

## **m-libraries 2014: From 'mobile first' to 'users first'**

### **Introduction**

Like so many other research libraries, the Utrecht University Library is in the process of transforming its digital services to cater to users with mobile devices. The decision was taken to start a number of projects to better support this new technology: our existing mobile website ( ) was completely rebuilt and, in order to assess the value of apps for our library, an actual app was developed (Librarian Bertine\*). To guide all our future plans, a beefy policy paper was written.

Amid all the big words that are used to describe mobile technology ('disruptive technology!', 'mobile revolution!'), however, the results of our projects were less than stellar. Disappointingly, the use of our revamped mobile site has not gone through the roof. Our app is actively being used, but by only a small number of people. So, what's going on?

### **What we found**

Even though we were expecting this new technology to cause a change in focus within our library – mobile is called a disruptive technology, after all – we've countered a more subtle shift: while investigating, we've discovered that our previous approach to developing digital services lacks in understanding our users. Mobile, being such a (relatively) new technology, presses us to acquire end user input. So, instead of relying on 'experts' who claim to know our users needs and desires, we've pivoted towards a range of tools and methods that allow us to actually (and finally!) reach those end users. The results are some exciting new plans regarding our mobile services – and regarding our regular, desktop oriented services as well.