Making Your User Guides Relevant in a 2.0 World

LIBRARY TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE
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Brief History of User Guides

- From Pathfinder to Static Web Pages
- First emerged in the mid 1990’s
- Challenge of Paper...Wanting Automation
- Librarians spend a great deal of time creating and updating guides...Is it worth the investment?
- Individually created by institution with varying standards and uses
Static Web Pages

Advertising & Media

For each U.S. advertising agency, this directory gives the agency's specialization, officers, account executives, approximate annual billing, breakdown by advertising media, and names of accounts. Also includes ranked lists of advertising agencies.

E-Resources


Census Bureau.
Official government source for a broad range of social, demographic, business, and economic statistics.

http://www.bls.gov/ces/

Consumer Expenditure Survey.
Consists of two surveys collected for the Bureau of Labor Statistics by the Census Bureau, the monthly Interview Survey, and the Diary survey, that provide information on the buying habits of American Consumers, including data on their expenditures, income, and consumer unit (families and single consumers) characteristics.

http://www.prb.org

Population Reference Bureau.
Non-profit organization that provides international statistical information on population, health, and the environment.

http://www.thompsonnet.com/

ThompsonNet.
Search engine that provides one source for finding the exact product, service, or supplier information obtained from the the knowledge base of Thomas Publishing Company family of products. Website searchable by product/service category, company name and brand name.

Electronic Indexes & Databases

Journal articles on the subjects of Marketing and Advertising may be found in the following indexes and databases by conducting a keyword search or using subject headings such as Marketing, Advertising Agencies, and Demographic Surveys.
Why User Guides?

- Enhances information literacy instruction
- Allows virtual access to facilitate communication with remote patrons
- Model proper research techniques and resources
- Adds a virtual “librarianesque” presence to your website, filling a void when the library is closed
- Can facilitate communication and interaction between librarian and user
Modern User Expectations

- Content specific enough to meet their needs
- Variety of customizable options
- Continuous updates with current information
- Sophisticated search functionality
- Easily found on the library web page, catalog or through the use of search boxes
Modern User Expectations Continued

- Familiarity/comfort with interface
- Explanation of resources and their applicability
- Minimal number of clicks to access materials
- Easy to understand language – no library jargon
- Anytime, anywhere convenience
Meeting Their Expectations

- Target an appropriate audience
- Ask for input
- Be specific!
- Quality vs. Quantity
- Make it easy
- Check links and update regularly
- Speak their language
Basic Technologies Available

Make Static Pages Appear Dynamic with Widgets!

- **Del.icio.us Listing**
  - Great organization tool but links need to be maintenance
- **RSS Feeds of books and other materials**
  - Simply extracted from the catalog but need some tech skills
- **Simple Chat Widgets**
  - Easy to communicate with users but need to be available
- **Simple Search Widgets**
  - Makes searching one stop but need to know html code
# Social Bookmarking Listing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Free!</td>
<td>Link maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative</td>
<td>Controlled Vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple tagging for</td>
<td>RSS feeding to web page can be difficult with code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>organization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety of sophistication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Example Delicious Listing
Delicious Implemented in Guide

Other Suggested Resources

MWLC's Internet Consumer Resources Guide: Consumer resource websites collected and maintained by the staff of the MWLC.

Health Information

My Delicious Bookmarks

Physician Profiles from the MA Board of Registration in Medicine
On-Line Physician Profiles, including education, training, and experience of all licensed MA physicians.
CPL: Reference: Health Resources
Chatham Library/Health Resources Task Guide

Government-Sponsored

My Delicious Bookmarks

Massachusetts Office of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation
Promote honest and fair business practices and to ensure that consumers are treated fairly and honestly.
Federal Consumer Information Center
Answers to your questions about the federal government and common consumer issues. The citizen's help desk for everyday life.
FTC Bureau of Consumer Protection - Consumer Information
Consumer Protection is the online version of the Office of Consumer and Business Education of the Bureau of Consumer Protection. It offers the full text of consumer publications on a wide range of categories.

Consumer.gov/USA: Home Page
A consumer-oriented organization that collects and distributes detailed consumer satisfaction reports on local businesses in more than 150 categories.

General

My Delicious Bookmarks

Internet Public Library Consumer Resources
A listing of consumer-related web resources compiled by the staff of the Internet Public Library.

Froogle - Google Product Search
Google's comparative shopping service analyzes the web to find the best prices on many different items.

ConsumerWorld
Consumer World has gathered over 400 of the most useful consumer resources on the internet.

ConsumerSearch.com
Reviews thousands of product reviews, analyzes them, distills the information shoppers need and recommends which products are the best.

Better Business Bureau
National organization that voluntarily tracks the conduct of businesses, services providers and charities, and provides an online search tool for looking up an organization's record.

Angie's List
A consumer-oriented organization that collects and distributes detailed customer satisfaction reports on local businesses in more than 150 categories.

Car Information

My Delicious Bookmarks

NADA Guide
Pricing new and used cars, car reviews and free car quotes from local dealers.
### RSS Feeds (Really Simple Syndication)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Aggregates content into one location</td>
<td>• Subscription based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Create many different feed</td>
<td>• Need to know a little html but there are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Push and pull technology</td>
<td>generators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Free</td>
<td>• Consumer driven</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This example has library news as the RSS feed on the subject guide. Other library subject guides have incorporate new book feeds or delicious web site feeds that pertain to a specific topic.
## Online Chat Widgets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides instant access</td>
<td>Availability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low to no tech skills needed</td>
<td>Demand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Point-of-Need from anywhere</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Example Chat Widgets

Chat widgets can be found additionally in the catalog or designate ASK page.
# Search Widgets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Vendors have free ones that you can adapt.</td>
<td>• Need to know some html code.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Allows users to search catalog or databases in multiple places.</td>
<td>• Vendor might not offer a search widget for product or may offer at a cost.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Google-like and familiar.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Search widgets are becoming popular on user guides, especially where federated search products are being implemented.
Automated Technology Options

Products that Make User Guide Creation Easy

- Wikis
  - A collection of interlinked web pages with information, designed to be collaboratively authored by a number of individuals

- Library à la Cart
  - An open source tool created by Oregon State University Libraries fully customized by librarians or staff at your own institution

- Lib Guides
  - A product released by the Springshare company that provides off-site hosting and a pre-programmed interface for creating single or multiple page web-based user guides
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wikis</th>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Pros</strong></td>
<td><strong>Cons</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Free (Sometimes)</td>
<td>- Fee (Sometimes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Increases Productivity</td>
<td>- Security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Easy to use and update</td>
<td>- Set up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Search functionality</td>
<td>- Local hosting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Many options available</td>
<td>- Many options available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Easy cross-references</td>
<td>- User generated content</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Wiki Example

Welcome to the Ohio University Libraries Biz Wiki

General Business | International Business | Company Information | Industry Information
Marketing Information | Economic Information | Research How-To’s | Browse A-Z

Select a Category to get started, or use the search box to the left. For more Biz Wiki tips, please visit the Help Page.

The Biz Wiki is a collection of business information resources available through Ohio University Libraries. It is designed to assist business researchers in finding the best resources for their projects or topics. The Biz Wiki contains articles about business reference books, databases, websites, and other research guides. Nearly all of the resources will only be available to current members of the Ohio University community, as many of the resources are subscription databases or local reference resources. To learn more about the Biz Wiki, visit the About Biz Wiki page.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Pros</strong></th>
<th><strong>Cons</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Free</td>
<td>- Programming skills and time required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Fully customizable</td>
<td>- Server space and maintainence must be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Variety of Web 2.0</td>
<td>locally available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tools can be easily</td>
<td>- No easy Facebook integration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>integrated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Library à la Carte Example

Children's Literature

About this Guide
This is a general research guide identifying and finding books for children or young adults, as well as information about this literature. You'll find suggestions for locating books, articles, topical overviews, research tools, and factual information. If further assistance is needed, please contact the subject librarian.

Quick Links

- Academic Search Premier
- Professional Development Collection
- CLCD Children's Literature Comprehensive Database
- ERIC Education Resources Information Center
- TILL Forms
- Off-Campus Access
- E-campus

Overview

This is a general research guide for identifying and finding books for children and young adults, as well as information about this literature. You'll find suggestions for locating books, articles, topical overviews, research tools, and factual information. If further assistance is needed, please contact the subject librarian.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Easy updates</td>
<td>Cost is Higher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited web design skills</td>
<td>Off-site servers cause some access problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>available</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customization available</td>
<td>Not fully customizable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-site hosting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information is easily</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reusable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Advanced Technology Options

- Need time, some money, and know how!
- Podcasting and Screencasting
  - Subscription based
  - Anytime, anywhere delivery for convenience
  - Need a good video recorder, audio equipment, and server space
  - Great for book reviews or general tours
- Tutorials
  - Anytime, anywhere access; Point of need
  - Need screen capturing software; with good audio capabilities
- Mashups!
  - This is the future of the library subject guide
  - RSS feeds, Images, everything feed into one web page
  - Content is not owned by creator
Example Podcasting in LibGuides
From Auckland University of Technology in New Zealand
Example Tutorial
Example Mashup Process

Obtained from the blog: 
Library Playground

http://libraryplayground.wordpress.com using search phrase Mashup
Example Final Mashup Product

Obtained from the blog:
Medallia Blog
Post by Al Nevaraz

Implementation @ YOUR Library

- Getting buy in from staff
- Forming a team
- Planning for implementation
  - Creating standards
  - Interfacing with tech department
  - Matching talents with tools
  - Addressing user expectations
Implementation @ YOUR Library

• Finding Help and Experience
  • Look locally and globally!
  • Online tutorials and web guides

• Assess your User Guides
  • Usage statistics
  • Surveys
  • Focus Groups
Final Thoughts...

- Choose Web 2.0 Tools Carefully
- Be Realistic About Your Available Time, Money, and Technological Skills
- Start Small and Build on Your Momentum


Sources We Used


