MediaWiki Open Source Software as Infrastructure for Electronic Resource Outreach

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If I had a hammer . . .
Overview

• **Who?**  (organization & culture)
• **Why?**  (background, need, etc.)
• **What?**  (a “wiki” – if that helps)
• **How?**  (very carefully)
• **Where?**  (are we now)
• **When?**  (do we move on . . . *NOW*)
Who?
Organization

• Library divided into 3 divisions: Public Services, Collection Services, and Technology & Research

• Outreach librarians assigned department(s)

• Collection Development Department
Stakeholders

• Patrons (“users”)
  – Faculty
  – Students
  – Broader campus community

• Librarians (“pushers”)
Why?
Background / Initial impetus

• Recent move to Open Source CMS from static HTML

• Use of “wikis” by subject specialists and librarians for outreach
Why a “wiki”? 

- Easy to update and un-do 
- “Minimal” learning curve 
- Connect with targeted user groups
Why MediaWiki?

• Robust support community
  – Proven security
  – Widgets, extensions, etc.

• Fit with current infrastructure
  – Ease of install
  – PHP/MySQL
Purposes / Goals

• Targeted content

• Personal empowerment (for librarians and end-users)
What?
A Wiki (but not)

• Open editing for librarians

• End-users only have “view” access

• Content Management without all the formality
Organized by Subject

Website → Wiki

E-Resources by Subject
- Anthropology
- Art
- Biology
- Business
- Chemistry
- Classics
- Communications
- Computer Science
- Criminal Justice
- Dance
- Economics
- Education
- Engineering
- English
- Environment
- Film
- Geography
- Geology
- History
- Information Studies
- International Studies
- Latin America and Caribbean
- Local Resources
- Mathematics
- Meteorology
- Modern Languages
- Nursing
- Nutrition
- Oceanography
- Philosophy
- Physical Education
- Physics
- Political Science
- Psychology
- Public Administration
- Religion
- Social Work
- Sociology
- Spanish Language
- Statistics
- Textiles
- Theater
- Urban/Regional
- Women's Studies

Subject Specialists By Academic Discipline
- Anthropology
- Art
- Biology
- Business
- Chemistry
- Classics
- Communications
- Computer Science
- Criminal Justice
- Dance
- Economics
- Education
- Engineering
- English
- Environment
- Film
- Geography
- Geology
- History
- Information Studies
- International Studies
- Latin America and Caribbean
- Mathematics
- Meteorology
- Modern Languages
- Nursing
- Nutrition
- Oceanography
- Philosophy
- Physical Education
- Physics
- Political Science
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http://www.lib.fsu.edu
A Personal Touch

• Added photos of outreach librarians

Contact Info

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How?
Implementation

• Fast rollout (one month from initial impetus to implementation/training)

• Minimal planning

• “Soft” launch
Training

• Dual strategy
  – Beginners: Hands-on instruction, paper “cheat sheets”
  – Advanced: Basic introduction, online help tools – links to documentation

• Need for “best practices”
Where are we now?
E-Resource by Subject

• Prominent link with embedded photo

**Arts & Humanities Search**
Records referencing many of the world’s leading arts and humanities journals. Online version of ISI’s Arts & Humanities Citation Index

**English Short Title Catalogue**
Contains records for works printed in any language in England or its dependencies from the beginning of printing through the end of the eighteenth century, as well as works printed in English anywhere else in the world during that period. Subject headings appear in records for items published in 1700 or earlier.

**Essay & General Literature Index**
(Changed to H.W. Wilson January 2004) Indexes essays and articles that have been published in collections as books. It is a good source of literary criticism published in books rather than in periodical articles from 1985-More than 300 volumes are indexed annually. Additionally, more than 20 annuals and serial publications are indexed. Essay and General Literature Index also provides full bibliographic information on collective titles indexed. Essay and General Literature Index focuses on the humanities and social sciences, with subject coverage ranging from economics, political science, and history to criticism of literary works, drama, and film.

Contact your the Subject Librarian for English or explore additional resources!
URL Aliases

• Current link schema for MediaWiki install:
  – If move to different software, can’t be maintained

• Alternate URL Alias:
  – [http://www.lib.fsu.edu/subject/classics](http://www.lib.fsu.edu/subject/classics)
  – “Easy to remember”
  – Durable and consistent
Customization of interface

• Better meets FSU identity guidelines

• Remove authenticated user features
  – No “login” link or “edit” tabs
  – Removed “toolbox”
Basic Customization

- Previous Page:
  - Clean/simple
  - Nice layout
  - No FSU ID
FSU “look and feel”

• New Look:
  – FSU header
  – Matching background and fonts
Removed “Wiki-ness”
Functionality Extensions

• Embedded chat
  – Meebome enabled
  – Plugoo, Chantango, etc.

• Google CSE
Embedded Chat

- Allows “flash-based” chat widgets
  - MeeboMe
  - Plugoo
Google CSE

- Custom Search Engine
- Search across “subject-based” selection of websites

http://google.com/coop/cse
The English “Super Page”

- Collaboration between technology and outreach
- Serve as “point of inspiration” for other outreach librarians
- Encourage further content creation and use of MediaWiki functionality

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Challenges & Opportunities

- Discovery of Wiki pages
- What goes here? How to make content more than a PDF of the paper version
- Updates – fitting the Wiki into workflow/workpatterns
Coming soon . . .

• “Best Practices” documentation
• Marketing New Features
• Turn on “talk” page
• WYSIWYG editing
When do we move on?
Taking Stock

• Pros:
  – “Quick and easy” changes
  – Openness and collaboration
  – Positive user feedback

• Cons:
  – Clarification of purpose and “best practices”
  – Lack of structure & uniformity
Alternatives and possibilities

- Blogging platform (Wordpress MU?)
- RSS Feeds
- Facebook and MySpace
- Flickr and Youtube
- “Return of the CMS”
  - “Book” module
  - Library staff profiles
  - Discussion forums, et
Things to remember

• Services breed expectations
  (“Services not software”)
• Communication not committees
• Change happens
  – Evolve/adapt
  – Take stock – consider stakeholders
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