LIBRARY WEBSITES

Creating a Dynamic and Useful Website for Smaller Libraries

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Sample Sites

- Waterford Library *
  - http://www.waterford.lib.wi.us/
- Arlington VA
  - http://library.arlingtonva.us/
- SWLS
  - http://swls.wordpress.com/
- Demolibrary
  - http://www.wilsorama.org/demolibrary/

* transitioned in 30 days
Why WordPress

- Easy to use and update
- Dynamic
- Looks terrific
- Interoperability

- [http://wordpress.org/](http://wordpress.org/)
- [http://wordpress.com/](http://wordpress.com/)
Hosting

• Your own solution, get installer from WordPress.org
  • Local Government
  • Campus
  • Who’s doing it now

• Commercial options
  • Bluehost
    • http://www.bluehost.com/
  • DreamHost
    • http://dreamhost.com/
  • 1and1
    • http://www.1and1.com/

• WordPress.com
  • http://wordpress.com/
Themes

• Your public face
• Your physical organization
• Your style
• Your content organization
• Navigation
• Instant change for a whole new look

• http://wordpress.org/extend/themes/
Themes

- Examples
  - Panorama
    - http://www.waterford.lib.wi.us/
  - 2010 or 2011
    - http://www.wilsorama.org/demolibrary/
  - Dandelion
    - http://test.elkhorn.lib.wi.us/wordpress/
  - Arras
    - http://www.wilsorama.org/buildings/
Static v. Dynamic content

- Pages are Static
  - How to’s
  - Location
  - Contacts
  - Calendars
  - Web forms

- Posts are Dynamic
  - Events
  - Announcements
  - Readers alerts
Widgets

- Header bar, provides branding and navigation*
- Side bar and footer blocks
- Persistent information on every page
  - Search your OPAC
  - RSS Feeds
  - Social links
  - Basic Extended navigation

* not really a “widget” but still a visual extra content block and in some themes can add widgets to the header area
Interoperability

• Engaged Patrons
  • http://engagedpatrons.org/

• Library Thing or Good Reads
  • http://www.librarything.com/

• Open Book
  • http://openlibrary.org/

• Google extensions like Calendar
• RSS feeds
Getting Started

- Design per page and across pages
- Blocks of data
- Different size post-its on a white board
- Space v. Density
- Arrange until you are content with visual navigation
  - Delivering your content, your priorities
Operating

- People organization
- Dynamic site so someone needs to wrangle
- Assign user levels
  - Or just admin for everyone
- Direct to publish
  - Or OK everything first
  - Letting your patrons post?
- Front page is what’s new, keep it so
  - Remember it’s easy to do
Go do it!

- Start up can be fast
- Content population can be easy
- Adding and deleting resources is easy
- Changing entire look is easy
- It’s dynamic so...

- Don’t worry about perfect, especially day one
- Concentrate on making it better and better and more useful every day
- Your website can be a conversation between you and your patrons
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