Navigating LibGuides

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Plan for today

- **Morning:**
  - Anatomy of a LibGuide
  - Creating a basic guide
  - Usability and accessibility

- **Afternoon:**
  - Beyond the basics
  - Making your LibGuide look good
  - Peer review
Finding your way
What is a LibGuide?

"Content management and sharing system designed specifically for libraries"
Benefits

- Central source of information
- Easy to navigate
- Simple to set up and maintain
- Useful for students not physically in the library
- Can be visually pleasing
Problems

- Proprietary software
- Highlights only selected resources
- Replicates existing content
- Doesn't display well on mobile devices
- Every library website looks the same...?
Anatomy of a LibGuide

- Navigation tabs
- Guide to the guide
- Clear boxes
- Links
- General info
- Profile box
- Images
- Tabbed boxes
Box types

- **Standard box**
  - This is a standard box filled with text!

- **Gallery box**
  - Woman with camera

- **Tabbed box**
  - Tab 1
  - Tab 2
  - Tab 3
  - Tab 4
  - This is a tabbed box with text!
Known in LibGuides terminology as an asset:

- **Rich Text/HTML**: Covers most types of general content.
- **Database**: Bespoke links to local databases.
- **Link**: General links to content.
- **Media/Widget**: Embed 3rd party content.
- **Book from the Catalog**: Add information on a specific title.
- **Document/File**: Add documents directly to a Guide.
Creating a basic LibGuide
Creating a Guide

Create new or copy?

Name should reflect all content
Creating a basic LibGuide

Think about what you want to include in your LibGuide.

- What information should it contain?
- What is the most important information?
- How will information be grouped together?

Draw up a basic concept map of your Guide. Think about the user and what they need.
Usability and accessibility
Usability and accessibility

- **Library:**
  - EU accessibility directive
  - Maintains SE rankings
  - Good learning opportunity

- **User:**
  - Aim of Guides is to make information accessible
  - Makes the library more approachable
  - Don't have to disclose their disability
Key areas to consider

Consider colour schemes

Links should open in new tabs

Keep image sizes consistent
Key areas to consider

Customise URL

Important information in top left

Avoid hover over descriptions
Key areas to consider

Think about search boxes

No bold or italics to highlight

Include vital information above the fold
Over to you...
Beyond the basics
Known in LibGuides terminology as an asset

**Rich Text/HTML**
Covers most types of general content.

**Database**
Bespoke links to local databases.

**Link**
General links to content.

**Media/Widget**
Embed 3rd party content.

**Book from the Catalog**
Add information on a specific title.

**Document/File**
Add documents directly to a Guide.
Things to think about:

- What is the best way to get your message across?
- What type of content do your users prefer?
- Which assets are easy to maintain?
- Remember accessibility. Which alternatives will you offer?
Copying vs mapping

- **Copying**
  - New version of the resource is created
  - Needs to be updated manually
  - Can be customised

- **Mapping**
  - Linked version of the resource is created
  - Automatically updates when original is updated
  - Cannot be edited
Borrowing boxes

Things to think about:

- Be general rather than specific as this is useful to a broader audience
- The more links that you include the more you will need to check
- Avoid jargon and complex terminology
Maintenance

Maintaining your Guide is vital to ensure it stays useful

- Build a schedule for checking information and links
- Check popular guides and those with links frequently
- Create a private guide for best practice?
- Peer reviewing guides - improve and learn
Going live!

- Change layout of Guide
- Preview Guide
- Back up, delete, add editors
- Discussion board
- The big moment!
Over to you...
Making your Guide look good
Key areas to consider

- Floating boxes
- Widgets
- Annotate links
Key areas to consider

Quick links

Text boxes

Accordion boxes
Over to you...
Review and wrap up
Peer review

Pair up with someone you haven't worked with and look at your Guides.

Think of:
• One thing that could be improved
• One thing you want to steal for your own Guide
Taking it further

CamGuides: https://camguides.lib.cam.ac.uk/

Questions?
Top tips

- Always think of the purpose of the guide and the needs of the user
- Visually appealing is great but accessibility is better
- Nothing is ever finished - build in a process of review and rebuilding

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