

Quick Tips

Copying & pasting from

Microsoft Word? Remember to use the “Microsoft Word” button in the editor. (It looks like a clipboard with a blue “W” on it.) Copy & paste your text from MS Word into the box. The button will pop up, and it will strip out most or all of the weird formatting Word will try to export with your text.

Don't forget...

When it comes to Webkits, we get the most calls at OPLIN because people forget to uncheck the “Automatic Alias” box when they are editing a page that has a custom URL. Remember to always uncheck that box whenever you edit any item and you'll prevent the breaking of links in your top-level navigation menu as well.



this issue

Making your site more professional-

looking **P.1**

Think twice about graphics **P.2**

Why we upgrade **P.3**

First impressions are everything. Visitors to your library web site will make a decision about the credibility and usefulness of your site within mere seconds of arrival. What kind of impression does your site make? Think about some of these elements:

- **Over-excited writing** that uses exclamation points everywhere (!!!!) ;
- **Standardized clip art** (often found in Microsoft products) that is seen in many other places on the Web;
- **Lists of links** without any annotations;
- **Lists of services** that don't actually link to any additional information.

Consider what your patrons likely think when they encounter each or any of these. Many visitors would immediately evaluate the site as being amateurish and difficult to use. They can (and will) quickly leave and go someplace else to find information. There is

no motivation to dig further; not when they can get instant, easy gratification elsewhere.

It can be difficult to get accustomed to the idea that a library web site is for the visitor, not for library staff. Think about furniture for a moment. The furniture in your library is constructed and arranged for the comfort of the visitors to the building. They are the people who use the furniture the most. The same can be said for your library web site; patrons use it the most and it needs to be constructed and arranged primarily for *their* comfort, not that of the library staff.

Not sure if something you want to add to your Webkit is going to give a negative impression? Contact Laura Solomon at OPLIN via email (laura@oplin.org) for assistance.



Featured Module

(Each issue we'll highlight a Drupal module (add-on) that you can add to your existing OPLIN Webkit.)

Add to Any

With the increased emphasis on social media and sharing data across services and sites, this module makes it simple for your site visitors to take any content item and easily email it to their friends, bookmark it or post it to Facebook, Twitter or a multitude of other social sites.

We use this module on at least two of the OPLIN blogs (4Cast: <http://www.oplin.org/4cast> and "What Does This Mean to Me, Laura?" <http://www.oplin.org/meanlaura>). You can see a screenshot at <http://www.oplin.org/content/add-any-screenshot>.

Interested in adding this module to your Webkit? Contact OPLIN Support at support@oplin.org.



It can be very tempting to add a picture, graphic or photo to every story or page on your Webkit site. Everything looks better with a picture, right?

Not so fast. This mode of thought has some major issues that you need to be aware of.

1. It's an outdated way of doing web sites. The web today is about content and semantics, not pretty presentation. Note that Craigslist.com is one of the plainest (and most popular) sites on the Net, yet no one complains. People care much more about function than form.

2. Dial-up users are still plentiful. This can be frustrating, but the reality is that broadband is not available in many rural areas and even those people who have access to it may not have it or be able to afford it. This

means that every time you add a graphic to your library site, you are adding (possibly significant) download time for every dial-up user. Don't give your visitors excuses to leave your site. Too many graphics and the site being slow are major ones.

3. This was mentioned on the front page: **Clip art is just that—clip art.** And nearly everyone

knows it when they see it. (Do you really want a site that has artwork the average grade-schooler can put in their book report?) Credibility is extremely important. Better to have no image than one that, even marginally, can hurt your library image.

4. Content is STILL king. Sorry, no, graphics typically do

Think twice about adding graphics

Just like books on the shelf have to earn their place by circulating, graphics have to earn their place on the page. Here's why.

not qualify as "content," unless you're talking about a photo site. Graphics are almost always design elements, not content that you're providing for your site visitors. Too many design elements are distracting and take away from the main foci of your site. For each graphic, ask yourself "Does this add to or distract

from the real message of this item?"

"People care much more about function than form."

The bottom line? Yes, people care about function over form, but that doesn't mean they don't care at all about how your site looks. Users typically start caring when the design becomes a hindrance, rather than a help.



Why do we upgrade the Webkits so often?

You will often receive notices letting all of our OPLIN Webkit libraries know that we're about to upgrade their site system again. You might think to yourself, "Hey, didn't OPLIN do this, like, 3 weeks ago?" You're not imagining it—we probably did!

Your OPLIN Webkit runs on the well-known content management system (CMS) Drupal. Drupal is an award-winning system that is incredibly extensible and is also open source. This latter characteristic means that anyone with the

skills can modify the system at the code level. It also means that it is a product of a very robust community of developers, who are often making improvements and patching bugs and holes. Unlike most products from for-profit vendors, which usually only produce new releases a few times a year (at most), Drupal often has new releases every few weeks.

The advantages of constant new releases are many. Not only are improvements made to the back end of the system constantly, but critical security bugs can be repaired

quickly, helping to prevent site hacking and other related problems.

What this means to OPLIN is that we are kept very busy doing upgrades as they come up. A huge advantage for you, as the webkit customer, is that by hosting your site at OPLIN, you don't have to worry about keeping up with the new releases as they appear and applying them to your site. Your annual fee covers not only the costs of hosting your site, but upgrades to your webkit as well.

Q&A

Q: Why is there no function to underline in the Drupal editor?

A: It's important to always remember that the Web is a completely different medium than print, and the answer to this question illustrates this point well.

This question usually comes up because library staff are unsure of how to handle book titles. In print, book titles are usually underlined. However,



on the Web, underlining is **never** (and this is an absolute, sorry, no exceptions!) supposed to be used except to denote a hyperlink. So, what to do? Online, book titles are usually italicized, while magazine articles/essays/et al are put in quotes.

So, why no underline function in the Webkit editor? You'll never need it! When you create a link with the editor, it automatically includes the underlining.

Got another question? Email laura@oplin.org.

Who's got a (live) Webkit?

Perry County District Library

(<http://www.pcdl.org>)

Coldwater Public Library

(<http://www.coldwaterlibrary.org>)

London Public Library

(<http://london.lib.oh.us>)

Logan-Hocking County District Library

(<http://www.hocking.lib.oh.us>)

Troy-Miami County Public Library

(<http://www.troypubliclibrary.org>)

Marion Public Library

(<http://marion.lib.oh.us>)

Franklin-Springboro Public Library

(<http://franklin.lib.oh.us>)

Who's getting a Webkit?

These libraries are the first in line to receive a Webkit after the beta sites are completed:

- Homer Public Library
- Canal Fulton Public Library
- Harbor-Topky Memorial Public Library





Additional resources

- **The latest Webkit documentation** can be found at <http://www.oplin.org/content/website-kit-documentation>
- **Video: Drupal Basics—How to Create an Event**
A nice, 3-minute video that walks you through creating an all-day Event. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ivDWyM6vK6I>
- **Email Laura Solomon**
Got a question? Just email Laura at laura@oplin.org. Or, you can reach OPLIN Support (and usually Laura, too) via our chat room at <http://support.oplin.org>.

Want to have your contact form emailed to more than one person?

The contact form in your Webkit can be sent to multiple recipients. Just email the addresses you want it to go to to Laura Solomon at laura@oplin.org.

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