UnLibGuiding LibGuides: Using JQuery and CSS with Campus Guides to make LibGuides a true Web CMS

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UnLibGuiding
LibGuides
Using JQuery and CSS with Campus Guides to make LibGuides a true Web CMS
Project Spork

A program within the Web Services team aimed at exploring new technologies and platforms.

- Drupal
- SharePoint
- SQL & PHP
- Amazon Web Services
- And now LibGuides – Campus Guides Spork
The Trouble with LibGuides

- Libraries should be using slicker designs
- Good design minimalist and to the point
- Irrelevant content (Last Updated, URL, Print Guide, etc.)
- Generally too busy.
Basic Architecture

- Library Administration Group
  - Images & graphics
  - JQuery libraries
  - Site boxes (sub-navigation menus, etc.)
  - Password protected against “Librarian-level” users

Content from this group is *duplicated* into guide templates so that it cannot be accidentally edited.
Templates

- We created one template for each section of the site:
  - Get Help pages
  - Services
  - Collections
  - About

- These templates have the specific sub-sections sub-navigation links on the left, which are duplicated from the Library Administration group.
JQuery

- Most JQuery libraries are managed from the Library Administration group

- Our custom JQuery files had to be hosted remotely since LibGuides cannot replicate the directory structure that is coded into the JQuery UI CSS files

- JQuery can be inserted globally or at the guide level
CSS

- Some LibGuides CSS styles are overridden in the Custom Head section for the “Spork group”

- Some CSS is also used to override our group overrides at the guide level using the Guide Custom JS/CSS tool.
  - Displaying tabs on some pages (e.g. Locations page)
  - Not displaying guide title on the homepage
We used a remote SQL database for the staff directory and locations.

SQL data is added to LibGuides using the Remote Script box type, which references a PHP file on our Spork Bluehost server along with the SQL database.
A tour of what we did...

- Homepage (CSS overrides)
- Locations (tabs)
- Staff Directory (SQL)
- Research Guides (JQuery)
Issues

- We had to add Z-index values to some LibGuides system DIVs to overcome display issues in IE.

- Queries to the database will not work, making searches of staff directory impossible. We are exploring one last trick using multiple boxes, one for the search box, another for the results.

- Blank containers are stripped out, so displaying results from API calls is problematic.

- No rollback functionality without requesting from Springshare.
Future Outlook

- Campus Guides is Go!

- Springshare products for database functionality (hours, staff directory)

- Without a server, we may opt for Dropbox for JQuery UI directories

- We can share our CSS and code to anyone interested in implementing this.