

Time for a Change?

An Overview of Web OPAC Redesign: Advanced

Accompanying Notes

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Minneapolis Public Library

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START OVER | LIMIT/SORT RESULTS | ANOTHER SEARCH | (Search History)

TITLE: birchbark house | View Entire Collection | System Sorted | Sort | Search

SAVE MARKED RECORDS | SAVE ALL ON PAGE

TITLES (1-2 of 2)

Birchbark House

1		The Birchbark House by Louise Erdrich. Erdrich, Louise. 1st ed. New York : Hyperion Books for Children, 1999. 244 p. : ill., map ; 24 cm. FICTION 21 copies available at BKMBL Juvenile, Central Childrens Dept, EL Juvenile and 10 other locations for checkout at this time	1999	BOOK REQUEST ITEM
2		The Birchbark House [Sound Recording] / Louise Erdrich. Erdrich, Louise. Northport, Maine : Audio Bookshelf, p2002. 4 sound cassettes (6 hr.) : analog. PHONOTAPE FICTION 4 copies available at FR Juvenile, NK Juvenile, NR Juvenile and WN Juvenile for checkout at this time	p2002	CASSETTE REQUEST ITEM

Done | Local intranet

Using the Command Line

Your key directories:

/iuidb/http/staging/screens

/iuidb/http/live/screens

Advantages to using the command line:

- immediate updates
- can back up files to spare directory
- access to utilities: sed, awk, grep, perl
- access to vi and emacs text editors
- can use ftp directly from command line
- can manage permissions/access on individual files
- feeling of control, freedom

Disadvantages to using the command line:

- immediate updates
- still need to ftp image files
- may still need to log in to regular menu system to restart processes; reload wwwoptions
- moving from staging to live is more cumbersome than in regular menu system
- may need to manage user/permissions issues when traversing directories
- may inadvertently block permissions/access on individual files
- what if something goes horribly, horribly wrong?

Regarding Style Sheets

You're going to list one style sheet in wwwoptions; go ahead and use it for everything.

There are more style sheet classes available in the Web OPAC than ever before.

Lots of styles are available on browse screens; fewer on individual record screens; room for more suggested styles in future enhancement rounds.

Styles can be updated immediately; no need to reload wwwoptions

Styles are easy to update to match changes in institutional visual identity standards

Use styles to suggest visual structure.

Style sheet button bars: not ready for prime time (but could be useful in the future--do your own evaluation).

Regarding Images

You may only need four sets. Create one "master file" for each:

- A banner
- Navigation buttons (create all from one template file)
- Material type icons
- AVS icons

Plus any other decorative items.

In a pinch, most buttons and icons can be downloaded from CSDirect.

Material type icons are also available at <http://www.mplib.org/demo/icons/icons.asp>

Book jackets, etc., can also be purchased from an outside vendor.

Compare Minneapolis and Tulsa opacs regarding placement of book jacket in individual item record.

<http://mplwebcat.mpls.lib.mn.us/search/i?SEARCH=0786814543>

<http://opac.tulsalibrary.org/search/i?SEARCH=0786814543>

Pushing the Envelope

Create Your Own Styles

You can add your own styles alongside the ones III defines, for use anywhere you have access to do your own coding, including: custom forms, toplogo/botlogo, briefcit.html, extra pages or popups.

Remember: controlling appearance in the style sheet means you don't have to restart a terminal to reload wwwoptions.

You can redefine tags in unusual ways to meet your own ends, notably FONT and CENTER

Overloading Wwwoptions

You can insert snippets of HTML inside wwwoptions entries above and beyond what you're "supposed" to enter.

```
CHECKIN_FONTCOLOR=ARRIVED=GREEN" CLASS="arrived|EXPECTED=BLACK"  
CLASS="expected|TOBIND/BOUND=RED" CLASS="tobind|LATE=BLACK"  
CLASS="late|OTHER=BLACK" CLASS="other
```

```
LOC_mlac=javascript:open('/screens/mlac.htm','mlacpop','height=420,width=250,  
screenX=75,screenY=75,top=75,left=75');location.href=location.href;
```

Disadvantage: will only work as long as the spec for the wwwoptions entry does not change. In other words, you may need to re-check that it still works after each upgrade.

Popup Links

In wwwoptions, use javascript in the LOC_ entry, and point it to an HTML file on your III server. That file can contain javascript links that load a page from elsewhere in the main window.

Advanced Keyword Searching

Requires javascript-based form. For example, view source at:

<http://mplwebcat.mpls.lib.mn.us/search/X>

<http://library.wmitchell.edu/search/X>

<http://clinet.clic.edu/search/X>

Build Your Own Form--in the OPAC or Elsewhere

Analysis of an advanced keyword search URL from CSDirect:

<code>http://libraryopac.union.edu/</code>	Base URL for the organization.
<code>search/X?</code>	Conducting an advanced keyword search
<code>d:(history)</code>	on the subject field containing "history"
<code>+and+t:(Paris)</code>	and on the title containing "Paris"
<code>+and+a:(Waldo%20G.%20Leland)+or+a:(Waldo%20Leland)</code>	and on the author field containing "Waldo G. Leland" or "Waldo Leland"
<code>&b=ur</code>	and on the location "Reference Room"
<code>&l=eng</code>	and for language "English"
<code>&p=carnegie</code>	and with publisher containing "Carnegie"
<code>&Da=1920&Db=1945</code>	and the date after 1920 and before 1945
<code>&SORT=R</code>	and sort by relevance

Any such URL can be used to build an HTML form. Use METHOD=GET. The ACTION attribute will point to your Web OPAC (here, the advanced keyword search page). The name=value pairs will show you what NAME attributes to use on your form elements. Use any form elements, including TYPE=HIDDEN to enforce a value. Here, the opening tag for the form would look like this:

```
<FORM METHOD=GET ACTION="http://libraryopac.union.edu/search/X">
```

Some searches can also be done with the POST method. View the source on the main page of <http://mplwebcat.mplib.org/> for an example.

As long as you use the full address to your OPAC in the action attribute, you can place this form on any server, not just your III server.

Broken Tokens

Instead of using tokens in customized forms, view the source for the form in a browser. Copy the HTML generated by the token, and insert that into your customized form in place of the token. Now, you can replace any INPUT or SELECT item with any other, as long as the NAME attribute does not change. You can also add javascript to validate input in text boxes.

See <http://mplwebcat.mpls.lib.mn.us:2082/illb> for an example.

Disadvantage: NOT supported by III.

Wrapping with Toplogo/Botlogo

Always use the @ include for toplogo and botlogo.

You can begin TABLE or DIV structures in toplogo, and close them in botlogo.

Disadvantage: stray invalid tags in III-generated code may break the layout.

Mainmenu, Opacmenu: Who Needs 'Em?

You can make them look exactly the same; patrons don't care about the difference. However, the "inner" file (usually opacmenu.html) should include the "patron" and "logout" tokens.

You may want to integrate the your "catalog home" into your regular website. See <http://www.sppl.org/catalog.cfm?id=38>

Having a page dedicated to your catalog in your main website will help your catalog show up in search results when visitors search your main website.

Includes with Javascript

You can emulate a server-side include by embedding a reference to a javascript file:

```
<SCRIPT SRC="/screens/myscript.js"></SCRIPT>
```

Advantages:

Gives you functionality you wouldn't have otherwise, including some dynamic scripting.

Cautions:

Beware of "namespace collisions"--there is already a lot of javascript in some III pages, be careful of using the same variable names as III.

Use of javascript may introduce accessibility issues.

Javascript can be turned off in the browser; some add-ons such as "pop-up blocker" software can also interfere with Javascript. Cross-browser javascript has historically been a problem.

We can't access the values from III tokens (....yet!).

Accessibility Issues

III Web Opac environment is already very accessible.

Use good tags/attributes on forms for accessibility, when you can:

--FIELDSET and LEGEND to contain the form, or functional areas of the form.

--LABEL with attribute FOR, and the ID attribute, to associate labels with input fields.
Don't just rely on visual positioning.

<http://www.mplib.org/askus.asp>

Font size cannot be "solved" to everyone's satisfaction.

--Users will not adjust font sizes on their own.

--Default fonts cannot please everyone, whether you specify fixed sizes or not.

--Adjusting font sizes in IE won't resize all form elements correctly; some are controlled at the operating system level.

Graphic buttons won't resize, of course. III does provide the correct ALT attribute, but it's not customizable.