Fast, Cheap & Easy

DIY Library 2.0 Services

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Kansas Library Association Conference   April 9, 2008

K-STATE LIBRARIES

K·STATE
Kansas State University
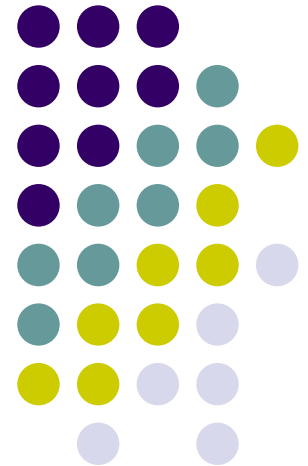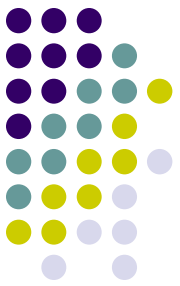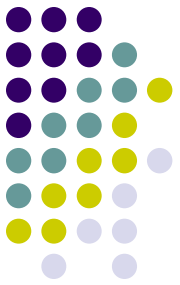
Agenda

- Introductions
- Overview of K-State Libraries' 2.0 services
- Show how to get hosting and a domain name
- Build a library Website that includes
  - a wiki
  - blogs
  - an image gallery
  - and a content management system
- Glue it all together

Introductions

- ## Jamene Brooks-Kieffer
  - Resource Linking Librarian
  - English major and teacher by training
  - 'Techie' by act of will
- ## Dale Askey
  - Web Development Librarian
  - German language and literature expert
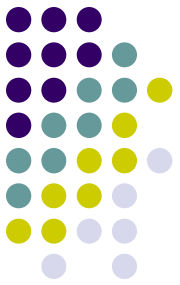 - Technology and programming hack

Disclaimer

- We'll show you how to do some exciting things
- But … we cannot provide support
  - You don't want our help, trust us
  - Seek out experts
- Good news
  - These tools have massive user communities
 - Open source software attracts experts who like to help
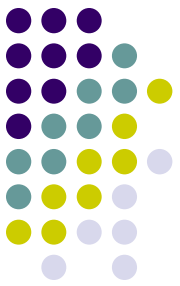
K-State Libraries

- We cannot run most 2.0 applications on our own Webserver
    - Lack of support for PHP/MySQL
    - Changing, but too slowly
- We offer 2.0 tools
    - Blogs (since December 2005)
    - Wiki (since February 2007)
- We don't use an image gallery nor a CMS
    - Why not?
    - We are big and inflexible

K-State Libraries

- Blogs – TypePad
  - $15/mo
  - 40+ active blogs
- Webhosting – A Small Orange
  - $20/mo
  - Hosts our wiki (Mediawiki) and other PHP/MySQL applications
- For less than $40/mo and low overhead, we derive great benefits
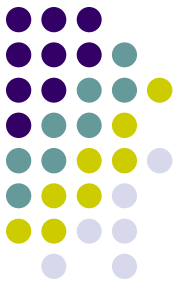
Library Wishful Thinking

- Typical library technology job ads
  - Laundry list of acronyms and intimidating skills
  - People like that are rare and expensive
- Are things actually this difficult?
  - After all, kids have their own Web empires
- Does this look familiar …

Library Wishful Thinking
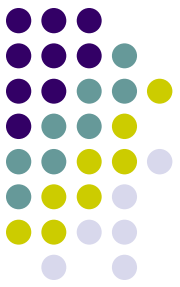
A library seeks an energetic individual to serve as a Web Development Librarian. Position works collaboratively with librarians and library staff to develop responsive, innovative and intuitive websites and web services for the University Libraries. The successful candidate will possess excellent communication skills and ability to work in a collaborative team environment. The candidate will show evidence of initiative, flexibility, attention to productivity, and ability to work creatively in a rapidly changing environment. Demonstrated project management and leadership skills and the ability to interact with diverse teams are also expected.

Minimum qualifications include an MLS or equivalent from an ALA accredited program, demonstrated experience with web development in a Microsoft Windows environment, skills with some or all of the following: XHTML, CSS, Javascript, ASP.NET, either Visual Basic or C#, PHP, Microsoft Visual Studio; demonstrated understanding of effective interface design, and knowledge of web standards, accessibility standards, and best practices.
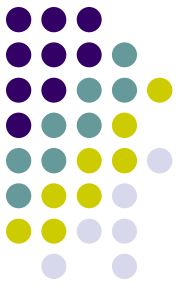
Library Wake-up Call
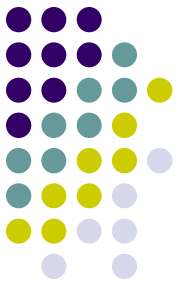
A library seeks an energetic person to serve as Cool Web Work Guru. This person doesn't fear talking to co-workers and library users and refuses to isolate themselves in a cubicle day after day. The Cool Web Work Guru will use these interactions to figure out what users need from Web services. This person plays well with others, enjoys making users happy, loves learning new things, and generally gets the job done.

The right person for this position has the ability to follow clear instructions, at least occasionally. At other times, has the ability to proceed with no direction or instructions. Also has a demonstrated willingness to play with technology, a creative approach to problem-solving, and no fear of making mistakes.
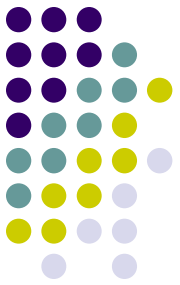
Make the Move

- Decide that you want to do these things
- Have no fear
- Mistakes are OK
- Learn as you go

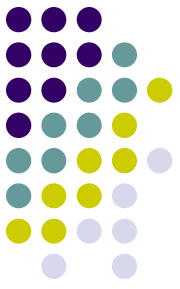- Skills: a desire to connect with users
- Cost: $0

Pick a Domain Name

- Use .org if you can, but it really doesn't matter
- Pick something easy to type if possible
- Or be cheeky!
- Domain name is not your identity
- Could use existing: just ask!

- Skills: creative with names
- Cost: $0

Find a Webhost

- Thousands to choose from
- Dreamhost offers free hosting to anyone who can provide a 501(c)(3)
- Key points
  - Don't pay more than $5/mo
  - Easy installs for the tools you want
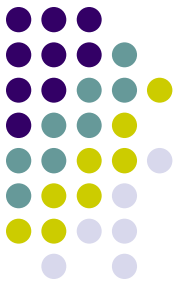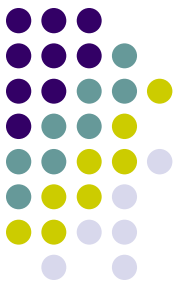- Who cares if it's in Topeka or Tuscaloosa?

Find a Webhost

- Some Webhosts will register your domain for a steep discount or even free when you sign up
- Saves you some coin and the DNS hassles
- If the Webhost doesn't offer this
  - Use someone big and cheap
  - godaddy.com - tacky ads, but effective

- Skills: comparison shopping
- Cost: $0-5/mo

Signing Up for a Webhost

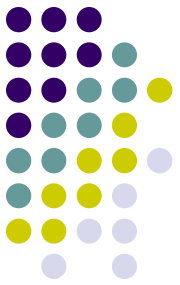- Dreamhost

Check Computer for Tools

Not absolutely required, but nice to have:

- A shell client, also called an SSH client
  - Putty is popular, free, may already be installed on your computer - if not, easy to download
- An SFTP client (for secured FTP)
  - WinSCP is easy to use - click and drag files where you want them - probably already installed on your computer
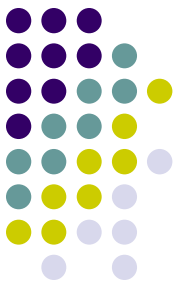
Installing the Software

- We're going to do all four at once
- You don't need to do it this way
- Also allows us to show you a few more tools from the hosting service:
  - upgrade tool
 - email when upgrades available tool - this is important!!

Install WordPress

- We will install in Advanced mode. Here's why:
  - Want access to all available themes
  - Will have to do for all other software we use today
  - We want to match install directory, db name, hostname
  - Other Webhosts will be like this

Install MediaWiki

- Must change PHP settings from default account install - installs with PHP 4, MW needs PHP 5

- Takes a few minutes to propagate - we have already done this on our account

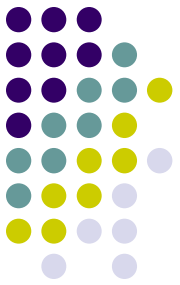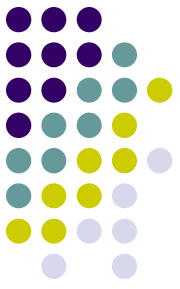- Don't be confused by multiple choices
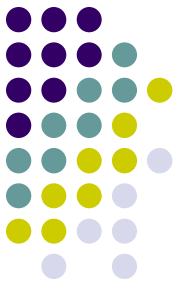
Install Gallery

- OK to reuse hostname and user, but pick a new database name

- Gallery takes a while to install - it's huge
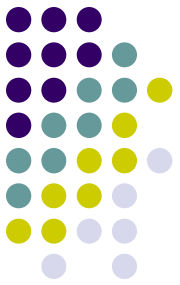
Install Joomla

- This should seem easy by now
- Just use names you can remember

Build a Blog

- We just installed WordPress
- Why WordPress?
  - Free, ubiquitous, solid as a rock, lots of templates
  - All the cool kids use it
- Intuitive Web-based blog admin
- Up and running literally in minutes
- Want a second, third, fourth blog? Install it again.

Build a Blog – Tips

- Follow the email instructions from Dreamhost

- Remember the password WordPress gives you - you need it to log in before you can change it

- If this is a public blog, allow Google and Technorati to find it

- Note the URLs you need to view and manage the blog - they're slightly different
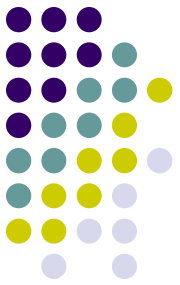
A Built Blog

- Extreme Makeover: Library Edition
- Blue Rapids Public Library goes 2.0
  - Before: *a* Web page
  - After: a fancy blog

- Skills: following directions, clicking links, FTP
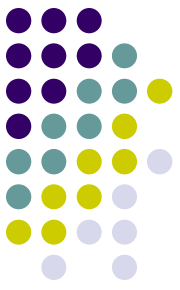- Cost: $0
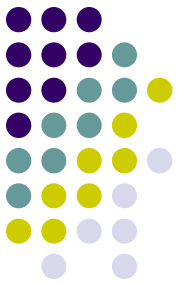
Build a Wiki

- We just installed MediaWiki

- Why Mediawiki?

  - Dreamhost offers it

  - Commonly used

  - Looks like Wikipedia

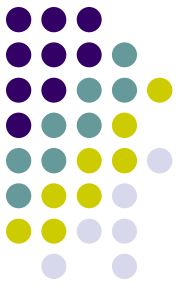- More and more people familiar with using it

Build a Wiki – Tips

- Follow the email instructions from Dreamhost
- Decide what you want to do for the content licensing
- Easiest: do no license

Build a Wiki – Caveat

- MediaWiki can be hard to administer until you catch on to the way it does things
  - What if it's too hard?
  - Try it first; don't be afraid - you'll feel great when you make it work
  - If you hate it, install a different wiki on your server – may have to load this yourself
  - Options compared on [Wikipedia](#)
 - Or use a hosted tool like Wetpaint (free, but contains ads)

A Built Wiki

- Look, it's just like Wikipedia!
- How to make a page

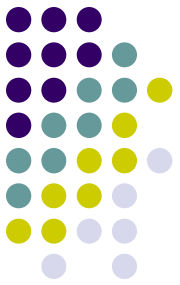- Skills: following directions, clicking links, FTP, research, shell
- Cost: $0
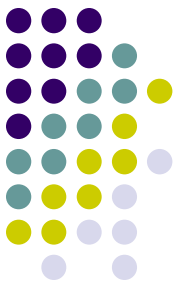
Build a Gallery

- Systems created for libraries are big, cumbersome, and expensive
- If you just want attractive image galleries, and don't need harvesting, DC metadata, yada yada yada, use a tool like Gallery
- Why Gallery?
  - Überpowerful
 - Does everything you'll ever need
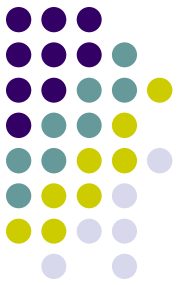
Build a Gallery – Tips

- Follow the email instructions from Dreamhost
- This Web install takes time
- Read the short security checklist
- Don't fret details – Gallery can suck you in

A Built Gallery

- Make your images look professional
- Better user interface than most library products

- Skills: following directions, clicking links, FTP, ability to ignore error messages, minimal knowledge of image editing
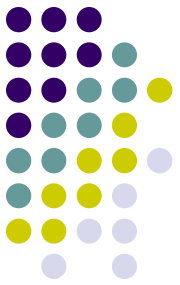- Cost: $0
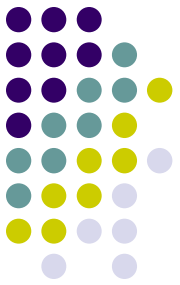
Build a CMS

- This is probably the most challenging part, but well worth the investment

- After creating blogs, a wiki, and image gallleries, you can do this!

- The CMS can be the backbone for everything else you're doing

- In a nutshell: makes a Website without having to use software to make pages, upload files, etc.
    - All done through a Web interface
    - You decide who can do what

Build a CMS

- Why Joomla?
    - Lots of templates and designers
    - Tons of modules
    - Thriving user community

Build a CMS – Tips

- Follow the email instructions from Dreamhost
- Take the time to learn Joomla's world view
- Don't trash all of the stock content in a mad fit of housecleaning
- Google for your answers

A Built CMS

- This is the Website, done in a matter of hours, and with bells and whistles that even large systems struggle with
- Can hold everything else we've done

- Skills: following directions, clicking links, FTP, shell, research, patience
- Cost: $0

Glue it All Together

- Decide what you want - is this your site, or an add-on?

- Pick the tools that fit the need, not the tool that is cool or that seems easy

- Can use WordPress, Mediawiki, or Joomla as your home (WordPress and Joomla are best for this)

- Many ways to approach
  - Try them out, experiment
  - They're _free_
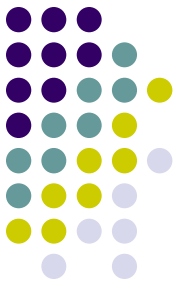
Total Cost

- If Dreamhost or similar deal:
    - $0 up front
    - $10/year after that to keep domain name registered
- If not:
    - $10/yr up front for a domain name
    - $60/yr at most for Webhosting
- Really, it's that cheap, about 10 cents a day
- You pay more for toilet paper

Skills Summary
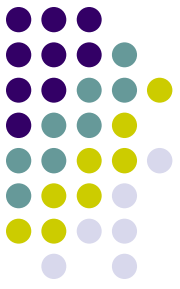
- Permanent skills that are hard to learn: perseverance, sense of humor, fearlessness, desire to communicate with users and hear something back, etc.

  In other words, everything you already have, because you're here

- Occasional skills that are easy to learn: command-line UNIX, HTML/CSS, etc. Depends on how fancy you want to get, and what you have on hand.

  In other words, things you may not have now, but can pick up as you need them

Thanks!

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http://hundreddollarlibrary.org