

Due Mar 8 11:59pm

5 points possible

20 Replies

Content Management System Comparison

After watching the lectures and reading the required reading articles for this week, take a look at a minimum of 3 websites - at least one designed with each CMS and compare and contrast them:

[Libraries Using Drupal](#)
[Libraries Using WordPress](#)

LibGuides:

[Abu Dhabi University](#)

[Texas A&M University](#)

[Boston College](#)

[and more!](#)

Mar 8 10:50pm

[Los Angeles Public Library](#) Drupal

The Los Angeles Public Library homepage is full of information from the very beginning. Information is divided into categories, with links to My Library Account and a catalog search box on the right side. Just slightly below the categories, you can see a slideshow of events that might be of interest to the community. Further down, we are presented with another list of categories, but this time as tiles with more details for each, going more in-depth. I can imagine that, for a library such as the Los Angeles Public Library, the size of the community it serves plays a big part in influencing the decisions that go into designing this website. I would say the homepage contains a lot of information without being overwhelming, so I feel that they have struck a good balance that suits their needs.

[Albany Public Library](#) WordPress

The Albany Public Library website feels *lighter* than the Los Angeles Public Library website. Both present similar information, but the difference in scale is immediately apparent. Some minor differences in the interface stand out immediately, such as the need to click the categories in the top row to make more options appear, rather than simply hovering over them. Maybe I've become too spoiled when it comes to navigating the web? The home page provides very relevant information, such as the hours and contact information. The website and its layout are very simple and a pleasure to navigate.

[Abu Dhabi University Library](#) LibGuides

The Abu Dhabi University Library feels very direct and focused on its primary purpose. Unlike the previous two sites, there is very little extra content, and everything presented is very straightforward. The most important information a user might be looking for, such as access to collections and databases, is presented clearly and easily navigated from the main page, with options to filter the information or present it in an A-Z List. Because of this, the site can initially feel a bit daunting, especially for someone unfamiliar with academic libraries or research tools. At the same time, it reflects the audience it is designed for. This is not necessarily a public-facing website like the Los Angeles Public Library or Albany Public Library sites. Instead, it appears built primarily for students and researchers who already know what they are looking for and need quick access to scholarly resources rather than general information or community programming.

Overall, what stood out to me most during this assignment was each site's intended audience and how it was built with that audience in mind. Each site has priorities that determine what information is presented at the forefront.

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Mar 8 10:19pm

CMS Comparison: [Canton Public Library](#) (Drupal), [Troy Public Library](#) (Wordpress), [Houston Public Library](#) (Libguides).

For this comparison, I looked at the Canton Public Library (Drupal), Troy Public Library (WordPress), and Houston Public Library (LibGuides). What stood out most was how differently each site organizes access to information and online resources. Canton's site seems especially strong in discoverability. Its homepage makes "Research & Learn" easy to find and includes a search that spans the catalog, website, FAQs, and events. On the research side, users can move between an A-Z list of resources and subject-based groupings like Educational Resources K-12, Research & Reference, Genealogy, and Newspapers. That combination supports both patrons who know exactly they're looking for, and for patrons who may be browsing and looking to discover a resource.

Troy Public Library's website felt less streamlined to me as well as very dated, even though it still offers a lot of useful content. One thing that stood out right away is that the homepage includes a separate "Mobile Home" link rather than presenting a more unified experience. Its resources are also spread across several sections. The actual database/electronic resource list is buried under several clicks. They also utilize outside platforms, like a Google Sites

page for teens rather than have it within the structure of their website. That gives patrons many ways to reach services, but it also makes the site feel more fragmented and, again, a little more dated in its organization.

Houston Public Library presents a strong research-focused model. Its homepage focuses on practical access points like Hours & Locations, Get Help, and language options, which seems especially useful for a large and diverse user community. Its research support is also very visible: the site includes Research Guides created by staff and an A-Z Databases page framed around helping users find the best databases for their research. Compared with Troy, Houston's approach feels more direct and easier to navigate for someone looking for databases or subject help.

Overall, I think Canton offers the best balance of browsing and known-item searching, Houston seems to be effective for research and database access, and Troy is functional but less cohesive in how it connects users to online resources.

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Mar 8 9:20pm

For this assignment I decided to look at college and university libraries in California. It was interesting to compare the differences between the libraries and what they might prioritize for their users, who are primarily students.

[USC Libraries](#) and [California College of the Arts Libraries](#): Drupal

I was interested to see how two higher academic spaces that have very different user needs could compare to each other, while still using the same CMS and needing to provide the same basic information. USC's home page is very inviting with a nice digital graphic and a prompt question that is clickable and redirects to another page. Their catalog search is clear at the top of the page and easily navigable, with a dropdown list of search options like: catalogs and articles, USC archives, and advanced search. As you scroll down the page there are different segments for different information, including a news banner, quick links boxes, and an events list at the bottom. There is a lot of information on this page, leading to many different places, however it does not feel overwhelming or complicated to understand as a user. Interestingly the California College of the Arts, CCA, had similarities in the visual set up and operations of their page. There is a single stagnant background image, search bar, and directions to more detailed information easily accessible. However, the page itself is not as engaging. There is limited information and though the layout makes sense there is not a lot of information on their page to fill the space after a single scroll. This is understandable as their user group are most likely far smaller than that of USC, however there is an unfinished and a bit of a forgotten feel to the page, as if it may not be tended to very often.

[Santa Barbara City College](#): Wordpress

This college website is pretty straightforward and minimalistic for the user. On the home page there is an easily visible catalog search bar, with an advanced search field as well. As you continue to scroll down, the information is detailed in different colored blocks, such as: help at your fingertips, quick links, and contact information. Additionally, there is a box linked to the library's events page, virtual chat services, and recent Instagram posts by the library. Each box is saturated with a bold color, with the text and outline of the boxes in white. It is easily navigable and seems to cover all the basic needs and questions their users may have, it does not feel flashy or extravagantly detailed. Everything is in clear language, accessible, and simple.

[UC Berkeley Library](#): LibGuide

I am still getting the hang of LibGuides. However the UC Berkeley one was pretty easy to use and has many that are broken down into specific categories and detailed out from there. Finding the lib guide home search was easy, resulting in a simple bubble list of categories, each category is a drop down list of more specialized topics. As Berkeley is a long established University and library it makes sense that they would have such a detailed and full list of LibGuides for so many specialties. It was a little confusing how I was being directed through all the information as I searched to find a specific page, however, there is a very easy progression navigation line of what you are looking at and all the categories and subcategories that it then falls under, which I particularly enjoyed as I was poking around the pages. I found their [Map and Air Photos](#), under their earth sciences and map libraries guide to be fascinating and sparked my interest! Their library home page is much like that of USC, both in visual layout and content of their page. However, they do have more of a variety of information the university provides. Click [here](#) for the library home page.

Conclusion:

Overall I enjoyed the experience of the USC library the most, it felt like the most tended to and user friendly of all the libraries I explored and had the most direct and simplest flow, while still being accessible and navigable without any previous experience on the page. This is probably a combination of the target user, intention of the space, and a lot of trial to get things working smoothly. The basics across all four libraries were on the same level, regardless of the CMS used, however the application of them varied in different ways across the board. I think a part of this is the creator and understanding of their users, and how to make it the most productive and approachable as possible.

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Mar 8 9:14pm | Last edited Mar 8 9:18pm

Hi,

I didn't want to fill my discussion with screenshots, so I took a short (3.5 minute) screen recording of me talking out the differences in webpage design between <https://hsl.lib.umn.edu/> (Drupal), <https://www.northhavenlibrary.net/> (Wordpress), and https://libguides.bc.edu/research_guides (LibGuides). I mostly talk about design decisions in the homepage layouts, not the site-wide organization of content. All together, I'm mostly convinced the differences are attributable to design decisions and not the systems used to implement those designs.

The file was too big to upload directly, so here's an unlisted YouTube link:
<https://youtu.be/YWQapTYaF9Y>

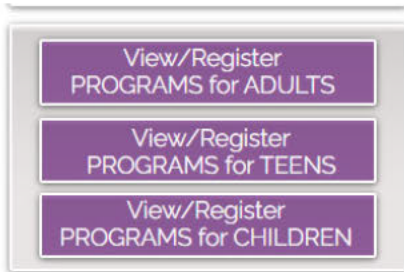


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Mar 8 8:13pm

Hi Everyone, I reviewed the following library websites: [Denver Public Library](#) (Drupal), [North Haven Memorial Library](#) (Wordpress), and [Boston College Library](#) (LibGuides).

All three were fairly user friendly, with the North Haven Memorial being my favorite. The NHML website was similar to that of the library where I work, with the same formatting regarding where things were located. Because of this, I was easily able to navigate and find what I was looking for. In all honesty, I do not think that was due to WordPress but more of the format/template being one I was used to. Our library uses a different service (and I cannot remember the name of it for the life of me), but the layout was similar. Two things in particular I liked was the ease of registering for programming and the what's new section. For our library, you need to go to the event or a specific page to sign up. NHML is much easier and would save patrons some time when registering. I am going to share their method and see if we can follow their lead.



Denver Public Library had a user-friendly website that was simple to navigate. I could easily find how to check an account or get a card, find staff book recommendations, and more. My only thoughts are that having so much information on the front page may result in a lot of it being skimmed and missed, having a more detailed menu at the top may be helpful.

Boston College Library used Libguides. It was still easy to navigate but I think the main reason is that I am used to the format from going to school. I don't necessarily think it would work well for a public library. For public library patrons, I think the long list of texts and subjects may not excite or interest patrons, thus causing them to miss out on needed information.

For North Haven and Denver public libraries, I was able to easily find information and I think both would be helpful to curious patrons and community members, they would be easily to find the resources that they needed.

Our library uses a web platform, where a company has helped design, make changes, and troubleshoot when necessary. For our staff, this works well. I think most would struggle if they had to write code or troubleshoot. This year I joined the Oregon Library Association's conference committee, with my role being the website. I have learned a lot throughout the process and am glad that I had another committee member who was able to help me when things did not make sense. For example, in order to change the font color from gray (the template theme had this color) to black, I had to write code. It was frustrating to have to use code instead of the tool bar I was used to. For our library page, I think we would need to hire a staff member with a background in this.

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Mar 8 8:09pm

Content Management System Comparison

Drupal: [University of Minnesota Health Sciences Library](#)

After reading Aspinall et al. (2021), I was interested to check out the University of Minnesota's Health Sciences Library (n.d.) website designed with Drupal. The simplicity and usability described by Aspinall et al. (2021) is readily apparent, with the four headers and no drop-down menus. In fact, the headers just lead further down the same page, keeping the website structure clean and easy to navigate. The descriptions of links are also worded simply and easy to understand, and I can see how this design is more accessible than most library websites. The lack of visual clutter makes it easy to quickly assess your options on the website. I was surprised by the choice of maroon and gold for the design, even though those are the school colors. They chose a very dark maroon and very light gold, but still, it's a bit of an eyesore. The website features a search box front and center, events integrated into the homepage, and one java-script element: the chat feature at the bottom of the page. Great care and planning was put into make this website as simple to use as possible. It has all the functions and features you need and none you don't.

LibGuides: [Boston College Libraries Research Guides](#)

Boston College Libraries Research Guides (n.d.) is a browsable, searchable, easy to navigate website. There or no bells and whistles, it just shows you the available information in a way that makes it easy to navigate. The layout is visually clean, with different ways to browse and search the available topics.

The only thing I found odd about it was that it had a "Get Help" heading on the left side bar, but that just directed you back up to the "Get Help" menu at the top of the page. The benefit of this is that wherever you look on the page, you'll see information on how to get help. (The "chat with us" widget is on the right of the page). However, why not make something clickable available on the left side bar? It feels like a design flaw to direct someone to click on a link elsewhere on the site.

WordPress: [Orion Township Public Library](#) ↗ ↗

The Orion Township Public Library Home Page (n.d.) was more aesthetically pleasing than either the Health Services Library (n.d.) or the Boston College Research Guides (n.d.) It had an appealing and modern look and large visuals. While this interface is more attractive, it requires a lot more scrolling to see what is available. You need to take the time to navigate through each of the drop down menus and scroll to the bottom of the page to see what your options are. Also, one of the visuals was so wide that I had to zoom out my screen to 80% to see the whole thing (the section with four image/links "for kids, for teens, for adults, for seniors"). Especially since the kids and seniors links were the ones cut off at the edges, I could see this design flaw interfering with usability. The website has all the functions needed by a public library, such as events, catalog search, and room reservations. However, the structure of the website was not simple or intuitive. For example, the suggest a purchase link is hidden under the "Discover" menu, which I would have never guessed. The design of the website seems to have emphasized looks over usability.

Conclusion

Drupal and WordPress seem to offer a lot of the same functionality, especially with the user-contributed add-ons and plug-ins. LibGuides seems more suited to organizing a large number of informational guides, rather than an interactive website for a whole institution. Any of these three web content management system probably has the features you would want for your library website. More important, as demonstrated by Aspinall et al. (2021) and stated explicitly by McDonald & Burkhardt (2019), is the forethought, strategy, and oversight of the website to ensure that it remains accessible and usable.

References:

Aspinall, E., Drayer, A., Ormsby, G., & Neveau, J. (2021). Considered content: A design system for equity, accessibility, and sustainability. *Code4Lib Journal*, 50.


Health Sciences Library. (n.d.) *University of Minnesota*. <https://hsl.lib.umn.edu/> ↗

Home Page. (n.d.) *Orion Township Public Library*. <https://www.orionlibrary.org/> ↗

McDonald, C. & Burkhardt, H. (2019). Library-authored web content and the need for content strategy. *Information technology and Libraries*, 38(3), 8-21.

Research Guides. (n.d.) *Boston College Libraries*. https://libguides.bc.edu/research_guides ↗

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 Mar 8 5:52pm

[Alhambra Library](#) ↗, Drupal

First I looked at Alhambra Library, which is a Public Library in the greater Los Angeles area. They use Drupal for their CMS. I found the website's landing page to be very simple and not too flashy. It does highlight services offered, like Libby, tutoring programs, and their "locker of things," which is near a park and allows patrons to check out family board games and card games to use at the park.

I found it difficult to find the actual catalog search as it is not embedded into the website. The link for the catalog directs to an external site. I also found the events calendar to be comprehensive, but a little plain compared to the other CMS. Although the calendar does contain links to programs and events, they open in a separate tab instead of creating a hover pop up.

They do offer a full "kids page" which highlights kid focused resources and events.

Overall, it is very usable but plain. The way the information is displayed is not super colorful or eye-catching.

[Santa Clarita Public Library](#) ↗, Wordpress

Santa Clarita Public Library is my local library so I'm already quite familiar with their website and services. They have the catalog search embedded in the site header so it's always easy to quickly look up books and resources.

They have a more colorful display of services, with scrolling features, that show things like popular book titles with cover images. They also have an RSS feed embedded that shows their Facebook page, which is useful to show upcoming events.

Their calendar is easy to sort by categories like theme and age of event participants. The calendar has the mouseover feature to show a pop up with more event info, which is convenient.

It feels like there is a lot of room to grow with this CMS because the website has everything all embedded in one, so the possibilities feel pretty endless.

[Arlington Public Library](#) ↗, Libguides

The landing page for Arlington Public Library, which uses Libguides CMS, is actually my favorite of the three. I like how simple it is and there is not much scrolling to do, yet they are still able to have eye-catching graphics and icons that advertise their more unique services like mobile printing, makerspaces,

and passport services.


Like the Wordpress site, this one also has the catalog search embedded in the header so it's easy to find.

Unlike the other two websites, this library doesn't have a dedicated kids page with resources. All of the links on their navigation bar lead to relatively plain "list" type pages. It doesn't feel like there is a lot of room for expansion into a more user-friendly or eye-catching website, but it is also possible they aren't using it to the fullest extent.

Conclusion

For this assignment, I focused on public libraries and compared their ease of use for a common user, like a mom looking for events or fun ideas for things to do with their young children. Overall, I found that all the sites were very functional, but it is hard to tell how much better each given system could be used. The main different that stood out to me is that the Drupal calendar pages weren't as user friendly as the calendars from Wordpress and Libguides.

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 Mar 8 2:03pm

For this discussion I decided to compare and contrast three separate libraries/organizations (public, academic, and special) that have a main theme of history. Please note that they are not listed by CMS.

[Digital Public Library of America](#) WordPress

The immediate factor that I noticed upon visiting the homepage was that it is for research rather than what one might assume to be a more e-book centric site. It is very simplistic in its design even though it boasts (right at the top of the page) that its catalog contains over 50 million records. What I particularly liked about it was the emphasis on the search bar which is its most prominent feature. It gives one the welcoming feeling of an "Ask Me Anything" service. Its homepage also features a list of online exhibitions and primary sources to browse including the history of public libraries in the U.S. The unfortunate downside was that several links, especially ones ("New? Start Here" and View all user guides") that first time visitors would find extremely helpful, ends up returning an error message that the page does not exist and/or was taken down.

[Harvard University Library](#) Drupal

Upon seeing Harvard University Library listed under the Drupal results, I knew that it was the perfect choice for my historical focus. Out of the three, it is definitely my first pick to browse/search through. Although, simplistic in design, it has just the right amount of eye catching photos, colors and fonts. What's more, I liked that its main homepage focus, like DPLA (see above), was on the search bar function. It also provides its visitors with a list of upcoming events/exhibitions just like DPLA as well. Aside from its search bar, as you scroll down the page, it immediately provides one with getting started and/or using the library. This is a very good layout idea for encouraging first time users to continue to explore the site. Lastly, as one continues to scroll down the homepage, its collections lists and other topics of note are perfectly laid out for an easy to access website map without the usage of drop down menus.

[DC History Center](#) LibGuides - [Homepage Link](#)

To be very frank, if this site was only judged based on its list of guides, then it would be the most basic and simplistic layout of all three. However, I decided to go to the homepage in order to make a proper comparative and contrasting observation and report. As opposed to the first two, the center's homepage takes very grand photo usage based approach. While some might find it visually appealing with its ever changing banner at the top, and the rest of its layout, I found that it really hindered my focus. For example, when I tried to read its main message, I kept getting distracted each time the picture in the background shifted. This was a major change from the two prior homepages. Furthermore, it uses very vibrant colors that can be unpleasing to the eye in certain types of lighting. However, it does share its current and upcoming exhibitions like the others. A final point of note, is that it offers its users options to learn more about and/or join their "Totman Fellowship", and even promotes its own magazine.

This was an interesting compare and contrast exercise because as a librarian or website developer, one really has to think about users first and foremost even though we're primarily prone to making decisions based on our personal opinions like I did. Overall, my favorite website from a personal and public standpoint was the Harvard University Library homepage with its easy to follow layout, and announcements.

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 Mar 7 7:41pm

WordPress - [Superior Public Library - Superior, AZ](#)

The Superior Public Library website utilizes a minimalistic WordPress design. In terms of scalability, WordPress is well-suited for a small-town public library. The website features WordPress plugins, such as an events calendar, menus, digital media, and a blog. Upon observation, it appears that the Superior Public Library's events calendar and blog have not been updated since 2013. There were not many library-oriented plugins; however, there are accessible links to the Pinal County Public Library's catalog and events calendar. After exploring this website, it is evident that this library lacks the infrastructure to maintain and regularly update WordPress.

Drupal - [UCLA Library](#)


The library website features multiple menus, media types, posts, and links to various pages. The layout is intuitive and well-organized while also jam-packed with information. A search bar features prominently on the homepage so that users can easily search for articles, books, and more. Users have the option to click on tabs above the search bar for "Site Search" or "UC Library Search." There are also links to A-Z Databases, Course Reserves, and Research Guides. As the user scrolls down the homepage, they will find additional links for technology equipment lending, reserving a study space in the

library, scheduling research consultations with a librarian, data services, accessing online resources, and more. The website also displays library events and features digital and physical collections that are accessible to students and other patrons. Overall, the UCLA Library website showcases how a university library can use the Drupal CMS to digitize library services for thousands of student patrons.

LibGuide - [Your Own Personal Librarian - Fairfax County Public Library](#)

I explored Your Own Personal Librarian, a LibGuide managed by the Fairfax County Public Library. Like most LibGuides, this website is accessible and responsive to users. In this reader's advisory LibGuide, librarians at the Fairfax County Public Library create their own profiles where they discuss genres of interest, favorite books, recommended reading, and their working hours. This LibGuide connects patrons with librarians who share similar reading preferences. I thought this LibGuide was a creative way to help patrons find books independently or receive personalized assistance from library staff.

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 Mar 7 6:08pm | Last reply Mar 8 8:16pm

Hello, for this comparison, I specifically analyzed three public libraries and their unique use of each content management system.

Drupal: [Oakland Public Library](#)

Wordpress: [Corvallis-Benton County Public Library](#)

LibGuides: [Arlington Public Library](#)

Drupal: [Oakland Public Library](#)

Oakland Public Library's website is my favorite of the three I selected. Immediately, the homepage communicates a strong sense of personality and community engagement. Their upcoming events are visually highlighted with engaging graphics, and the blog is prominently featured. As you scroll, the content is layered intentionally, moving from children's programming to teens and then adults. This creates clear content buckets that help users navigate based on the audience.

I appreciated the minimal top navigation menu. It keeps the experience focused and avoids overwhelming users with too many options. The site feels curated rather than crowded. The organization suggests strong content governance and intentional planning. The content appears purposeful and aligned with user needs instead of simply publishing as much information as possible.

Wordpress: [Corvallis-Benton County Public Library](#)

The Corvallis-Benton County Public Library site feels simple and organized. There are no moving elements in the banner, which makes it visually calm and straightforward. I especially like how they highlight featured services and e-resources at the top. This supports task-oriented use and helps patrons quickly access what they likely need.

However, the site lacks a strong visual identity. There are no photos of the actual library building or community members, and the homepage image appears generic. Compared to Oakland's site, this one feels more information than experiential. The functionality is there, but the presentation does not fully communicate the library's personality or community presence.

LibGuides: [Arlington Public Library](#)


The Arlington Public Library uses LibGuides for its research portal. This page is very functional and tool-focused. Resources are grouped by topic, and each bullet point links directly to a database or external site. There is also a dropdown listing databases and a search function for convenience.

However, the page feels very barebones. It functions more as a directory than a carefully planned user experience. It prioritizes access over design. LibGuides works well for quick publishing and organizing subject-specific content, but its design structure feels limited. Without strong templates or intentional layout choices, the content can become a list of links rather than a cohesive and engaging experience.

Overall Comparison:

Across all three platforms, the biggest difference was not really the CMS itself, but how it was used. Each system allows libraries to publish and organize content, but the overall experience depends on how intentional the design and structure are. Oakland's site feels cohesive and engaging, while the other two are more functional and straightforward. I think the CMS provides the framework, but the strategy behind it is what really helps shape the user experience.

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 Mar 8 8:16pm

Hello! I loved your last paragraph and agree completely. At least for Wordpress and Drupal, I think it came down more to the template or format chosen by the individual library. How they chose to lay out the website and the information provided, is what made all of the difference. Two libraries could use the same platforms and the results would be entirely different based on the information they highlighted and where it was put.

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[Jax Skorich \(They/Them\)](#)

Mar 7 5:05pm

Week 7: Content Management System Comparison

For this comparison, I examined Seattle Public Library (Drupal), Arlington Public Library, VA (WordPress), and the University of Texas Libraries LibGuides platform.

[Seattle Public Library's](#) [↪](#) Drupal site reflects the platform's strength in managing large, complex content environments. The homepage integrates layered navigation, service categories, events, catalog access, and account management in a structured way. Drupal's modular architecture supports scalability and governance, which aligns with Nykolaichuk's (2024) discussion of Drupal's suitability for institutions requiring robust content management and structured workflows. The site feels intentionally organized for high-volume public use while maintaining clear pathways for different patron needs.

[Arlington Public Library's](#) [↪](#) WordPress site presents a more streamlined, visually modern interface. WordPress allows flexibility in design and rapid deployment, and Arlington's implementation highlights accessibility features and clear service calls-to-action. However, as McDonald and Burkhardt (2019) note, strong content strategy is essential in WordPress environments to prevent fragmentation. Arlington appears to maintain consistent organization despite WordPress's customization freedom.

[The University of Texas](#) [↪](#) LibGuides platform serves a distinctly instructional purpose. Its standardized layout prioritizes research navigation over aesthetic differentiation. While less customizable, this consistency supports usability and accessibility, aligning with Aspinall et al.'s (2021) emphasis on equity-centered design systems.

Overall, Drupal excels in enterprise-level scalability, WordPress in flexible public engagement, and LibGuides in focused instructional delivery.

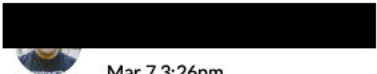
References

Aspinall, E., Drayer, A., Ormsby, G., & Neveau, J. (2021). Considered content: A design system for equity, accessibility, and sustainability. *Code4Lib Journal*.

McDonald, C., & Burkhardt, H. (2019). Library-authored web content and the need for content strategy. *Information Technology & Libraries*, 38(3), 8–21.

Nykolaichuk, N. (2024). Libraries going digital: A guide through useful features for library websites, and how Drupal fits in.

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Mar 7 3:26pm

[Multnomah County Library \(Drupal\):](#) [↪](#)

For my Drupal example, I chose Multnomah County Library's website. This page features a clean layout with a navigation bar at the top, a search bar, links to various resources, news stories, and more. Conveniently, language options are also included at the top and highlight the most spoken languages in the Portland area. Having worked with both Drupal and WordPress before, I immediately noticed their footer design, which is typical of websites built in CMS platforms. That said, this is less of a criticism and more of an observation on the homogeneity of modern website design. The footer provides quick access to contact information, operating hours, social media links, and other information. Overall, the Multnomah County Library website is functional, clean, and very usable.

[Mt. Angel Public Library \(WordPress\):](#) [↪](#)

Keeping with my theme of Oregon institutions, I landed on the Mt. Angel Public Library website when searching for libraries in the state using WordPress. While the library used a Cyclone Themes template to build their website, it contains enough custom assets, artwork, and warm color combinations to really stand on its own. Similar to the Multnomah County Library website, the Mt. Angel Public Library's home page features a navigation bar at the top, current events just below, links to resources, and the same style footer typical of CMS-designed websites. One key difference between the two library websites is that the Mt. Angel Public Library catalog links lead to their regional cooperative, as opposed to being built within the same website, which is understandable for a town of just over 3,000 people. All in all, the Mt. Angel Public Library website is both very functional and charming, which can be a hard balance to achieve for some smaller library systems.

[University of Oregon Libraries \(LibGuide\):](#) [↪](#)

Lastly, for my LibGuide example, I went with the University of Oregon Library's curated lists. I browsed through a few different LibGuides on their page, and the layouts were pretty consistent among the various disciplines. I specifically linked the "HIST 407: History of Books" guide for this example. Like most LibGuides, the home page features a starting guide and navigation bar on the left hand side of the page with this example including background sources, secondary sources, articles & databases, primary sources, and citation management. Contact information and a photo for the librarian who assembled the LibGuide is also included below the navigation bar. In contrast to the two library websites, this LibGuide (and most others) primarily serves an informational purpose—guiding researchers or students to specific resources. Aesthetics are rarely considered in the same capacity as usability here. In this regard, this example and other University of Oregon LibGuides function as intended.

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Mar 6 7:36pm | Last reply Mar 7 5:09pm

[Harvard University Library \(Drupal\)](#) ↗

When users first access the Harvard University library website, they are greeted with a page that is broken down into multiple sections which include: "Using The Library", "Get Your Work Done", "Explore Our Collections", and "What's Happening". Each section has multiple linked pages attached to them that lead users to various resources. For example in the "Using The Library" section, users can learn how to borrow and return materials, request the meeting room, view archival materials, and more! I also like that the Harvard University library included a discovery search on their homepage as it lets users conduct a general search without having to know where to go to find a specific resource. Another aspect of their homepage that I thought was interesting was that on the top banner of the website, there are four drop down menu sections that correspond with the four sections discussed previously. These banner sections are: "Help with...", "Collections", "Events & News" and "Visit & About". While investigating these banner sections, it seems to provide users with the same information. I suppose this would allow users to choose how they would prefer to access information and resources. Overall, the Harvard University Library website was user-friendly! ↗

[Superior Public Library \(WordPress\)](#) ↗

When on the homepage for the Superior Public Library, users are greeted with a page that is much more simplified than the Harvard University Library. The top banner of the SPL includes: "Home, Contact Us, History, Digital Media, and Blog". When clicking on each of these sections, users are directed to a new page. Underneath this top banner, there are four square/rectangular sections in which users can click to gain access to the library catalog, the events calendar, online resources (these are different than the resources located in the digital media tab), a link to Goodreads, and finally a link to photos from the Pinal County Library District which the Superior Public Library is a part of. While I appreciate the simplicity of the website, I feel that having the location of the library located two times on the homepage is redundant. I wish that they had included an Ask Us widget or even highlighted a resource that they think users would use instead of repeating the location twice.

[Library Self-Care and Finals De-Stress Guide by Laura Worden at CSU Channel Islands](#) ↗

This LibGuide, which was created to support users in finding ways to relax while studying for finals is filled with a ton of resources. This guide includes links that take users to different pages with even more links that include articles, videos, and more. I personally liked the "Recreating the Library Experience" and the "Crafts, Coloring, and Puzzle" sections the most. I also appreciate that this guide included a chat feature as well as the different hours the library would be open during finals. With this being said, I did find broken links on this guide which was unfortunate. Overall this LibGuide was user-friendly and provides users with a large quantity of resources and information.

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[Jax Skorich \(They/Them\)](#)

Mar 7 5:09pm

Hiya [REDACTED],

I really liked how you pointed out the overlap between the homepage sections and the banner dropdowns on the Harvard site. I noticed that too, and it made me wonder if they're trying to support different browsing styles—some people scan the page visually, while others go straight to the navigation bar. It's interesting how larger Drupal sites try to guide users in multiple ways at once.

Your note about the Superior Public Library site repeating the location info also stood out to me. I agree that using that space for something like an "Ask Us" feature or highlighted resource could make the homepage feel more useful without losing the simplicity you mentioned. Overall, I thought your comparison did a great job showing how "simple" design can work well, but only when the most important info is front and center.

best,

Jax

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[REDACTED]
Mar 5 1:45pm | Last edited Mar 5 1:47pm

[SWON Libraries Consortium \(Drupal\): Home | SWON Libraries](#) ↗

The SWON website was user-friendly on both desktop and mobile devices, balancing text and image formats to engage with. The design was friendly yet professional with a balance in colors, white space, and information drop-downs clearly marked with relevant information. SWON Libraries included social media connections prominently at the top of the page, as well as a member login option. All the links I clicked on (about eight) worked. There were no accessibility options or light-dark theme options for either the desktop or mobile versions.

[Madison Library Local History Project \(WordPress\): Madison, NH Local History Project | A community archive](#) ↗

This website was a significantly different experience. Right away, I noticed the use of at least three different fonts, and a layout theme that was reminiscent of the early 2000s but not in a fun nostalgic way. I only checked two links here, one of which was under reconstruction; I was a little worried that, given the dated appearance of the website, there might be an old or expired link that might contain a virus or something. Attempting to open this website on a mobile device eventually worked, though it was very slow to load, unlike SWON. It was easier to view it on my mobile device as the desktop version, and then zoom in as needed. There were no accessibility options or light-dark theme options for either the desktop or mobile versions. If the goal of the website is to record local history through volunteer efforts, perhaps updating it a bit would elicit more participation and interest, or at least use of the site.

[Doing It For the Culture: Sneaker Stories \(LibGuide\): Kamala Harris x Chuck Taylor - Doing It For The Culture: Sneaker Stories - Research Portal at Virginia State University](#) ↗

This LibGuide was a delight to view in both desktop and mobile platforms. From on-theme graphics to short text boxes with white space, I found this guide to be engaging, informative, and fun to evaluate. The author(s) of the guide also knew when to edit and did not overload the user with extraneous details, superfluous links, or additional content that was distracting or cluttering up the white space. The articles were easy to navigate, and all the links I tested worked (about six). It maintained a youthful yet organized and deliberate theme, unlike SWON which was more professional though not stuffy. There were no accessibility options or light-dark theme options for either the desktop or mobile versions.

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Mar 4 8:26pm | Last edited Mar 4 8:26pm

Patty's Response: Content Management System Comparison

Drupal: Purdue University Libraries <https://lib.purdue.edu/>

- I chose the Purdue Libraries from the Drupal list because I often use Purdue's Online Writing Lab when looking checking my citations. Purdue library's website looks very professionally made, with a simple gold-and-black running theme, a header with dropdown menus with more options. Its emphasized feature is fitting for an academic library, which is the search bar function. You can quickly search through the catalogs, but you also have quicklinks that can take you to the individual databases, research guides, or online journal lists. At the same time, Purdue neatly maps out potential visitor needs of their websites, identifying users such as graduate students, faculty, and alumni and guests for additional links that the each group is more likely to need. This website reflects a higher-education sense of quality and standard, but also rigidity. This contrasts with the public library site I examined that was made on Wordpress; even through it's simplicity, a warmer tone via coloration, images, and even placement indicates the different role of the library more centered in community than in academia.

Wordpress: Superior Public Library <https://superiorpublib.wordpress.com/>

- The website for the Superior Public Library (SPL) is very simple, but it contrasts greatly with the rigid, academic layout of Purdue University's library. It demonstrates the differences between library types, as Purdue's library serves a very large body of students, faculty, and visitors, while SPL clearly focuses more on the local community, with their community events, homestyle-photographs, and event calendar on primary display. There are a few different apps that were clearly connected to this site, including Flickr (photographs) and Goodreads. In contrast, other apps for different platforms were not featured in Purdue's website. Wordpress makes integration with other applications and websites smooth due to their large web of collaboration, but SPL's chosen apps fit well with the needs of their community. For this site, I appreciated the simplicity and functionality that centers around the community and families that they serve. Were this an academic library, the apps used may have looked very different. However, since it is a local public library, the apps fit well, and that is the contrast between Purdue and SPL.

Libguide: Harvard Libguides <https://guides.library.harvard.edu/>

- Libguides serve a much different purpose than the front-face of a library, often embedded in the quick links of the library homepage. I did notice that Harvard's Libguides are a bit hard to find since they don't seem to be prominently featured on the homepage, and even after clicking several links that seemed like they might lead to research guides, I could not find the Libguides page. I reached their page directly through Libguides featured sites. When I finally reached Harvard's Libguides, I appreciated the concise and easy to navigate interface. They break down Libguides by library, by subject, and by type, giving succinct options to search by based on my own need. Guides by subject was simply alphabetically organized, and guides by type had just three options to help the user simplify what they might be looking for. In terms of comparing function, users would have to work with the given menus on the Libguide and click through, versus typing something in like you might in a catalog. It is clear that the Libguide serves a completely different purpose for its users than the main pages made with Wordpress or Dupral, and serve more specifically for research needs or general guidance tips. Harvard had many guides to choose from but the simple layout did help make it feel less overwhelming and more intuitive.

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Mar 3 3:37am

[Los Angeles Public Library - Drupal](#)

The Los Angeles Public Library has a colorful design. There is a headline of parent categories for patrons to search through regarding books and online resources, education resources, services, programs, events, as well as a log in for active patrons and a link to apply for a library card. Additionally, something that I particularly appreciate about the Los Angeles Public Library's website is how there are photos included in the standalone links within the homepage. Overall, the Los Angeles Public Library website proves they utilized their opportunities to provide links, dropdowns, links embedded in photos, and so on within their website.

[Unified Astronomy Thesaurus through the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics John G. Wolbach Library - WordPress](#)

The Unified Astronomy Thesaurus is a resource provided by the Harvard Library for Astrophysics. Thus, this WordPress website is an index of astrophysics vocabulary. It provides definitions of astrophysics vocabulary and with each term, it may provide broader, narrower, and related concepts and alternate terms for users to select if desired. Although, if a term is "too narrow" a definition is not provided but the link to a broader concept. In general, this website is very easy to navigate through a provided index, a hierarchy of topics, or a direct search within the website's index.

[UC Davis Library - LibGuides](#)

I found UC Davis Library's research guides to be the most difficult to navigate. Some guides provided direct links to applicable databases within the main body of text. Contrastingly, within the main body of text, other guides had a welcome and a quick summary of the library research guide and parent categories of databases, journals, books, etc were off to the side. On every page is a contact to the respective department's librarian. For example, Mathematics & Statistics were provided contact information to a specific undergraduate STEM librarian and to a specific graduate and post-doc STEM librarian. Overall, every page felt like it was written by a different author with different goals and intentions rather than utilizing a universal design for the sake of consistency.

Comparisons:

Each website I chose had completely different designs and outlines. The Los Angeles Public Library Drupal website was the most thought out and has the most going on in comparison to the two other websites with a substantial amount of information right off the bat on the homepage. This website fully utilizes the CMS tools to create an interactive and informative website for their patrons. The Unified Astronomy Thesaurus WordPress website was the most straightforward to navigate and had the simplest design since the website's goal is clear as only a thesaurus. Next, the UC Davis Library LibGuide purpose was strictly as a research resource for UC Davis students. I would argue that the Unified Astronomy Thesaurus WordPress and the UC Davis Library LibGuide are the most similar as the terms within the Thesaurus and the research guides within the UC Davis Library are provided as an index. However, the UC Davis LibGuide was the most difficult to navigate since those who worked on the underdeveloped research guides did not fully utilize LibGuide's design potential.

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Mar 2 2:33pm

Hello everyone,

For this discussion, I've decided to compare three public library websites using different CMSs: Los Angeles Public Library, Patagonia Public Library, and Eugene Public Library. Here are my observations and comparisons:

[Los Angeles Public Library - Drupal](#) ↗

Observations: The first thing I noticed on this page was the amount of information and links packed into the home page. A slide show with hyperlinked promotional content for library events, dropdown menus with additional links to other services pages, an upcoming events menu with hyperlinked information. If you scroll down the page, there are even more links (some of which repeat the same information found at the top of the page from the dropdown menus). And found at the very bottom of the page are book recommendations.

Comparisons: In comparison to the WordPress, Drupal seems to be the more structured with their templates. Although this layout may be unique to LAPL, it seems that their website follows a very strict template. While WordPress is a little more flexible in breaking away from the template. I find Drupal to be very similar to LibGuides in that LibGuides also follows a very strict format and makes customization difficult.

[Patagonia Public Library - WordPress](#) ↗

Observations: The complete opposite of LAPL, the Patagonia Public Library (PPL) has an extremely minimal homepage. With some dropdown menus at the top of the page, a hyperlinked photo that leads to their library catalog, a tabbed box including tabs titled: *This Month*, *Story Walk*, *Culture Passes*, *Libby*, *Kanopy*, and *You Tube*, and a box with their hours of operation. Further down the page are two additional photo boxes, one of which is hyperlinked to their events calendar (which I only found out by hovering over the photo because the box is unlabeled), and an illustration that isn't hyperlinked to anything.

Comparisons: Focusing solely on the CMS, I find that WordPress has the most customizable templates amongst the three. As it seems that this library may have started from a blank template and added what little information they had to it. I feel that this speaks to how easy it is for new users to build a website using WordPress. As even those with minimal web design experience can put together a functional website, as LibGuides can be a little complicated to use for a user who is unfamiliar with it.

[Eugene Public Library - LibGuides](#) ↗

Observations: Acting as a sort of site directory, the Eugene Public Library LibGuide features a list of links that either redirects users to the proper page on their website (such as the Teen link taking users to the Teen page) or takes users to a page within the LibGuide (such as Audiobooks or Auto Repair). I find the way they integrated the LibGuide into their webpage interesting as there is no direct link to just the LibGuide, but rather select pages of their website are hosted on LibGuides. Most notably, their book recommendations have their own LibGuide which is integrated into the library website. Overall, I think it's interesting to see their website and LibGuide work in tandem.

Comparisons: As mentioned throughout my comparisons, LibGuides have a very rigid and recognizable structure, leaving little room for customization when comparing it to WordPress and Drupal. Speaking from personal experience, I find LibGuides to be a little difficult to learn as some of the features (such as adding a photo) seem to be a little overly complicated and counterintuitive (again, this is just my personal opinion).

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Feb 26 11:09pm

Here are my selected websites, my thoughts on each, and a final comparison of what is working and what isn't while contrasting each website's design.

[Santa Barbara City College - Wordpress](#) ↗

The Santa Barbara City College website meets users with images of students, a headline of quick links (Career and Academic Pathways, Apply and Enroll, Pay for College, etc.), and a one stop shop for all library links in a squared off colorful design. There's an embedded chat function early on the website, a rotating calendar of events, and many links available from the home page.

[San Jose Public Library - Drupal](#) ↗

The San Jose Public Library homepage has a more spread display of links, articles and information. The images are varied in color and style from photographs and logos. The link to library cards, "get started" page, and "more events" are highlighted out of all the informational highlights. The headlining bar of options includes dropdowns for resources including "Locations," "Books & eResources," "Learning," and "Kids & Teens." Users need to scroll to reach the total of the long homepage.

[Boston College - LibGuides](#) ↗

The LibGuides page for Boston College Libraries is simple and direct in its display of information. There is a highlighted search bar and chat function. Heading the main page is "Starting Points for Subject Research" which in turn sorts into further sections for subject research. The minimalist design assists in the functionality of this page.

Compare and Contrast

The designs of the Drupal and Wordpress contrast greatly with the outlines of LibGuides. The public library websites that were designed with these CMS's focus on images, logos, and catching the attention of users with colors and photographs. LibGuides is streamlined into the starting process of research and finding sources. Between Wordpress and Drupal, the styles of these specific websites were not egregiously different. Each flowed comfortably between users changing needs, focusing on immediate needs on the homepage. I found the longer scroll setup on the Drupal website to be a bit cumbersome, but I also speculate that it is not an exclusive attribute to Drupal design. Overall, the focus of a website should determine the design, and these CMS's for these three websites served their purposes enough to be functional and attractive to the user.

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