From Open Source to on Your Phone: Using Drupal to Develop the Library's Mobile Website

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Library

An increasing number of users are visiting the library website through mobile devices. Library resources such as electronic databases are now available as mobile websites, apps, or both. Web metrics in 2011 showed less than 1% of visitors were using mobile devices to visit the library website. Statistics for 2012 have showed mobile users now make up 9% of total visitors.¹

The number of Americans who own a smartphone

The number of Americans who own a cell phone

The increase of tablet ownership between December 2011 - February 2012

Mobile Device Visits
October 2011 - October 2012

56% Increase of visitors between 2011 and 2012

70% Number of visitors out of mobile users who use iPads

< 1%

Number of visitors who use non-iOS (iPad, iPhone) devices

Open-source
The library mobile site is built on open-source. Open-source is a philosophy or model that promotes the free-sharing of software. It is lightweight, flexible and most importantly, cost-effective. Here is a selected list software the library uses:

- Linux (Operating System)
- Apache (Web Server Software)
- Drupal (Content Management System)
- Piwik (Web Metrics and Statistics)
- Clickbeat (Mouse Click Tracker)
- MediaWiki (Wiki Platform)
- WordPress (Blogging Platform)
- WebMin (Web Administration)
- myphpadmin (PHP Administration)

The Mobile Site - http://m.library.citytech.cuny.edu
The mobile site utilizes a user-centered design, where users’ needs are built into the interface. For instance, the top content of the library’s website is used as the foundation of the library’s mobile site. The code used to present the site, jQuery Mobile, is widely used by different browsers, hardware devices, and platforms to maximize compatibility.

18,937*
The number of available Drupal modules as of June 2011

86
The number of Drupal modules the library uses

7
The number of pages available on the library’s mobile site

Drupal
Drupal is an open-source, modular content management system used to collaborate and create web pages. The library mobile website utilizes Drupal 7, which is customized specifically for the library’s needs. Electronic resources management is done through Drupal, using the web browser. ² A custom PHP script allows eBooks added to the library’s traditional site to be automatically added the mobile site.¹ Another script automatically redirects users visiting the desktop site to the mobile site.

References:
¹ Data: Statista
⁴ Tidal, J. (2012), Tubhorn: Making a PHP File the Electronic Resources Manager's Tool of Choice, Presentation at the 2012 New England Conference on New Media, Boston, MA.
⁵ Tidal, J. (2011), Libraries and Mobile Development: Successes and Failures, Presented at the Coalition of College and University Library Directors Annual Conference, Las Vegas, NV.

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