




Guiding Your Users to Library Resources: a Case Study of LibGuides at Charles Sturt University

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Approximately seventy per cent of Charles Sturt University (CSU) students study through online mode and receive little to no on-campus instruction. On-campus students are increasingly taught through a combination of online and face-to-face delivery (blended learning). Hence the provision of online resources to support learning and teaching at Charles Sturt University (CSU) is integral to supporting CSU students to achieve their study goals. Being information literate is one of the key Graduate Learning Outcomes CSU aims for its undergraduate students to achieve upon graduation from a CSU course. LibGuides¹ is utilised by CSU Library as a tool to support information literacy online. This paper will outline the purposes for which the LibGuides platform is used at CSU, and briefly examine more affordable alternatives to LibGuides as a launchpad for investigating suitable product(s) for the Library users within your own organisation.

LibGuides is a product developed by Springshare designed for libraries to easily share information online on just about any topic imaginable (Springshare, 2013). Library staff can compile information from a wide variety of internet sources into a guide, as well as incorporating their own written content. A LibGuide can be customised to contain as few or as many pages as needed. Boxes of content are added to each page within a LibGuide. The type of content that can be added to a box within a LibGuide is limited only by your imagination. Types of content that can be added include images, videos, embedded web pages, Word and Excel documents, PowerPoint

¹ libguides.csu.edu.au



presentations, Twitter feeds and widgets developed by third-party providers. LibGuides are mobile-device compatible and can be viewed on any PC, tablet or mobile phone. LibGuides don't require specialist coding knowledge, for example HTML or CSS – although there is provision to use this if desired. LibGuides provides the structure to add content using a WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) editor. The WYSIWYG editor doesn't require specialist training as it is intuitive and easy to use.

Prior to the purchase of a LibGuides subscription in 2013, CSU Library relied on a central Library web team with specialist web editing skills to upload all web content. Uploading and editing content was typically a laborious and time-consuming process involving at least two staff members. As a result of the purchase of LibGuides, all Library staff members can now potentially create their own web content without the necessity of a web team mediating the process. LibGuides content can be dynamic and follow a learner's natural style rather than forcing the user through predetermined steps created using HTML. That is, learners don't start at point A and finish at point Z. Rather, they will progress through online content in a LibGuide according to their personal needs and interests. Instead of having to navigate through an entire Library website, users can readily navigate through resources presented in a visually appealing manner specific to their discipline within a LibGuide.

LibGuides is an online content management system that has many uses. At CSU Library LibGuides are branded 'Library Resource Guides' and are used for the following purposes:

Topic Guides containing discipline specific information. Staff use a template that contains generic information about Library services, finding and evaluating resources, etc, and then add discipline-specific information relevant to the topic area. Statistics show that the top three topic guides in 2016 at CSU Library are: Law (7900 views), Library and Information Studies (2094 views) and Business and Management Studies (1808 views);

Theology and Religious Studies: Books & Articles

Enter Search Words

BOOKS & ARTICLES
JOURNAL DATABASES
WEB RESOURCES
REFERENCE RESOURCES
LATEST NEWS
STUDY SUPPORT

THEOLOGY & RELIGIOUS STUDIES

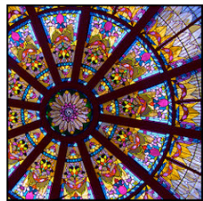


Photo Credit: ecstasiatist via Compfight cc

PRIMO SEARCH

Primo Search

Search Catalogue


Search All Books, journals, DVDs & more Articles

[Renew my loans](#) [What is Primo Search?](#)

- Use Primo Search to find books and articles from most databases.
- To search all subject specific databases, use the **Journal Databases tab**.
- Use the **Reference Resources tab** to find subject dictionaries and encyclopaedias.

INTRODUCING PRIMO SEARCH

Watch this short video to get started using Primo Search. For more help see the Primo Search Help Guide.




HELP FROM A LIBRARIAN

- Use the Ask a Librarian form
- Use the Live-Chat service
- Call 1800 808 369

QUICK LINKS

- [Library home](#)
- [Student Home](#)
- [How to use your Library](#)

FEATURED RESOURCE



- **Twentieth Century Religious Thought**

Twentieth Century Religious Thought is an online collection of seminal works and archival materials related to key worldwide religious thinkers, from the early 1900s until the turn of the 21st century.

This resource is being produced in "Volumes", the first of which is Volume 1:

Theology and Religious Studies Topic Guide <http://libguides.csu.edu.au/theology>

Research Skills Guides containing information that is tailored to a specific subject taught at CSU. Research Skills Guides contain information designed to assist students completing assessments within that subject in which information literacy is one of the intended learning outcomes of an assessment (for example, finding x number of peer-reviewed journal articles). Research Skills Guides are embedded into subject course management system sites. Research Skills Guides form part of the Library's scaffolded approach to teaching information literacy to CSU students. Students in first year, for example, would be expected by the end of first year to be able to perform basic searches in Primo Search (Library catalogue), whereas by third year the same student would be expected to be able to perform more sophisticated journal database searches. This approach is thus reflected in the design and content of Research Skills Guides. Research Skills Guides can be designed around specific subject assessments and include an assessable component such as a quiz. Research Skills Guides are designed to be used as stand-alone tutorials or supported by other measures such as library classes. A study by Georgia Southern University Library in the United States found that tutorial-type LibGuides provided the most effective learning outcomes in comparison to topic-style LibGuides (Baker, 2014).

HCS102 Library Research Skills Guide: Primo Search

- INTRODUCTION
- GETTING STARTED
- SEARCHING THE LITERATURE
- EVALUATING INFORMATION
- REFERENCING

PRIMO SEARCH

PRIMOSEARCH is CSU Library's discovery tool. Primo Search searches most of the CSU Library collection, including:

- Most of the Library's online journal articles and newspaper content;
- Books, DVDs, journals and other physical items found in the library;
- Many of the Library's eBooks; and
- CSU research papers and theses in CRO (CSU Research Output)

Tip: Distance Education (DE) students can have hard copy items posted to them free of charge. CSU Library includes a reply paid label for DE students living in Australia so return postage is free, too.

OVERVIEW

Watch the video demonstration to find out more about using Primo Search to access online journal articles and ebooks.

How to:
Find eBooks & articles in Primo Search

DIVISION OF LIBRARY SERVICES

PRIMO SEARCH

Primo Search **Subject Reserve**

Search Catalogue

Search All Books, journals, DVDs & more Articles

[Renew my loans](#) [What is Primo Search?](#)

- Use Primo Search to find books and articles from most databases.
- To search all subject specific databases, use the **Journal Databases** tab.
- Use the **Reference Resources** tab to find subject dictionaries and encyclopaedias.


TRY IT NOW

HCS102 Research Skills Guide <http://libguides.csu.edu.au/hcs102>

General purpose guides have a more general audience and are not tailored to a specific discipline or year level. Statistics show that the top three general purpose guides at CSU are: Endnote, Primo Search Help and Copyright.



CSU HOME CSU NEWS LIBRARY CURRENT STUDENTS STAFF CONTACT CSU

Division of Library Services 

Charles Sturt University Library / Library Resource Guides / EndNote X7 / What is EndNote?

EndNote X7: What is EndNote?

WHAT IS ENDNOTE? GETTING STARTED BUILDING YOUR LIBRARY **ENDNOTE & WORD** REFERENCING STYLES ENDNOTE ONLINE, IPAD APP SHARING YOUR LIBRARY

MANUALS, SUPPORT & HELP

WHAT IS ENDNOTE?

EndNote can be used to manage your references, insert citations in Microsoft Word documents and store and annotate your PDFs.

For more information see the *Thomson Reuters* web site:

- System requirements
- Microsoft Word compatibility details


To **download** EndNote, click on the **Getting Started** tab.

How to use this Guide

The Guide has been designed to alert users to key options and functions in EndNote X7, with more detailed instructions provided in the PDF Manual linked throughout. Alternatively, you can access the complete CSU EndNote X7 User Manuals via the **Manuals, support & help** tab.

In order to use EndNote effectively with the APA 6th referencing style, students should consult the Referencing at CSU guide.


A QUICK OVERVIEW



EndNote X7 Overview

ENDNOTE X7


Overview



[Next: Getting started >>](#)

General purpose guide: Endnote X7 <http://libguides.csu.edu.au/endnote>

Staff guides are designed to provide information about providing Library services for CSU Library staff use only. Staff Guides are set to ‘private’ and are not publicly accessible or searchable through search engines, and are only accessible with a known URL. For example, the Reference Toolbox which is used by staff providing reference services, a guide on finding and using images in the creation of online resources, and procedures for Access Services staff. Links to these guides are provided through a private Library Staff Resources webpage.

Division of Library Services 

Charles Sturt University Library / Library Resource Guides / Reference toolbox / Home

Reference toolbox: Home

A guide to providing reference services to CSU library clients, and who to contact for assistance with answering queries.

HOME PRIMO SEARCH JOURNAL DATABASES **ASK A LIBRARIAN SYSTEMS INFO** REFERENCE INTERVIEWS TROUBLESHOOTING SOCIAL MEDIA REFERENCING

ENDNOTE KNOWLEDGE DIRECTORY

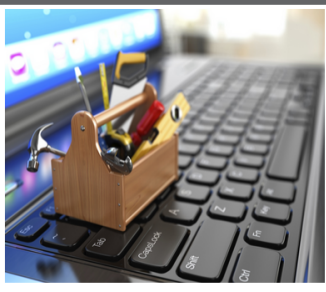
CONTENTS

- Primo Search
- Databases
- Ask a Librarian Services
- Reference interviews
- Troubleshooting
- Social Media
- Referencing
- Endnote
- Knowledge Directory

FEATURED RESOURCES


- Law CoP notes
- NEW! How to handle multiple virtual service enquiries- a flowchart
- Dealing with Difficult Client Queries CoP notes
- Collection Services Contact List (updated 14/4/16)
- eBooks Community of Practice 3/9/15
Information session presented by Karthik Babu on Proquest eBooks platform, specific eBook licensing models and how they affect the user experience and frequently asked questions.

IMAGE



Any updates required?
If you spot an errors in this guide, please contact Carla Daws cdaws@csu.edu

Staff guide: Reference Toolbox



CSU Library Resource Guides can be created by staff members with a LibGuides account. Staff are allocated one of two types of access levels: Standard and Administration. Staff with Standard Level access can create new guides and edit guides they own. Staff with Administration privileges can edit any CSU Library Resource Guide and reallocate ownership of any guide to a new owner. A team of staff with Administration privileges is responsible for regularly checking that hyperlinks within Library Resource Guides work and that content within the guides is up-to-date, and for the creation of new topic guides. Only a select few staff members can make full use of administration rights. For example, the Library's Information Literacy coordinator (who is responsible for overseeing the creation of Library Resource Guides at CSU Library) can generate statistics on usage of all Library Resource Guides and make changes to the overall colour, font, layout and themes in LibGuides.

One of the major benefits of using LibGuides is the ability to share and reuse content between guides, both within the institution and with other institutions that use LibGuides. This is an efficient and time-saving means of creating online content. This can be achieved in two ways. The first method is through copying content from another guide. When one staff member sees content that they like in one subject tutorial, for example, they can reuse that content within their own guide. The shared content can be a box or even a whole page. The other method is through the use of a template that users can then customise. CSU Library uses a template for its topic guides. Whilst LibGuides offers a level of creativity for users by allowing them to create their own unique guide content, the use of templates and shared content also allows an institution's guides to be more uniform in appearance, thereby being recognisably 'branded' as belonging to an institution. At present CSU Library staff have some freedom to choose tab colours within Research Skills Guides. In future, however, there are plans to make Library Resource Guides at CSU more uniform by introducing more cohesive themes. For example, use of the University Faculty colours in LibGuides page and box tabs in order to make Research Skills Guides more identifiably 'course' resources rather than 'Library' resources.

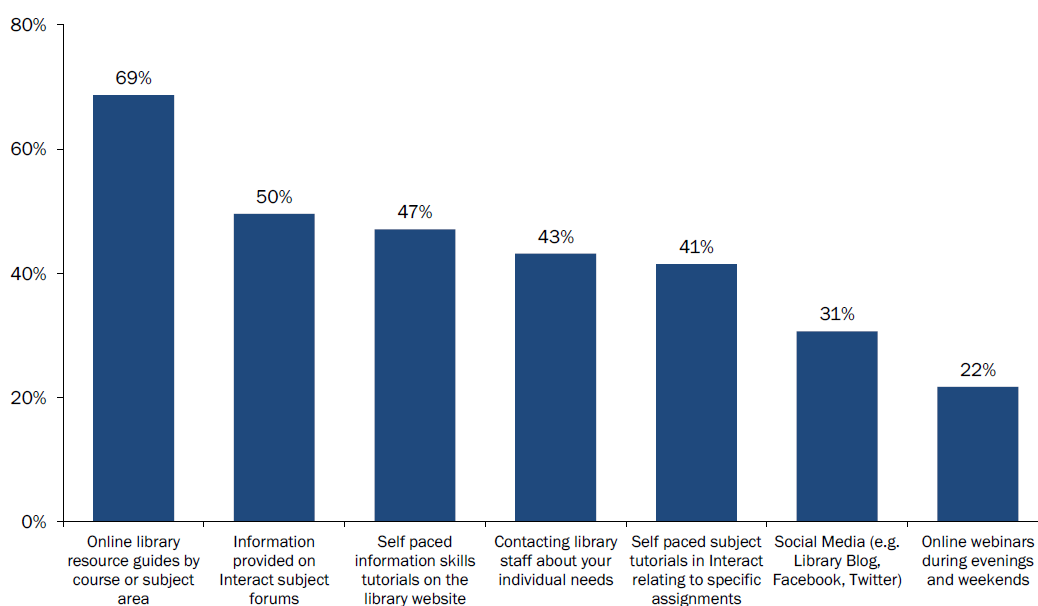
In addition to facilitating efficient content creation, LibGuides also offer many benefits to students in the area of information literacy. Whilst undergraduate students who first start university usually know how to perform a Google search, those same skills are not necessarily transferrable to searching Library resources such as catalogues and journal databases, which have more sophisticated search parameters than Google. Academic libraries have attempted to address the issue through the introduction of discovery tools that search across multiple physical and electronic



resources within the one search interface. Discovery tools are designed to be more intuitive to use with more ‘Google-like’ simplified search interfaces. In our experience at CSU, however, we have found that students still require information literacy instruction in order to improve the precision and relevance of results found through CSU Library’s discovery tool, Primo Search. Similar support is also required for the effective use of journal databases. Subsequently, most of CSU Library’s Library Resource Guides, specifically Research Skills Guides and topic guides, contain information about how to locate scholarly information using resources such as Primo Search, journal databases and Google Scholar.

Library Resource Guides are used as the primary method of information literacy instruction at CSU, which may be supported by an online or face-to-face library class. Unlike the information presented in a class, the student can refer back to the information in a Library Resource Guide as many times as needed, which improves retention of content. Inclusion of an assessable quiz that tests a student’s understanding of subject tutorial content improves use of, and engagement with, Research Skills Guides. Results from the 2014 InSync survey demonstrate that CSU Library Topic Guides are the preferred method for students to learn about using Library resources (69 per cent of respondents), and 47 per cent of respondents prefer to use Research Skills Tutorials (see graph below).

How would you prefer to learn about using library resources?





More recent preliminary research from surveys conducted by Librarians embedded into CSU subjects indicates that most students find Library Resource Guides to be highly useful and relevant and are a popular choice with academics. At present, recent statistics on the success of the Library's Library Resource Guides are not yet available to include in this paper.

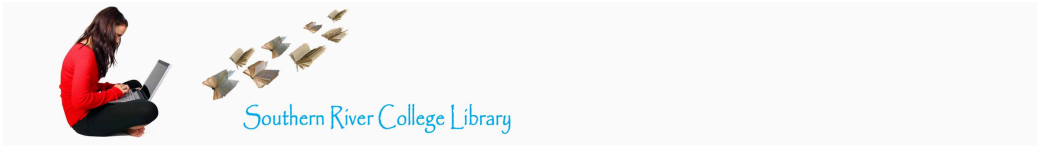
Whilst LibGuides offers many benefits to both staff and students it is not without significant cost. The total cost of LibGuides is dependent on the number of full-time equivalent students at an institution. There are also additional components that may be purchased for use with LibGuides, such as an add-on server/back-up module, a mobile site builder and a surveys and tests module called LibWizard. Whilst LibGuides offers many benefits to libraries and their users the cost may nonetheless be prohibitive to some organisations. We'll now look at some of the other free and low-cost alternatives to LibGuides that provide similar functionality.

Library Course Builder

Developed by the University of Rochester, Library Course Builder (LibCB) (<https://sourceforge.net/projects/libcb/>) is an open source program that allows library staff to curate webpages without requiring knowledge of HTML. Librarians fill out a web form to add print and electronic resources to a webpage. Libraries will need Cold Fusion server and Microsoft SQL backend in order to implement LibCB, hence there are financial constraints to using this program. The use of LibCB beyond the creation of basic lists of resources is very limited in comparison to LibGuides, which offers a wider range of applications.


SubjectsPlus

SubjectsPlus (<http://www.subjectsplus.com/>) is a freely available product developed from what was originally called PirateSource by East Carolina University's Joyner Library, and modified and maintained by Andrew Darby of Ithaca College in the US (Corrado, 2008). SubjectsPlus allows libraries to create subject guides, A-Z database lists and staff lists and can be integrated with the Summon discovery tool.


Southern River College Library

About the library



The library is a place to relax, read, hang out, study, game, create and more. **We are open on most school days** between 9.15 am and 4.00 pm and all students and staff are

Electronic resources




Thanks to a partnership between Southern River College and the City of Gosnells' libraries, students can now access a wide range of resources for free, online anywhere they have

Made by Ms Coole

For questions and feedback regarding this guide, please contact shiarne.coole@education.wa.edu.au

About Ms Coole



Example of a Library that uses SubjectsPlus: Southern River College, Western Australia
<http://southernrivercollege.wa.edu.au/subsplus/subjects/guide.php?subject=About>

Blogs

Many libraries have experimented with using WordPress to create subject guides. WordPress has hundreds of plugins and widgets that can be used in combination to create unique web content tailored to user needs. Some initial investment in time is required to set up a template and to ensure all plugins and widgets display correctly. The WordPress community offers extensive support via forums to assist with this process. As with LibGuides, WordPress content requires close monitoring to ensure that content remains up-to-date, however WordPress requires additional effort to guard against plugin and widget discontinuation to ensure content continues to display correctly. WordPress may not be suitable to use in a library with larger staff numbers as it requires significant commitment in time and training on an initial and ongoing basis. The use of WordPress requires a champion to ensure its continued use. This was found to be the case at the University of Mary Washington Library (Jones & Farrington, 2013), which experimented with using WordPress at one of its Libraries and has subsequently implemented LibGuides. However, for a smaller library with fewer staff members and a smaller budget, WordPress may be a highly suitable and affordable choice.

Wikis

There are many free wiki platforms available: Wikia, WikiSpaces, MediaWiki, to name a few. Wikis offer users the benefit of having a familiar navigational structure for anyone who has ever used Wikipedia. Wikis are fast and easy to use for both creators and browsers alike, are intuitive to use and require little to no training.



Course Management Systems

Course Management Systems (CMS) are another alternative to using LibGuides. Institutions that do not have a CMS can utilise open source alternatives such as Moodle. Uploading content into a CMS offers the benefit of providing information about discipline-specific library resources directly within subject and course sites.

Conclusion

LibGuides can be used creatively and in many different ways. At CSU Library LibGuides are tailored to cater to the needs of specific user groups. LibGuides offer many benefits to staff such as time savings through more efficient content creation and reuse. The use of LibGuides at CSU benefits students by supporting their learning by facilitating the development of information literacy skills. There are many freely available and open-source alternatives available that have similar features in common with LibGuides and can potentially provide similar benefits to libraries and their users. This paper has provided a starting point for you to explore the possibilities LibGuides and its alternatives can offer, and to work out which product/s will best meet the needs of your users.



References

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