

ABSTRACT

Libraries' Web presence is becoming more essential nowadays than ever because more library resources, services, and instruction are accessible through libraries' websites. The Web is always evolving since its birth. Meanwhile, it is common for libraries to spend years on a website redesign project. Last time, the Texas Tech University (TTU) Libraries launched its website in 2008. It took more than five years for the Libraries to redesign, develop, and launch the site.

After the new position, Web Librarian, was filled in September 2015, a new website redesign started. In August 2017 just prior to the start of the fall semester, the TTU Libraries launched its new site. The redesign took less than two years, and it mainly included content repository development, content audit, and content update, homepage redesign, navigation system improvement, and content management system (CMS) selection. During this period, several usability testing methods, such as card sorting, XO test, etc. have been adopted to make sure the new design meets the patrons' expectations. In addition, the usability testing results and the usage statistics from Google Analytics were both referred, especially when making decisions on homepage real estate allocation. Beyond that, the Library website were migrated from PHP pages to the content management system, OmniUpdate, which the Texas Tech University has utilized since 2014. The new website employed the University's most recent Web template to ensure better accessibility, security, and responsiveness. The adoption of OmniUpdate and the University's template have reduced the Libraries' workload on website maintenance. After the website went live, we have kept both the old and the new sites running to make sure the users would be able to locate resources and information during the transition.

CONTACT

Jingjing Wu
Web Librarian
Texas Tech University Libraries
Email: jingjing.wu@ttu.edu
Phone: (806) 834 3991

INTRODUCTION

In August 2017 just prior to the start of the fall semester, the Texas Tech University (TTU) Libraries launched its new site, which took less than two years to redesign and develop.

Where Did We Start

In September 2015, the TTU Libraries homepage was on a University template at least 3 versions earlier than the current one.

On the Web server:

- 55,500 files; 6,881 folders; 11.28 GB,
- Of which, 830 Web pages

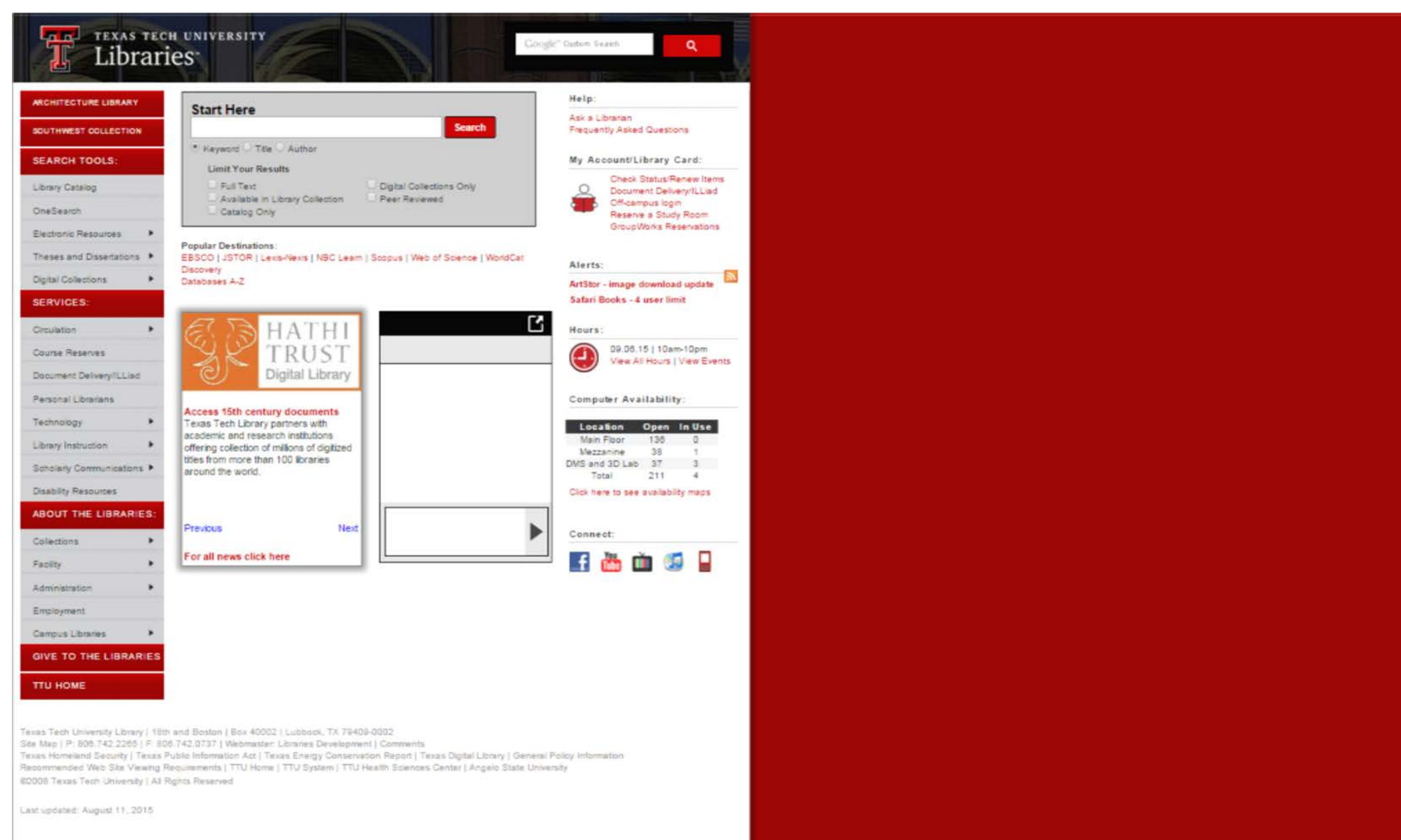


Figure 1. Screenshot of TTU Libraries Homepage in Sep. 2015

Objectives

- More useful and usable for target users
- Adopt the University's most recent template for security and accessibility purpose
- Easier to maintain, especially by content owners

- Focus on critical issues you are facing
- Your website cannot be perfect
- Continually improve your website to meeting evolving needs

STEPS

Step 1: Content Preparation

Content is always critical to a website. So, I started from content preparation. I developed content inventory, performed content audits, archived around 500 obsolete pages, clarified content ownership, and collaborated with content owners on webpage updates.

- 23,515 files, 3,527 folders; 5.56 GB
- Of which, 340 Web pages (113 news stories)
- 16 content providers

Step 2: Content Management System (CMS) Selection and Content Migration

Most pages on the old website were static PHP pages. Adobe Contribute was used by content owners for page editing. Some content owners did not even install the software due to its learning curve and nonintuitiveness. Switching to a CMS could reduce the development and maintenance workload as well as keep consistency in branding and look & feel.

We compared the features, security, maintenance and availability of support of Drupal and OmniUpdate (OU), and selected OU because of the availability of resources and technical support as well as the ease to meet the University's IT requirements.

Most old website content were automatically migrated to OU under the help of the University IT.

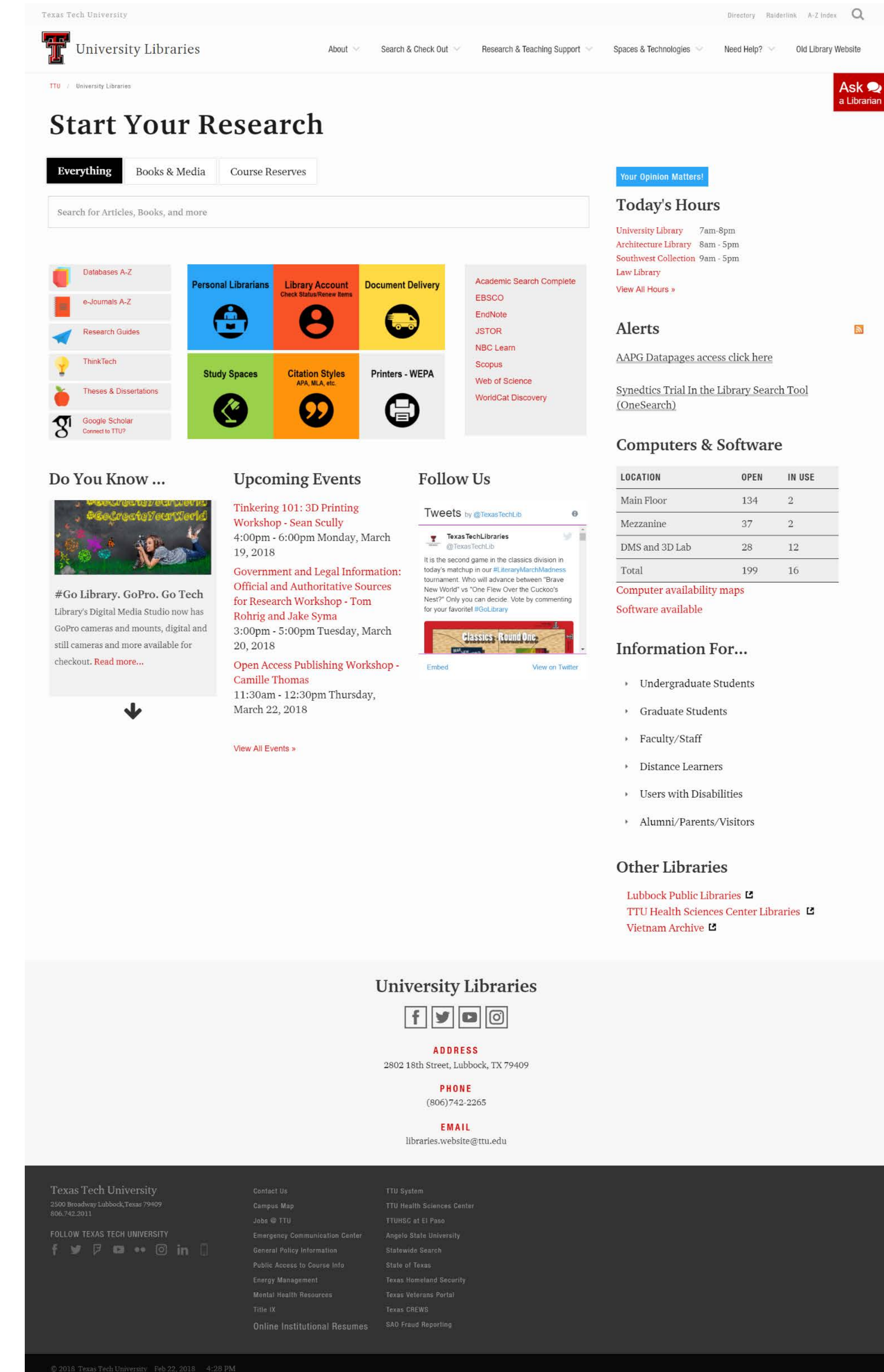
Step 3: Usability Testing and Usage Analytics

- Card Sorting: pilot exercises with librarians and student workers helped streamline the procedures and selection of terms used for official tests. 13 undergraduate and graduate students attended the tests. Based on the results, the website navigation (menu) system were changed from department-oriented to service and resource based.
- Homepage X/O Testing: over 150 students, faculty, staff, and community users attended homepage X/O testing.
- Usage Analytics: page view data from Google Analytics were analyzed. Homepage real estate decisions were made based on usage data and the results from homepage X/O testing.

Step 4: Launch Preparation

- Duplicated old website and requested a new CNAME and SSL certificate it to keep it running without URL conflicts with the help of the Library IT
- Redirect pages if needed.

LAUNCH NEW SITE



AFTER LAUNCH

- Collect feedback from target users and conduct usability testing and further study
- Update standalone applications such as library map, computer availability, to be better integrated into the new website

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