

Music Library Instruction on the Web

By Vivien Taylor
Queen's University Music Library
<http://stauffer.queensu.ca/webmus/>

We are all being encouraged to exploit the internet because it's available as a tool in most libraries today. The electronic medium provides us with a means of promoting our services worldwide and self-publishing our bibliographies and library instruction materials. Although we have mostly created them for local use, why not put them out there (if it's not really much extra effort on our part) in case others can benefit.

When your site is ready, just request indexing by search engines such as Alta Vista and Infoseek. Then, when you take material from the net, you can feel that you have already returned something in kind. It's one big shareware world out there!

Remember, too, that once publications are prepared in HTML, they are available both in-house and on the web. This reduces or eliminates the need to make printed handouts and guides. Users can consult or download the pages they require at any computer with net access. It's publication on demand!

Content of the Site

Your site should include:

A profile of services and collections and links to library homepage and OPAC.

Bibliographical instruction documents, guides, pathfinders for locating materials, and self-help tutorials on research strategy.

Selective bibliographies of reference works (general or specific).

Internal and external links to a select number of related web documents, sites, OPACs and databases. Spend some time searching the net before you reinvent the wheel. If someone else has done it better, just link to that site, e.g., Indiana University Library indexes to class M; University of Washington indexes to songs and arias in collections; Digital Tradition Folksong database: <http://www.deltablues.com/dbsearch.htm>

Selective use of graphics and colour, taking load time and printout quality into consideration, when creating, for instance, a labelled floor plan of the library.

E-mail address of author and date of last revision.

Layout and organization

Here are some suggestions:

Draw a diagram when planning the configuration of your web site to show the hierarchies and links between the documents. Choose a good HTML editor program like *Webber* or *HTML Assistant*.

Adapt printed materials to the online format: Avoid unnecessary lengthy repetitions of sections of material by creating a general, master guide page and referring or linking to appropriate sections from other specific pages, e.g., how to find a periodical article in *Music Index*.

Subdivide your site into topics of reasonable complexity and length (3-4 pages, if possible) so that users do not have to print out more than they need or want. Make good use of tables of contents for specific index access online.

Establish a format which suggests a possible research strategy in the general document and use it with appropriate modification for the pages on specific topics, e.g., introductory guide, history, education, women, ethnomusicology.

Establish a uniformity of presentation and style (headings, print font, icons, etc.) which will make it easier for the reader to follow. As you create your master document, you are learning the basics of HTML formatting so it may take some time to complete. Thereafter, reduce the amount of duplicate coding by deriving your first document as a template. Use cut-and-paste effectively to speed up data entry. Cross-check the web view of your site frequently as you work in HTML. Evaluate the printed version also.

How To Use Your Webpages in Bibliographical Instruction and Reference:

Set your music library homepage as the default on the music library OPACs, or bookmark it for ease of access, if the system allows this.

Provide one paper copy of your website pages in plastic protective covers in a ring binder at each OPAC station for quick reference.

Refer to the website and the printout pages often when answering reference queries and instruct support staff to do likewise. Illustrate the advantage of access to the website as it provides the links to other sites.

Incorporate the site and its contents into

classes on research strategy. Create an online tutorial which guides the user through the research process, introducing the various types of information formats and their index access.

Update your documents as needed, taking into account frequently asked questions, local library network system changes and specific faculty requests for BI classes. A continual update approach keeps your site dynamic and relevant.

Take advantage of local expertise. At Queen's University Library, I have been fortunate to have advice and guidance in my exploration of the web and its use in bibliographic instruction from Elizabeth Fox, Electronic Services Librarian, and Corinne Lavery, Instructional Services Librarian. The reference staff have also set up a comprehensive site relating to library instruction on the web:

<http://stauffer.queensu.ca/inforef/tutorials/cla/clahome.htm>

Lavery's paper on this topic is published in *Internet Reference Services Quarterly*, v. 2, no. 2/3, 1997.

A Selective Tour of Academic Music Library Websites

Most libraries include a profile of their collections, services and staff, along with links to OPACs and other internet resources. The following is a highly selective list of music library webpages that include bibliographic instruction materials (research guides and bibliographies). Note that sites are continually updated; the following URLs were verified on Oct. 16, 1997.

<http://www.music.indiana.edu/reference/> Indiana University Music Library. The premier music library site for bibliographic

instructional material. Choose the core music reference guide for the introductory listing of contents:

...edu/musicref/song.htm Guide to locating songs and arias;

...edu/musicref/booktran.htm Locating translations of songs;

...edu/musicref/lcmclass/mclass.htm Detailed index to the M classification scheme and music LCSH; numbers for specific repertoire;

...edu/muslib_otherlinks.html Impressive number of links to music resources, including the AMLG group and other major music libraries worldwide.

<http://toltec.lib.utk.edu/~music/guides.html> DeVine Music Library, University of Tennessee, Knoxville. A comprehensive site: excellent subject guides (especially music education) plus a song index.

<http://www.lib.washington.edu/libinfo/libunits/soc-hum/music/ourstuff.html> University of Washington Library. A comprehensive site which includes several guides, an index to popular tunes in collections, and an index to arias and art songs in collections.

http://www.rism.harvard.edu/music/library/ir_databases.html Eda Kuhn Loeb Music Library, Harvard University. The page,

"Internet resources for music scholars: Music databases and information resources," provides a comprehensive list of web links, especially to early music. Note that this URL is case-sensitive.

<http://www.bibl.ulaval.ca/ress/musique.html> Université Laval Music Library. Comprehensive, well-organized, and instructive; prints out in 12 pages.

<http://libraries.mit.edu/music/collection.html#guides> Lewis Music Library, MIT. The collection information page includes the Electronic Music Bibliography and links to various reference guides including American music, piano music and Western art music.

<http://www.middlebury.edu/~lib/musiclib/music.html> Middlebury College Music Library. Very green! Includes LC class guide and annotated bibliographies of reference tools.

<http://www.csd.sc.edu/library/music/music.html> University of South Carolina Library. Includes a basic floor plan; somewhat awkward sizing to the screen format.

<http://library.usask.ca/subjects/music.html> University of Saskatchewan Music Library. Extensive links to internet resources in music including notable Canadian sites; the web page lacks the University of Saskatchewan banner headline.