

Quick Tips

Remember to ditch the exclamation points:

This was mentioned in an earlier issue of *Kit and Caboodle*, but bears repeating: library websites tend to overuse exclamation points. This makes your site look amateurish and unprofessional. Use them for really big things only, like passing a levy.

To be fixed...

Always forgetting to uncheck the "Automatic Alias" box when you are editing a page that has a custom URL? Soon, it won't be an issue. We've got this bug ironed out and will be implementing the fix by the time you hear about the next upgrade. Whoohoo!



It's a what?

One of the handy features of your new Website Kit is the ability to directly attach a file to any given piece of content. This is especially useful if you'd like to attach a PDF document (such as an event flier).

If you're going to attach PDF documents to items in your website, be sure to note that it is a PDF, either in the description or even use a little PDF icon.

Why?

Nobody likes to be surprised. When someone clicks a link on a web page, they fully expect to be taken to another web page, not a different type of media. Surprise PDFs are not a pleasant way to treat your site's visitors.

In addition, PDFs can have their own issues. People using dial-up internet access may have trouble downloading them at all. People on slow computers may experience computer

crashes. Even people with fast connections and newer machines may experience issues if they don't have Adobe Reader installed.

So, what can you do?

- Use PDFs only when necessary. (Of course, these are still infinitely better than attaching Microsoft Word, which you shouldn't be doing at all!)
- Be sure that it's clear that the link will take someone to a PDF and not to a regular web page.
- Provide an easy link to Adobe Reader (<http://get.adobe.com/reader/>).

Learn Good Web Design by Watching Videos of Bad Web Design

(<http://bit.ly/6prKx>)

Learn more about the frustrations of non-identified PDF documents on websites

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Featured Module

Each issue we'll highlight a Drupal module (add-on) that you can add to your existing OPLIN Webkit.

LinkChecker

The LinkChecker module periodically inspects the content of all items and tries to detect broken hypertext links by checking the remote sites and evaluating the HTTP response codes. It maintains a table which can be viewed through the administrative interfaces and contains all its findings. It runs in the background, initially going through all nodes, and subsequently only checking updated and newly created content. This cycle can be set to run every week or month.

Interested in adding this module to your Website Kit? Contact OPLIN Support at support@oplin.org.

Need help?

Got a question? Just email Laura at laura@oplin.org

Or, you can reach OPLIN Support (and usually Laura, too) via our [chat room](#)

[Website Kit Documentation](#) (Get the most recent documentation for your OPLIN Web Kit here.)



Got a blog? Beware of these common errors

Get a grip on best practices for blogging by knowing if you're guilty of any of these blogging faux pas

Whether you're writing for your regular site or a blog, there are common mistakes people often make. Take a moment to examine whether or not you're guilty of any of these "traffic killers":

- **Posts are too long.** Most successful posts range between 200-500 words. It's possible to go longer than that, but you need to break it down with sub-headers and bulleted lists.
- **Posts are too frequent.** Remember, people have very limited amounts of time and are only scanning your content, at best. Assume that anything more than once per day is going to overwhelm your readers.
- **Posts are too infrequent.** If you only blog every month or so, you will almost undoubtedly lose readers.
- **Headlines aren't catchy.** Again, people only scan, so you need to catch their eye right away. Be sure to check out the Fall 2009 edition of *Kit and Caboodle* for help with writing good headlines. (<http://oplin.org/sites/default/files/Issue2.pdf>)
- **The first paragraph is too weak.** If you've gotten readers this far, don't lose them by rambling on. Use a story, an interesting fact or a promise to get them to read further.
- **It's too self-centered.** If your post is all about you (or the library), you'll lose readers fast. Be sure to

tell your readers what's in it for them. If you're going to promote something, always be thinking about what the reader will get out of it. Nobody pays much attention to people (or organizations) that only talk about themselves.

For more blogging mistakes, check out the blog of Michael Hyatt (<http://bit.ly/aCu0Lx>)



