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Wikis For Better Collaboration and Learning

VILSC 2018
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BC Libraries Cooperative

INTRO

- Who are you?
- Do you currently wiki? If not - why not?
- Who am I?

Some things about the Coop

- We're not a library.
- We have a lot of tech-savvy people on staff.
- We do open source as exclusively as possible
- We are super cost-aware, don't like to spend when we don't have to

wiki.libraries.coop

Why Wiki?

- Easy collaborative document editing and creation but...
- Works just as well for the individual
- "More archival than email, less process that Word"
- Easy search and browse
- Improve transparency and help reduce silos
- Anticipate knowledge growth even before it happens
- For changeable info, likely the best approach (cf https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/e138/f96aedcb18893a87bd22d95d3914db4d22ae.pdf)

Why DOKUWIKI?

- Open source, mature, lots of plugins - https://www.dokuwiki.org/plugins
- Document based, not database
- Git backed, which means key staff can have an offline version of the wiki on their laptops

- Ability to move pages and namespaces (means you don't have to get it perfect the first time)

Why DOKUWIKI? Part II

- Access control - can control both visibility and edit-ablity; can include public sections (such as this page!)
- Re-skinning; the nav bars are actually wiki pages! https://wiki.libraries.coop/doku.php?id=sidebar
- Easily embed other content
  - calendars
  - list of google docs in a folder
- Can host structured data and offer alternative ways to use it? https://www.dokuwiki.org/plugin:data:list_of_employees

How we made it work

- If you already have one, with even a few people using it - don't kill it, build on it!
- Redesign can help + "a bit" of info architecture
- Wiki Gardening! together and separately
- Focus on "collaboration" not "publishing", folksonomy (+search) not taxonomy
- If a good exchange has happened elsewhere (IRC, email) suggest a wiki entry as a result
- Keep it as open as possible - we have public/private distinction, but after that try not to create too many internal groups

Is wiki always the way? NO

- Very small groups/locations - a binder may make a ton more sense
- Non-volatile information - may not be the best way to handle official policy docs you don't want edited

Thanks! Questions?

- slides at http://bit.ly/vislc2018-wikis
- scott.leslie@bc.libraries.coop / @sleslie on twitter

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