

# Library of Michigan Tech Programs: E-rate, Tech Plans, Plinkit, the new MeL interface and Michlib-I

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Library of Michigan – Beginning Workshop 2013

# E-rate

- Federal program established in 1996 and designed to save you money on your
  - Telephone
  - Internet and
  - Internal connections budgets

Your discount is based primarily on the percentage of school children in your service area who participate in the National School Lunch Program

# Enough to know better... not enough to put you to sleep

- Erate is a series of forms coordinated with actions on behalf of the library, service provider, and federal government
  - Tech plan if seeking funds for internal connections
  - RFP for services
  - Award contract
  - Request discount
  - Receive discounted bills or refunds
  - Release unused funds

# Websites to be aware of

- Federal site, including the place you can apply online: <http://www.usac.org/sl/>
- State of Michigan site, including the place you will find the NSLP data you need as well as tech plan submission info: <http://www.michigan.gov/erateforlibraries>

# Full-day training provided by the Library of Michigan

- Beginner: June
- Advanced: October
- Registration available at  
<http://www.michigan.gov/libraryce>

# Who do I go to with questions?

- Your co-op director will be able to answer questions for you in between the training sessions provided by the Library of Michigan.
- We contract for expert, back-up support for the co-op directors so they will have the resources they need to assist you.

# Technology Planning

Tech planning is important for libraries of all sizes regardless of whether they are applying for E-rate funds.

**You've got to be very careful if  
you don't know where you're  
going, because you might not  
get there.**

Yogi Berra

## Just to be clear...

- **Tech plans are not required** for Priority 1 E-rate funding (telephone service and Internet costs).
- **Tech plans are required** for Priority 2 E-rate funding (internal connections [wiring])

# So why does it matter?

- Technology is integral to everything a modern establishment does, and libraries are a particularly good example of that. We all need:
  - Hardware, software, products, services and training **for staff**
  - Hardware, software, products, services and training **for the public**
  - You may need outside consulting on a variety of issues and that requires budgeting

# Why plan?

- So that technology decisions align with the overall library plan
- To think about how you are integrating technology into the libraries' operations
- To manage and coordinate the multitude of technology applications throughout the library
- To provide effective services to your patrons

## The Why's cont.

- So that everyone has a common understanding of the role of technology in the library and
- To justify budget requests externally and plan for budget expenditures internally

## But most importantly

Creating a technology plan provides a time and place for you to think about your technology goals to help avoid IT crisis saving you time, expense and trouble.

Technology planning is profitable for all libraries, regardless of whether they apply for E-rate.

# Who should be on the team?

- Evaluate interest and expertise on staff
  - Public Services
  - Technical Services
  - Technology Staff
- Include a board member
- Consider including community members who are technologically fluent or who run businesses that rely on IT – they deal with technology planning, too.

# What should it include?

- A good technology plan follows closely on the heels of your organization's vision statement.
- The goals of your technology plan should support the goals of your vision statement.

# Additional Resources

- <http://michigan.gov/erateforlibraries>
- <http://www.usac.org/sl/applicants/step01/>
  - USF E-rate checklist
- <http://www.webjunction.org/explore-topics/tech-planning.html>
  - “Core to library services, access to technology requires active and ongoing planning. Technology plans should support library strategic planning, include more than just computers, accomodate new and emerging technologies, and include staff training.”

# MeL Redesign

After 7 years, MeL is getting a new interface and new functionality!

And P.S. It's mobile-friendly!



# Michigan eLibrary

MICHIGAN.GOV



Home

MeLCat

Teachers

Databases

Michigana

Contact

Help

## MeL Features



- [Practice tests](#)
- [Digital Literacy](#)
- [Magazines & Newspapers](#)

## SEARCH

Michigan eLibrary



Search for Books, Articles, and more!



[Advanced Search >>](#)



## About MeL

## MeL Databases

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## Books & Literacy Gateway

SEARCH

Books & Literacy Gateway




SEARCH

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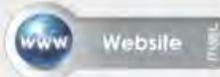
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# Applying Information Architecture and User Experience Design to MeL

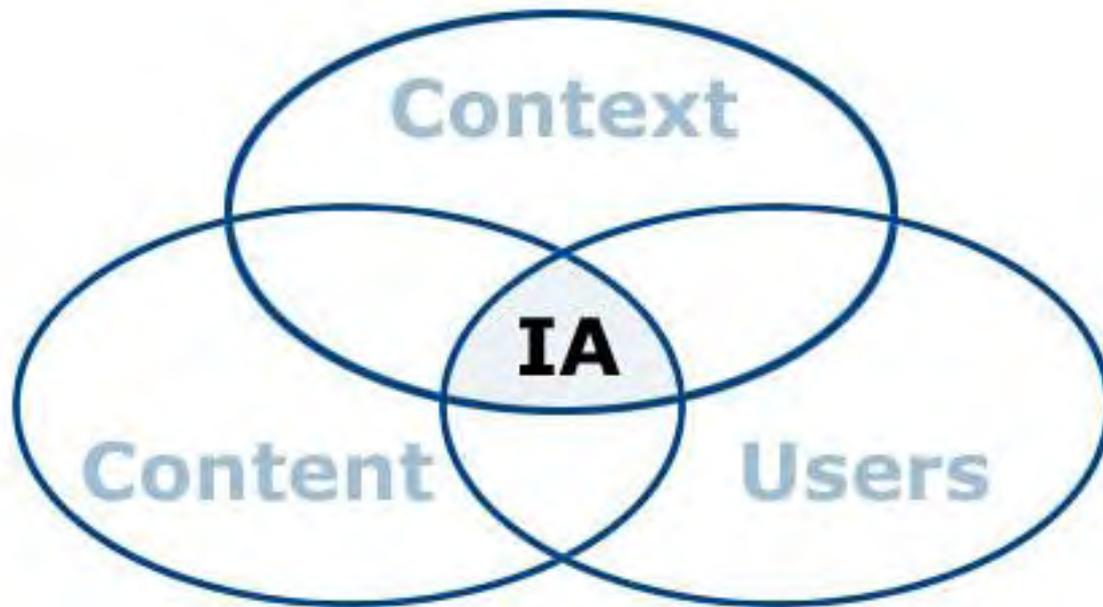
There's a lot I could tell you about the redesign. I'm going to cover what could help YOU in redesigning your own sites.

Some web sites "work" and some don't. Good web site consultants know that you can't just jump in and start writing HTML, the same way you can't build a house by just pouring a foundation and putting up some walls. You need to know who will be using the site, and what they'll be using it for. You need some idea of what you'd like to draw their attention to during their visit. Overall, you need a strong, cohesive vision for the site that makes it both distinctive and usable.

The job of the architect is to set up the framework for the site to make it comfortable and inviting for people to visit, relax in, and perhaps even return to someday.

--from "Information Architecture for the World Wide Web by Peter Morville and William Rosenfeld

# Information Architecture



## Our context...

- Requirements of our parent organization, the State of Michigan, in Website development
- 20 years of Michigan eLibrary history

# Our content

- Discovery service/search box
- We identified our primary deliverables and placed them in the global navigation:
  - MeLCat
  - Michigan Online Resources for Educators
  - MeL Databases
  - Michigana
- We used valuable homepage real estate for subject gateways

# Our users

- Expectations of
  - Citizens
  - Library staff
  - Children/students “born digital”
  - Subject-specific information seekers such as college professors and graduate students, genealogists, job seekers, and entrepreneurs.

# Graphic Design

We put out an RFP and went out to bid for graphic design and expert programming.

# Two rounds of user testing

- Round one: wireframe testing.
- Round two: with user experience librarian Elaine Meyer of the Midwest Collaborative for Library Services (formerly of Gale Cengage and Proquest).
- We tested
  - **High school and college students**
  - **Public, college and school librarians as well as library staff**
  - **Members of the public**
  - **Government employees**
  - **Users and non-users**

# What did we learn?

- Our internal vernacular is not helpful on the site – the term “MeLCat” was not understood by non-users. The term/link “gateway” was completely ignored.
- Words like “government” “business” and “legal” have wide appeal and wide understanding.
- **Use common language so you will be commonly understood.**

# What else did we learn?

- MeLCat is beloved but too often not intuitive, especially when it comes to finding materials in a particular format and limiting search results
- The new graphics were well liked by those who knew the “old” MeL and those who didn’t
- **That search box has some high expectations!**

# What Else Are We Going to Get?

Kids and Teens portals!

**MICHIGAN eLIBRARY**  
meL.org

Michigan's 24/7 eLibrary

HOME MeL DATABASES MeL CATALOG FOR EDUCATORS MICHIGANA CONTACT HELP

**KIDS**  
MeL.org

**Kids Resources**

- Kids - For Kids
- Kids - For Parents

# K-5 Kid's Page

Are you out finshin' for homework helpers, online stories, and fun and exciting games? Vero facilisi nisl; illum ut consectetur hendrent, facilisi odio facilisi.

 **Search**  
Advanced Search

**Homework Helpers**

**Games & Activities**

**Storytime**

**Michigana!**

MeL

- Home
- MeL Databases
- MeL Catalog
- For Educators
- Michigana
- Contact
- Help

GATEWAYS

- Kids
- Teens
- Business
- Jobs
- Government
- Health
- Legal
- Books & Literacy

RESOURCES

- Michigan.gov
- MeL Home
- Contact MeL
- Help
- About MeL
- Promotions

POLICIES

- Accessibility Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Link Policy
- Security Policy
- Office of Regulatory Reintervention

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# Plinkit: A Program Update

**Will you please stand if your library has a Plinkit Website?**

# Public Library Interface Kit (Plinkit)

- Began in 2006 in Oregon
- Michigan joined the Collaborative three years later
- There have been nearly 30 in-person training sessions all over the lower peninsula
- I've also been holding demonstration and training webinars for the past two years

# Current state: we have reached capacity

- 123 + sites, approximately half of the target audience in the lower peninsula
- Library of Michigan is no longer accepting new applications
- We continue to train new and ongoing employees and to support existing sites

# Some Plinkit examples

- Lapeer District Library
- Alvah N. Belding Memorial Library
- Reed City Public Library
- Topinabee Public Library
  
- Training and support:
  - <http://michlibrary.org>

# Michlib-I

- *Michlib-I was created for Michigan libraries to share information about best practices, management, reference, operations and other areas of interest to Michigan libraries. Anyone with an interest in Michigan libraries may join. Librarians and library support staff are especially encouraged to join.*

# Server change

- We are in the process of changing servers for Michlib-I. I hope to have appropriate location/subscription information for you at the time of the conference.