PRODUCT REVIEW / ÉVALUATION DE PRODUIT

Product: LibWizard

Introduction

Springshare's suite of cloud- and browser-based products (LibApps) for libraries includes LibWizard, a multi-purpose form tool for libraries. LibWizard V1 was retired January 15, 2020. This review is of V2 and was conducted between March and April, 2020.

Purpose

LibWizard is designed for libraries and library workers. The product's purpose is creation and management of online forms, quizzes, and tutorials. LibWizard complements and integrates effectively with existing Springshare LibApps (LibGuides, LibAnswers, etc.), however, it can be used as a standalone product.

LibWizard provides a relatively simple and customizable user interface for designing web-based forms. Forms can be designed for research, assessment, or instructional needs, but quality will depend on the creator's knowledge and familiarity with survey design methods and online user experience.

Product Description

Like other LibApps, LibWizard is cloud-based and accessed via a web browser. Two options are available: a full-featured subscription, or LibWizard Lite. This review is of the full LibWizard subscription. The lite version is limited only to forms and surveys with the associated statistical reporting dashboard (quizzes and tutorials are only available in the full subscription). Other touted features include LibGuides integration, automated grading, and allowing users to upload files.

Intended Users

Libraries and librarians in any sector may benefit from this product. Resulting forms can be used for staff and administrative needs, or targeted at library users for program or assessment purposes.

Though LibWizard includes instructional and assessment tools, this product is in no way a replacement for a fully-featured learning management system (LMS), but may suffice as a simple solution for smaller libraries or organizations with an online education mandate.

Special Features

Ultimately, three of the four promoted tools - forms, surveys, and quizzes - are all very alike. They are not unlike other simple form building and data collection tools already available (Google Forms, RedCap). Forms and surveys are near indistinguishable, aside from how they are presented. Quizzes are much like forms and surveys as well, but can include question-and-answer banks to automate grading and reporting.

Tutorials introduce the feature of embedded web pages alongside forms - allowing the creator to embed a library catalogue, home page, or just about any other website in the user's browser window.

Tutorials come in two forms - one embeds a sidebar to any website, which can then be opened as a guide to the content already on-screen. (Figure 1)

The other form of tutorial is a standalone website, with instructions and forms on the left, and an embedded website window on the right side of the screen. (Figure 2)

Compatibility

LibWizard is a browser and cloud-based product, intended to be used in most modern web browsers (Chrome, IE, Edge, Firefox). No issues were

encountered in reviewing or testing the product with any of these browsers.

Springshare acknowledges that the iFrames (embedded windows) may pose problems for out of date browsers. Though no issues were encountered, it is recommended to avoid outdated browsers to prevent potential technical difficulties.

Forms display clearly in mobile as well as desktop browsers. Tutorials employing the embedded web pages, however, will not be conducive to most mobile interfaces.

Platform:

LibWizard is an online based tool (software-as-a-service). It can be deployed on its own, or as part of Springshare's LibApps or LibGuides content management systems (CMS) products.

Usability:

Some initial training may be necessary in order to bring staff and administrators up to speed on the product and its features. Content (form) creators will benefit from having some skill and experience with HTML, CSS, and general web design.

The form builder is easy to use, but long and content-rich forms and tutorials can quickly become complex. The interface takes some initial adjusting to. There are some considerable learning curves, especially if users are inexperienced with similar products.

Strengths:

LibWizard provides a multitude of interactive, online form solutions for libraries. Forms are relatively easy to create and manage, and reports can be generated and viewed with a few simple clicks. Libraries and librarians familiar with existing Springshare tools and products will find LibWizard an easy adjustment, given it uses the same general user interface as other products.

The ability to embed web pages via tutorials is a welcome feature here, permitting increased interactivity and feedback in any library's online instruction programs.

Weaknesses:

Quality of forms and tutorials ultimately depends on the skill level of the creator. No matter how feature-rich or capable this product is, it is no replacement for proper training and instruction on survey design and online usability. Surveys, forms, and quizzes are barely different, despite Springshare's insistence, in its promotional marketing, that they are distinct features of the product. Ultimately they are the same. Forms, surveys, and quizzes, in fact, all use the same interface for design. The only real differences include the methods of deploying the form, survey, or quiz (embedded vs. standalone vs. emailed) and that for quizzes, there is a question-and-answer bank. Aside from the rather arbitrary classification of form, survey, and quiz, few issues or negative experiences were identified.

Comparison

Few comparisons can be made with this product. Though other form designers are available (Google Forms, RedCap, etc.), most do not have an instructional mandate in addition to fulfilling a need for rigorous data collection. With the inclusion of the quizzes, forms, and surveys, as well as the embedded website tutorials, this is a rather unique product package.RedCap would be a superior choice for researchers dealing with sensitive data. Google Forms are free, but limited in scope and features.

LibWizard tutorials and quizzes are conducive to most instructional needs, but would not act as a substitute for a CMS or LMS.

Currency/ Cost

USD. Contact Springshare representative for pricing.

Screenshots / figures
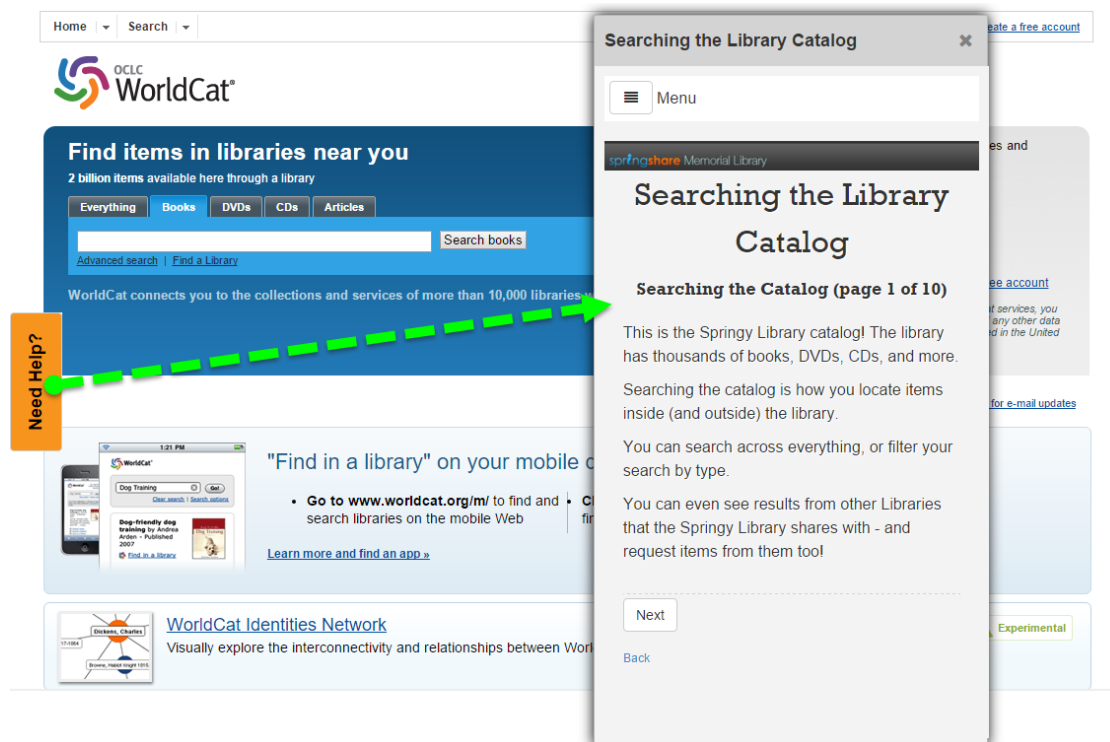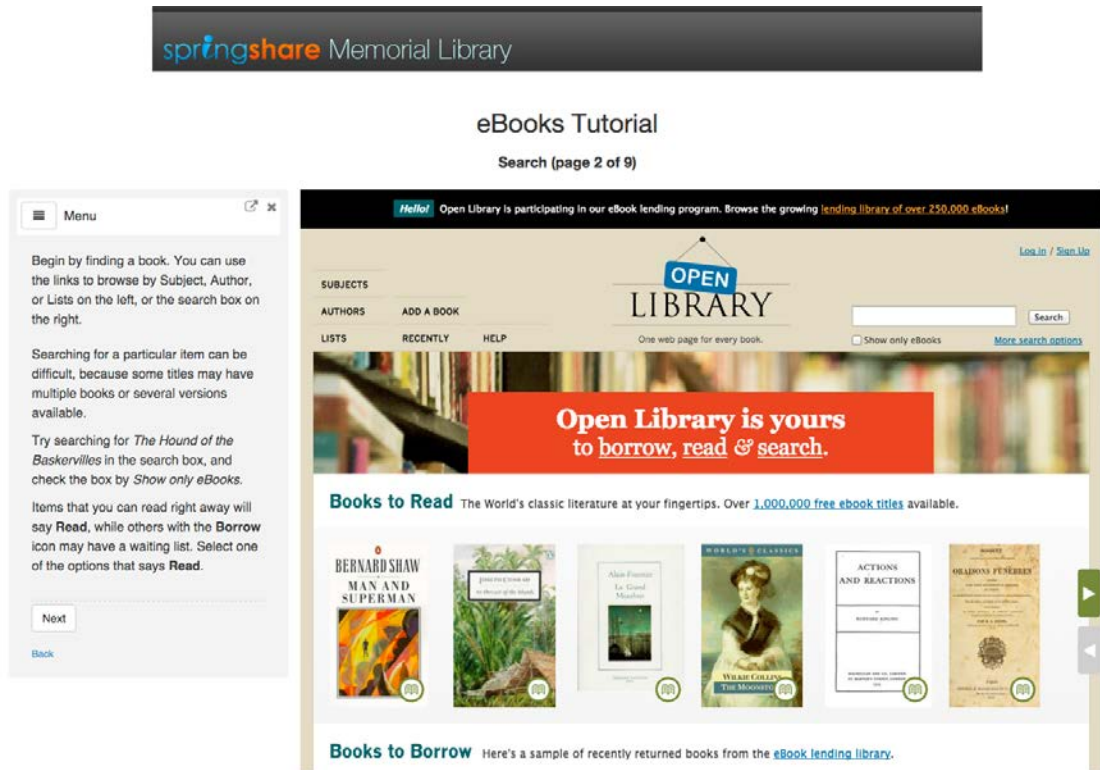

Figure 1: Sample sidebar tutorial.[1]

Figure 2: Sample standalone tutorial.[2]

References

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2. Springshare. eBooks Tutorial [Internet]. n.d. [cited 2020 Apr 30]. Available from https://s3.amazonaws.com/libapps/customers/1/images/LWZ_AT_FullTutorialExample.png

Statement of Competing Interests

No competing interests declared.

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