FIGHT THE ROT: IMPROVING SUPPORT FOR LINKING TO ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

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GUGM 2023
THE PROBLEM

• **If your web presence is like ours, broken links abound**
  *This includes the library website, the learning management system, syllabuses, reading lists, etc.*

• **Some links break naturally, some are bad to begin with**
  *We worry about both, but especially the latter.*

• **Library personnel are only a little less likely to create bad links**
  *Our colleagues need as much support creating reliable links as our patrons.*

**My God, It's full of broken links**
THE PROBLEM

• The dreaded session ID...
  https://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=1&sid=6367059c-2227-467d-9a35-511e7333233c%40sessionmgr102&bdata=#AN=gas.9915882143802950&db=cat05752a

• The link that doesn’t authenticate off campus...
  https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-540-68832-7

My God, It’s Full of Broken Links
OUR SOLUTION

DEVELOPED OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS, THE “LINKING TO LIBRARY RESOURCES” GUIDE INCLUDES:

- ONE ARTICLE ON CREATING DATABASE FRIENDLY URLs
- ONE ARTICLE ON CREATING GIL-FIND PERMALINKS
- ~175 ARTICLES ON CREATING DATABASE ITEM AND RESULT LIST URLs

https://georgiasouthern.libguides.com/links
DATABASE FRIENDLY URLs

We use LibGuides’ A-Z DATABASE LIST, so this article explains how to use the SHARE ICON TO OBTAIN THE LIBRARIES’ FRIENDLY URL FOR EACH DATABASE.

We occasionally see library faculty and staff using the address bar URL after clicking on the friendly URL, so this deserves an article!

https://georgiasouthern.libguides.com/links/friendly-urls
GIL-FIND PERMALINKS

This article explains how to use the Permalink feature in GIL-Find records.

This article is more for the benefit of faculty, for example those who link to the browse page for a particular journal title in the database rather than to the record in GIL-Find. As a result, their link doesn’t account for additional holdings or holdings changes over time.

https://georgiasouthern.libguides.com/links/journals
.ITEM & RESULT
LIST URLS

FOR EVERY DATABASE THAT APPEARS ON
OUR A-Z DATABASE LIST, WE INCLUDE AN
ARTICLE ON HOW TO CREATE A LINK TO
AN ITEM RECORD OR RESULT LIST.

IN EACH CASE, WE EXPLAIN HOW TO
CREATE A LINK THAT WILL AUTHENTICATE
ON OR OFF CAMPUS.

THESE ARTICLES ARE THE CENTERPIECE
OF THE “LINKING TO LIBRARY RESOURCES”
GUIDE AND ARE TARGETED TO PATRONS
AND LIBRARY PERSONNEL ALIKE.
UNIQUE LINKS, UNIQUE INSTRUCTIONS

Instructions vary according to what is required by each vendor platform to generate a stable, authenticatable URL.

• **In some cases, the vendor’s built-in linking tool is adequate.**

• **For many databases using Open Athens, we explain how to use the Link Generator.**

• **For databases using EZProxy, we explain how to add the prefix.**
ONE ARTICLE, MANY DATABASES

Many databases do not require a unique article or steps.

For example, all EBSCOhost, ProQuest Platform, and Web of Science databases use the same article.

Also, many articles share similar steps that can be copied... for example, any database using the address bar URL and the Open Athens Link Generator has the same instructions.

We have ~175 articles for ~350 databases.
ODDITIES

- **Resources that require personal accounts to create shareable links** (e.g., ProQuest Platform, Grant Forward).

- **Resources that require teasing record URLs out of citations** (e.g., Ovid).

- **Resources on the same platform that behave differently depending on the module** (e.g., JSTOR vs. Artstor @ JSTOR).
ACCESS

ARTICLES ARE ACCESSIBLE VIA THE DETAILED DESCRIPTION FOR EACH DATABASE.

LINKS TO THE DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS APPEAR IN EACH DATABASE ENTRY ON OUR A-Z DATABASE LIST.

DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS ARE HOUSED ON OUR LIBRARIES FAQ.

THE GUIDE IS ALSO AVAILABLE VIA OUR PUBLIC-FACING LIBGUIDES MENU.
NAVIGATION

BECAUSE THE LIST OF DATABASES IS LONG (AS WELL AS WE DON’T MAINTAIN A UNIQUE TAB FOR EACH DATABASE), WE DIDN’T WANT TO USE STANDARD NAVIGATION.

INSTEAD, WE CREATED A FOUR-COLUMN MENU THAT APPEARS AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PAGE AND ALLOWS USERS TO KEYWORD SEARCH THE LIST.

SIMILARLY, WE USE A TRUNCATED MENU ON INDIVIDUAL TABS THAT IS ALSO KEYWORD SEARCHABLE.

See Justin Barnett’s recent Springshare Lounge post:
https://lounge.springshare.com/discussion/1511/sharing-our-filterable-page-list-hidden-navigation/p1?new=1
MAINTENANCE

• Creating the guide was time-consuming but maintaining it should be easier. Most updates can be handled transactionally as databases are updated or issues arise.

• Creating, updating, and deleting articles is now written into our maintenance workflows for database assets.

• Articles will need to be audited, likely on a biennial schedule (±7 articles per month).
NEXT STEPS

Promotion & Training With Library Faculty & Staff

Promotion to Teaching Faculty

Further Consolidate Articles

Redirect DOIs?
QUESTIONS?

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