

PROJECT OWL JR.

# PROJECT OWL JR.

---

ON THE WEB

Carolyn Occhipinti  
and  
John Wilson

11/23/2011

## **Project Owl Jr. on the Web**

Owl Jr. is a project which will have a positive impact on bringing literacy to children. With such a large undertaking, the project needed an identity. To create this identity, we developed a website and wiki page. With these two interfaces, we are able to communicate our mission, vision, goals and research materials to the public and any persons interested.

When creating the website, emphasis was placed on user requirements, that is, to create an identity for the Owl Jr. Project that will primarily inform the user of what we are doing, and how our project relates to Sugar Labs and the One Laptop per Child (OLPC) organization. Our website provides a description of the Owl Jr. Project, and links to our wiki also. By doing this we are able to share both the website and wiki to the audience at the same time. A hyperlink to the Owl Jr. Facebook page is provided, also.

In order to provide a research materials sharing source, we created our own wiki page on Sugar Labs' wiki. Considering user needs, the wiki was designed to introduce the Owl Jr. Project, and to inform Sugar OS developers of our research as it is happening. Each team in the Owl Jr. Project has been assigned their own section on the wiki page in order to provide their research to developers. These sections can be edited individually as our research changes.

Originally, our team had considered creating a forum for the entire project. From the information provided by our fellow students, we learned that the forum was not a desired form of communication, primarily because other teams working on similar projects such as Sugar Labs do not use a forum. Additionally, if our materials are not constantly updated on a forum, it can appear as if the project is unsuccessful or even discontinued. Therefore, we decided to continue use of the website and wiki page for project identity. In moving forward, we needed to conduct some research on formatting wiki projects in Sugar Labs' Wiki Page, the utilization of SEO, and advertising through social networks.

## Research

### Sugar Labs' Wiki Projects

While we have already created the Owl Jr. Project page in Sugar Labs' Wiki, we are now ready to integrate the information our class has created. To figure out the best methods of formatting our Wiki, we found it was best to look at the other current projects affiliated with Sugar Labs. Creating our Wiki page to be uniform with the other projects' pages is a significant part of the process because we can figure out what Sugar Labs is expecting in terms of design, language, format, and so on. Below is our analysis of the current project wiki pages on the Sugar Labs Wiki. Each project is listed, in addition to the organization of content from top to bottom.

#### Dextrose

1. A bolded title of their project with different colors and font. Next to the title is a star and logo.
2. Under the title is a toolbar with the following links: Dextrose, Get involved, Contacts, Resources, FAQ, Roadmap, To do, and Meetings.
3. A two sentence description of what Dextrose is, who it was developed by, and who it is in collaboration with.
4. Next, they explained that their main focus is stability and usability in the classroom.
5. A list of the new features in Dextrose 2, along with links to further, more detailed notes.
6. Dextrose 2 World Edition Download
7. A "How to" on knowing your way around the new features.
8. Instruction for installation.
9. Lastly, they have a list of links that lead to further notes on other aspects of their project.

## Replacing Textbooks

1. Large, bolded title.
2. Paragraph explaining what the project is, who created it, what it will develop, and contact information for the program manager.
3. Rationale section with links
4. Planning section with details on their request for proposals and links with detailed notes.
5. A “See also” section with links
6. An “External links” section

## Sugar Creation Kit

1. A large, bolded title.
2. A large, colorful DVD that is a link to the download for the Sugar Creation Kit.
3. A link to “List of contents”
4. A list of the uses for this disc
5. Chat login with list of channels and languages
6. Introduction to Sugar on a Stick as the Online version with links and descriptions of each other version
7. Communication channels, used to communicate with Sugar Labs contributors and learners.
8. Translator, time convertor, tiny URL and a “How to” on IP addresses
9. Hardware compatibility and cautions
10. Use of live USB and WIFI

11. Community distributions
12. Activities and file share
13. DVD covers, artwork and screenshots
14. Manuals and download methods

### Sugar on a Stick

1. A large, bolded title with different colors and a different font.
2. Picture of four different colored sticks of Sugar on a Stick.
3. Introduction to what type of operating system and type of design.
4. Reference to the most recent version and how they are related.
5. Promotion to “Turn your computer into a Sugar on a Stick creation station,” which is followed by reference to Sugar Creation Kit project; including what it is and a link to their wiki.
6. Links of available downloads if you want to start using Sugar on a Stick.
7. Section on how others can contribute
8. Getting the sticks into schools
9. Current status
10. Meetings and release schedules.
11. Links to related work

### Toast

1. Shorter page with a large, bolded title.
2. Small screenshot of the Toast Boot Menu, which is also a hyperlink.

3. Introduction to what it is.
4. Sections of other advanced uses features “Main features,” “Download,” “Install to disc,” and “Startup disc creator.”

The analysis of the other pages has given our group a new perspective on how our information should be presented. As we received the information gathered by groups two and three, we created sections which were separated by “Teams” one through five. From there, we simply placed the information from each group into their team’s designated section. With our studies, we have learned that our information should be divided by content, not by who is assigned to that content. In addition, we should not present one long page full of information. Instead, our wiki page will be separated by content; in which each section will have a title, a few sentences explaining definition, who has worked on this, and why it is significant. Beyond this, each section will feature direct hyperlinks leading to further notes, details, explanations, statuses, and updates.

As far as wiki page design, we might consider putting the title in a different, more playful font with some color. Next to the title, we will place the newly created Owl Jr. Project logo. From our studies, we find that the pages with some color and unique design were much more appealing to the eye, which encouraged us to read more. Whereas, the wikis with no color and all uniform fonts appeared boring and even incomplete; as if they hadn’t gotten to the point of considering the design of their page. Lastly, we noticed that the language of the other projects’ wiki pages were not aimed necessarily at a general public audience. Their pages featured a great deal of technical terminology and focused on things that the average internet surfer might not consider reading. While the pages feature descriptions and “how to’s,” we believe these pages are targeted for an audience who already knows about Sugar Labs, or have at least some level of basic to advanced knowledge about computer programs/technical support.

## **Search Engine Optimization (SEO)**

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is a complex, but very important subject when dealing with websites and organization identity. This area of web design can make the face of an organization or project more visible in cyberspace. Generally, the goal of SEO is to have a website appear in the first page of internet search results. As of this writing, this area is still being explored to enhance the identity of the Owl Jr. Project. Even so, a few SEO strategies have been learned and applied to the face of our project.

In order to analyze various statistics about our website, Google Webmaster Tools has been implemented. Webmaster tools provides important information, such as how the website is viewed by Google and how search queries result in bringing up a particular website. This information can then be used to help identify problem areas within the website, so improvements can be made (Fleischner, 2011, pp. 20-21).

Another area of SEO involves creating the website to be as user – friendly as possible. A website that provides the user with an easy-to-use interface, while providing clear, relevant information will compel users to view a website more frequently than a poorly written, difficult-to-use interface. This topic is further explained by the website, SEOMOZ:

Usability and user experience are "second order" influences on search engine ranking success. They provide an indirect, but measurable benefit to a site's external popularity, which the engines can then interpret as a signal of higher quality. This is called the "no one likes to link to a crummy site" phenomenon (SEOMOZ, 2011).

When people conduct internet searches, the words they type into the search engine will determine what websites are displayed in the results. The search engine looks for websites that match the keywords that were input by the user. This means that website ranking can improve by including the right keywords. In other words, “The value of selecting keywords strategically is very high. The ‘right’ keywords allow your optimization efforts to happen quicker and produce the best organic result’ (Fleischner, 2011, pg. 24).

## **Promoting Organizations through Social Networks**

The Project Owl Jr. Facebook Page is active and continuing to be updated. Upon creating the social network profile for our project, we wondered how well this would act as an advertisement. Was this the only way we would spread the word, or could there be multiple paths to take? Conducting research on how other organizations promote themselves was the next step.

We needed to know exactly what we were trying to accomplish by joining a social network, and what it could really do for Project Owl Jr. In an article by Brian Setterfield of TechSoup, the Executive Director of the Internet Advocacy Center explains, “Social networking platforms give nonprofits a forum for meeting like-minded organizations and potential supporters, and provide a medium for spreading their messages beyond the immediate community” (2006). Setterfield also indicates in his article that most organizations choose more than one social network to join, and that not every social network is compatible with every organization (2006). From this point, we decided to analyze the most popular social networks, aside from Facebook, and find the ones most compatible with our project. Below are each of the social networks that are used by organizations and companies (Setterfield, 2006).

### Social Networks Used by Organizations/Companies:

- Care2: Activists come here to network and work around specific issues. Create or add into groups that are dedicated to a cause. Share/browse photos, post to message boards, solicit donations and publicize your organization’s events.
- Flickr: Based upon publicizing images, tagging others in images, and allowing comments on images. Creating a Creative Commons License with Flickr would allow others to use your photos in their blogs or other places on the internet.
- Friendster: Users can share photos, blogs, posts on message boards, browse classified ads, and create or join group discussions/announcements. Categorized by subject matter, with a specific area for non-profit organizations.



- Gather: Focuses on content and offers non-profit organizations plenty of tools to share their story. Publish photos, in addition to blogs which are called “articles,” and can be read, tagged, and rated by anyone. Articles which are tagged and rated the highest or most often will be featured on the home page of the site.
- LinkedIn: Focuses primarily on keeping in contact with professionals, businesses, and organizations. There are no forum or blog type features.
- MySpace: Not targeted to one specific type of user, MySpace allows pictures, videos, messaging, adding or joining a group, and announcements/events.
- Ryze: Much like LinkedIn, Ryze is aimed at staying in contact with professionals, businesses, and organizations. Here, you can add events, post classified ads, and post job openings within your organization. Ryze requires a monthly payment in order to join.
- Tribe: Users gather together in forums to discuss specific topics. Within the forums, users are able to post photos, messages, and list events that might be of interest to this community.

In studying each of the social networks mentioned above by their actual web pages and by articles and reviews, we have concluded that there may not be one specific network that fits Project Owl Jr. However, an analysis may be done by deciding which of the social network features would be most important in terms of explaining our project and spreading the word. As a group, we feel that the most compatible social network will allow us to have a profile which says what Project Owl Jr. is; it will also allow photo uploading, a place where users can volunteer their contribution, posting to message boards or forums, and keeping in contact with other businesses/organizations in order to get the word out.

## Project Updates

### Project Owl Jr. Logo

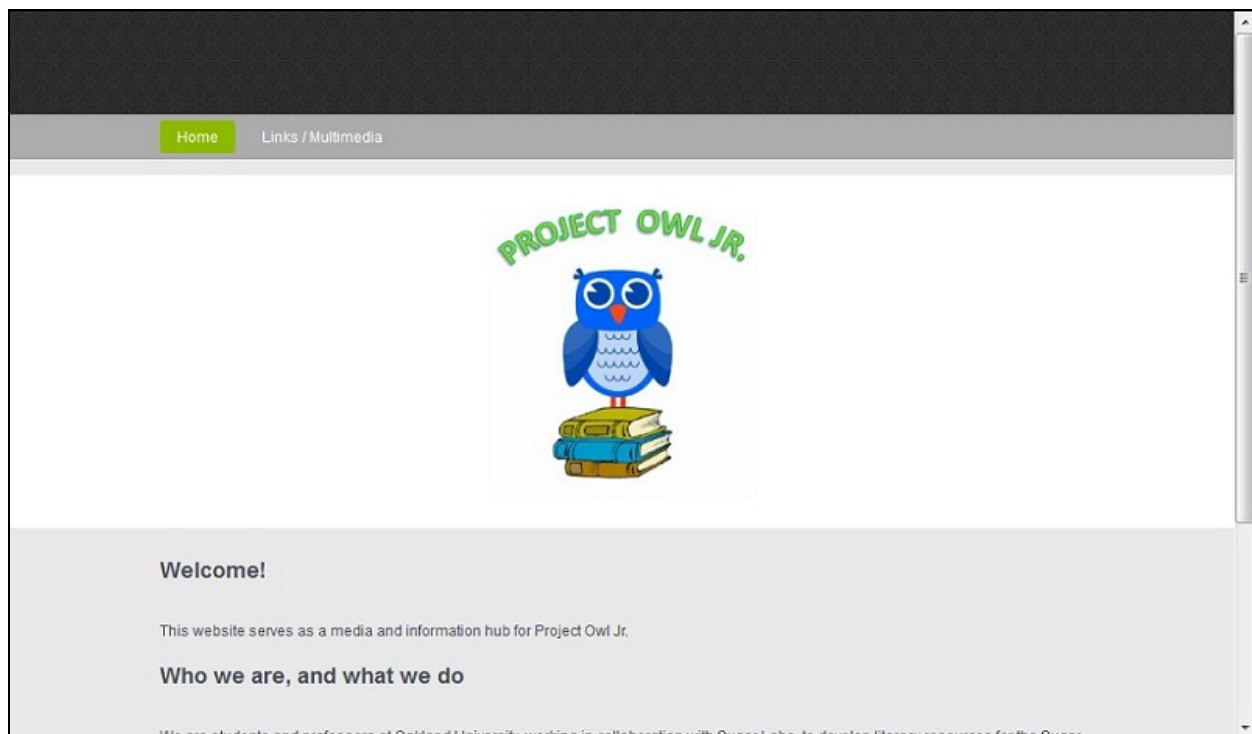
In feedback from students, we found that our logo could be better. The first logo was a display of a green figure that represented a child which was holding one of the XO laptops. This logo showed that any child can use the XO; and while it was a bold green color that was appealing to the eye, it did not relate to literacy. We decided to take a new route in the creation of a new logo. The logo will represent all of the work we have put into this project, as well as the work future students in Writing for Literacy, Technology, and Civic Engagement will contribute. With this, we wanted something colorful and appealing, but also relative to our project and literacy. Below is the new Project Owl Jr. Logo.



## Project Owl Jr. Web Page

The website was created using a template found on [www.weebly.com](http://www.weebly.com). Information is provided describing what Owl Jr. is and its relation to OLPC. Links to the Owl Jr. Facebook page and the Wiki are provided to further inform the user. Recent changes include the addition of the Owl Jr. Logo.

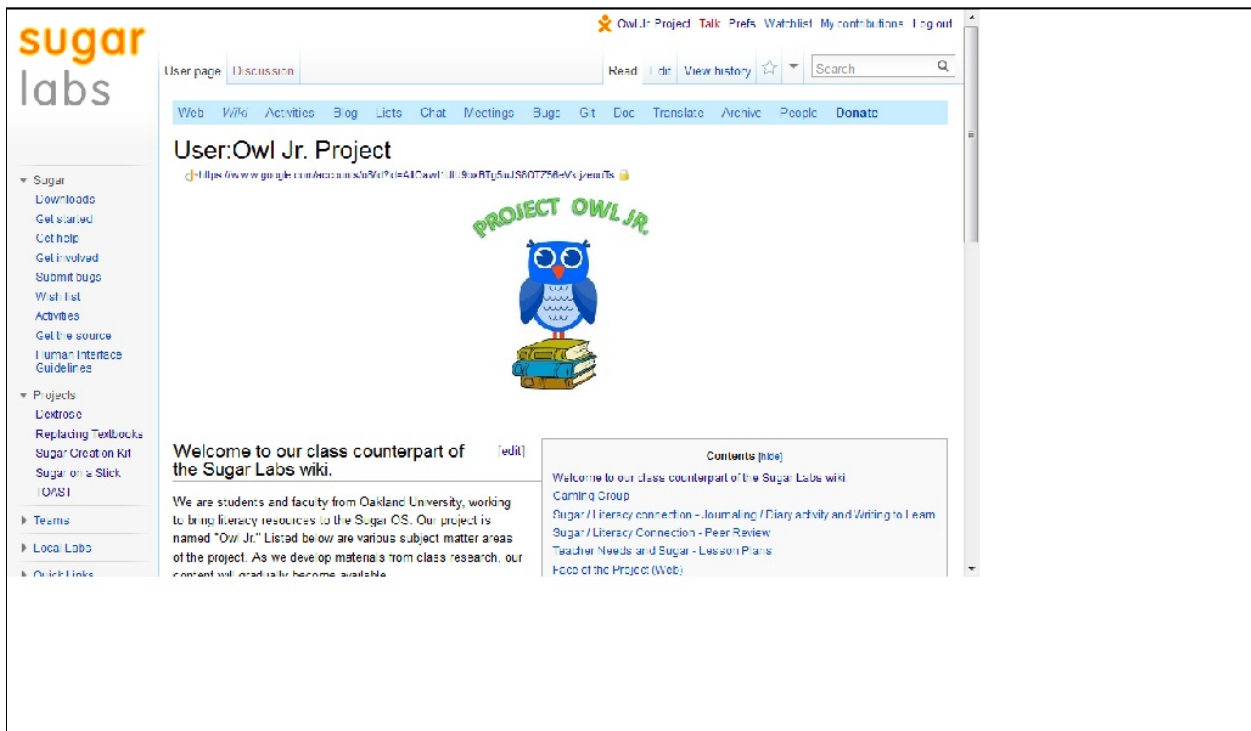
Screenshot:



## Project Owl Jr. Wiki Page

The Owl Jr. Wiki page was created in Sugar Labs' Wiki, primarily as a site to share information between students and faculty working on Owl Jr., and Sugar OS developers. Each team has a dedicated section for posting research materials. However, the sections are no longer separated by team name; instead the information will be presented in sections divided by content/genre. Recently, materials from teams two, three, and five have been posted, as well as the Owl Jr. Logo.

Screenshot:



## Project Owl Jr. Facebook Page

While the Facebook page has been in existence for some time now, it still needs to be updated periodically. We have continued to post status updates, integrate information from other groups within our class, add/like different groups and organizations who are also on Facebook, and have recently uploaded the new project logo as the main picture.

Screenshot:



## References

Fleischner, M.H. (2011). *SEO Made Simple: Strategies for Dominating the World's Largest Search Engine*. United States.

Satterfield, B. (2006). What can social networking do for your organization? *The technology place for nonprofits*. Retrieved from: <http://www.techsoup.org/learningcenter/internet/archives/page9215.cfm>

SEOMoz.com (2012). *How Usability, User Experience and Content Affect Search Engine Rankings*. Retrieved from: <http://www.seomoz.org/beginners-guide-to-seo>