Original Content WG Final Report

What problem was addressed by this group?

The working group focused on the BTAA-GIN authored documents available on our public-facing websites, primarily our tutorials, collection guides, and reports. We were to assess the practicality and effectiveness of our current solution and make recommendations for any changes. The three issues that we focused on included:

1. Discoverability: Currently, these documents are hosted in [Google Drive](#) and findable through our project Google Sites website. These are not broadly discoverable unless someone is on our site - in which case they might not be looking for this kind of material.

2. Accessibility: These documents were created before the BTAA-GIN articulated and prioritized DEIA goals of accessibility. Our content should be updated to incorporate accessibility issues as much as possible.

3. Persistence: Google Drive documents are generally owned by an individual. If that individual leaves their position, we need to work through a series of steps to make sure the content remains online. There are other repositories and file formats that are more stable.

What we did

✓ **Identified and organized target resources**

- Identified existing GIN public content to be addressed and gathered it onto [one webpage](#) that includes Step by step tutorials, Research Guides, and Best Practices.
- Moved all other content to [Documentation](#) or [Geoportal Help](#).

✓ **Researched Accessibility issues**

- Reviewed tutorial page with [NVDA screen reader](#) and [Axe plug-in](#) for Mozilla Firefox.
- Reviewed accessibility of Google Slides presentation using NVDA screen reader, [Deque Color Content Analyzer](#), and Adobe PowerPoint Accessibility Review Tool.
- See [separate document](#) for fuller accessibility review.
- Contacted the University of Michigan Digital Accessibility Team for recommendations on Google Slides vs. PowerPoint vs. OpenOffice, but no clear winner.

✓ **Researched & Tested Platforms**

- We explored other BTAA projects and other multi-institutional projects which serve out public-facing documentation. Most or all BTAA Library Initiative groups use hosting from one of the member organizations. Some groups utilize github, but no one platform has emerged as a clear favorite.

○ We used one BTAA GIN tutorial as a test and copied the content into the following platforms to see how easy it was, how long it took, and how much it would improve accessibility.

Platform Feature Matrix

Platform	Discoverability	Accessibility	Preservability	Ease of Use and Team Access
Google Slides	not indexed	weak	tied to individual accounts; could be migrated to Shared Drive	everyone in Program Team can already edit; easy
PowerPoint	not indexed	strong	proprietary file format; main content exportable	everyone in Program Team can already edit; easy
Google Sites	indexed	medium	tied to individual accounts; could be migrated to Shared Drive	everyone in Program Team can already edit; slow
GitHub	indexed	strong	Markdown files can be copied and stored	Program Team would need to set up GitHub accounts; moderate learning curve

Platform Pros & Cons

platform	pros	cons
Google Slides (with a different template)	everyone knows how to make these free content is already in this format easy to adopt by classroom instructors	does not provide robust accessibility review (requires external tools to assess) not very accessible for screen readers not well indexed in Google searches, hindering discoverability
PowerPoint example	robust accessibility review tools extra accessibility features (ex. marking images "decorative") Well known by users	compatibility problems with other programs (i.e., accessible improvements are fragile and may be stripped out if converted to or opened in another program embedded audio and video may not persist if converted into another format

Google Site [example](#)	indexed in search engines Screen reader can parse through headings and navigation site already exists	tedious implementation not very customizable: not much control over navigation placement forced to use long UMN based URL
GitHub Pages [example](#)	indexed in search engines fully customizable Screen reader can parse through headings and navigation in use by other documentation for both BTAA-GIN and GeoBlacklight projects exit strategy: better persistence as the files can be viewed and cloned by anyone	learning curve will limit widespread editing; requires its own tutorial mainly used only by Karen right now Owned by Microsoft, will free access continue?

Potential Next Steps

Discoverability

☐ Select Platform
- Maintain existing Tutorials page with embedded content:
    - Keep content in Google Slides or
    - Migrate to Microsoft PowerPoint

- Migrate content to pages on Google Site
    - Copy and paste content into new site pages using the interactive editor

- Migrate content to new website built with Markdown files hosted in GitHub Pages
    - Conduct training on using Markdown and GitHub
    - Copy and paste content into Markdown files

☐ Submit tutorials to the [Instruction Materials by and for GIS librarians and practitioners](#) for broader reach.

Accessibility

☐ If current site is maintained, <h#> headings should be consistently structured on the Tutorial page, if possible, to better support table-of-contents-style browsing with a screen reader.

☐ If slides are retained, at minimum and to ensure adherence to W3C accessibility guidelines:
- Color contrast of slides should be changed;

- Images should be reviewed to ensure they have alt-text or are marked as decorative;
- We may wish to remove purely decorative elements (logos, horizontal rules, gray triangles) or to make these part of a background image to reduce the number of elements that need to be marked as "decorative" for screen reader applications;
- Alternatively, audio voiceover could be added to mitigate most issues encountered with a screen reader.

- ☐ If slide content is migrated to GitHub Pages or Google Site, review impact on accessibility and mitigate any lost accessibility information (e.g. alt-text, browseable headings).

Persistence

- ☐ Migrate to a Google Shared drive for all Google documents
- ☐ Utilize the GitHub public organization account (geobtaa) for Markdown documents.

Recommendations

1. The Steering and Education Outreach Committees need to conduct further conversations about each platform's benefits and barriers. Should multiple formats/platforms be used?

2. The BTAA-GIN should hold group workshops for the Program Team to learn Markdown.

3. Provide accessibility training and/or guidelines for creating new original content.

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