

Innovation Report – Web design in libraries

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, libraries have had to offer most of their programming online, including registration, and might continue offering more virtual program and direct users to register via the library's website. Library staff can use HTML, CSS and JavaScript to design web pages for their library programs (either one for a specific program, or one for a series of similar programs) which would include requests for registration information, and provide confirmation of registration of information. Having the virtual registration available helps provide alternative options for library users, particularly younger library users who are comfortable with using virtual services, and can alleviate time and resources required to having people register in-person or over the phone.

In the HTML structure of a library programming page, you would have the basic tags (header, nav tags, body, footer, etc.) but could add tables and forms in to display and request information. A table could be designed to show a calendar of programming for a specific week or month on main page, with links on programming dates that would direct the user to more information and registration requirements. The form fields could ask them to enter their name, contact information (email and phone number), and ask for their library card number. Once the user submits the information, JavaScript could be used to have a script running on the page that produces a confirmation page that they have registered successfully. CSS would be used to style it using different colours, fonts or backgrounds. You could use CSS to style your web content to appeal to specific audiences (for example a web page designed for adult language classes would be styled differently from a children's story time program). The library would be able to collect the information for each program, without having to dedicate time and resources completing registration forms in person. The virtual registration offers users flexibility to register on their own time.

Using GitHub repositories would be useful in designing web pages for library programs when you are partnering with another library or community organization on the programming. You would be able to collaborate on the coding and design of your web page. If there are specific items that both partners want featured on the web page, then GitHub provides an opportunity to have each review and work on building each element of the web page. If libraries face funding cuts after the pandemic is over, they will likely need to partner even more with other organizations to be able to offer programs to their users.