



# How do users use your website?

a look at website tracking tools

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What statistics do you use in your library to know how successful your services are?

Circulation numbers? Visitor counts?

An increasingly important statistic for libraries today is web site use. More and more of library users are interacting with the library primarily through the web site, and when they do, they leave behind a wealth of use information that librarians could be looking at for user feedback.



# Outline

- Google Analytics
  - Logging in
  - Looking at reports
  - Site Overlay
- Other free tools
  - SiteMeter.com
  - WayBack Machine

In this presentation we'll look at two free tracking tools – Google Analytics and SiteMeter.com. Both of these tools are very easy to add to a web page if you have access to the HTML code. We'll end by looking at a tool from the Internet Archive that allows your newer employees (and older employees) to see the evolution of your website.

# Google Analytics

## Pros

- Free
- Invisible on your web pages
- Extensive reports
- Site Overlay

## Cons

- Controlled by Google
- Requires access to the HTML code of your web page
- Requires a Gmail account

I'm starting with Google Analytics because that's what we've been using here at the Mortenson Center and I know several of the bigger offices on campus have been using it for their own statistics.

The Pros and Cons -- on one hand, you have the benefit of all the power and development Google can put into its products. On the other hand, all that valuable data about your website is going through an outside party.

Our library IT office used to provide web tracking statistics but the data was very basic and not very helpful. We'll look a little at the differences between helpful statistics and just plain numbers.

# Meaningful Data

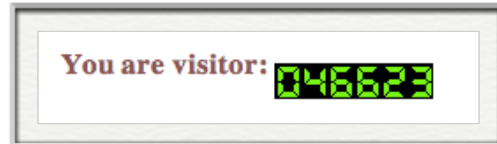
- Good:

- visitors vs. page views
- visitor locations
- visitor languages
- referrals
- length of visit

- Bonus:

- which links on your page are clicked most!

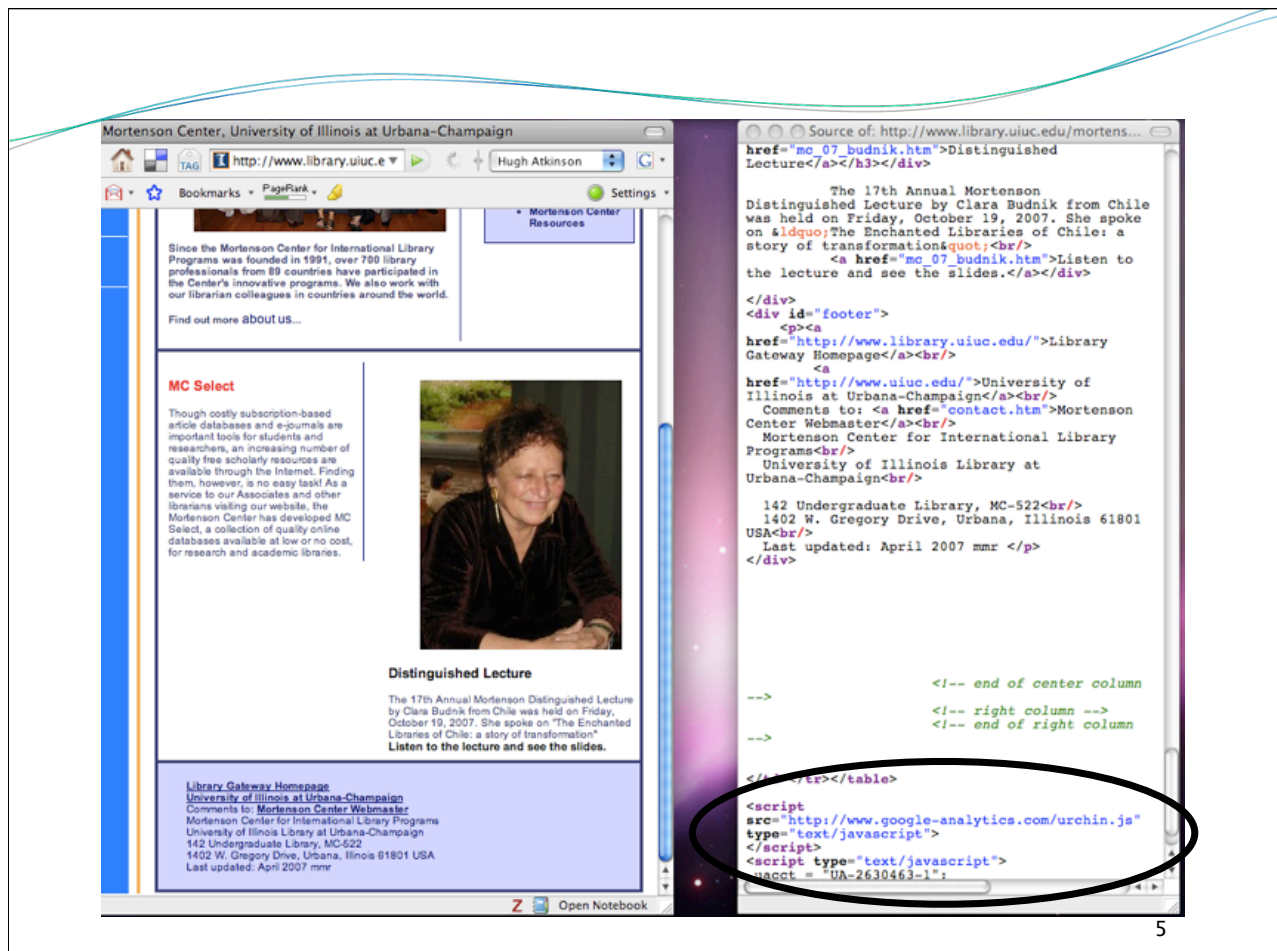
- Bad:



What is meaningful data? In terms of your website, it would be good to have lots of information about your visitors and where your visitors are coming from. It would be even better to know what your visitors did while they were on your website.

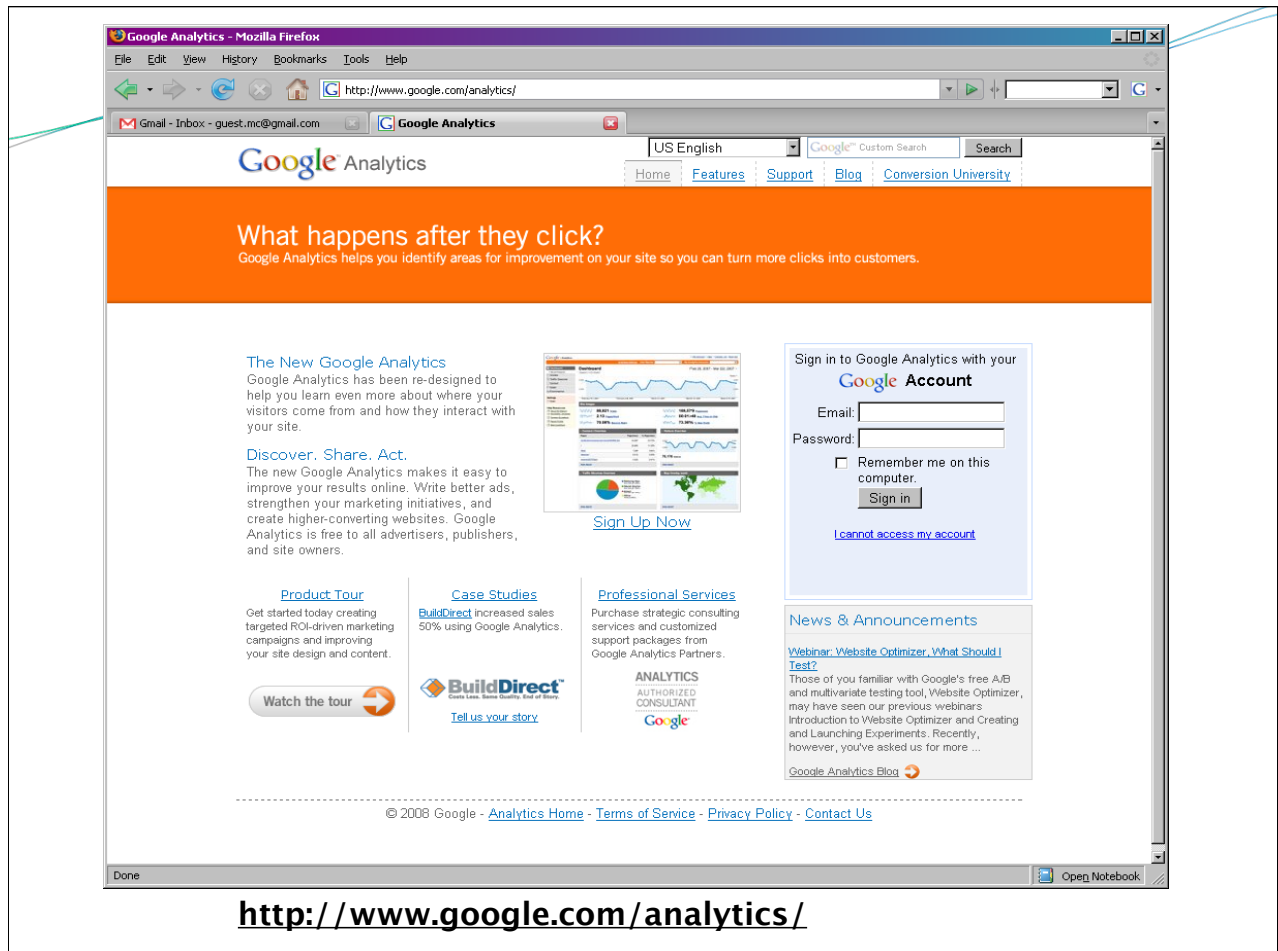
Unfortunately, a lot of library websites are still stuck in the days of Web 1.0 - back when websites were used as soliloquies rather than dialogues.

But today it's very easy to get information about how users interact with your web presence - like having each of your visitors fill out a survey every time they come see you and you don't even have to bribe them to do it.



On the left is the Mortenson Center's home page - the bottom of it. On the right is the HTML code for the page.

The Google Analytics tracker is just 6 lines of code at the bottom of each web page you want tracked and it doesn't show up in the visible web page at all. Google Analytics provides this code snippet at set-up so that it's a simple copy-and-paste. If your website uses a template or a content management system, the code snippet could be inserted just once on the main template in order to apply to all your pages based on that template.

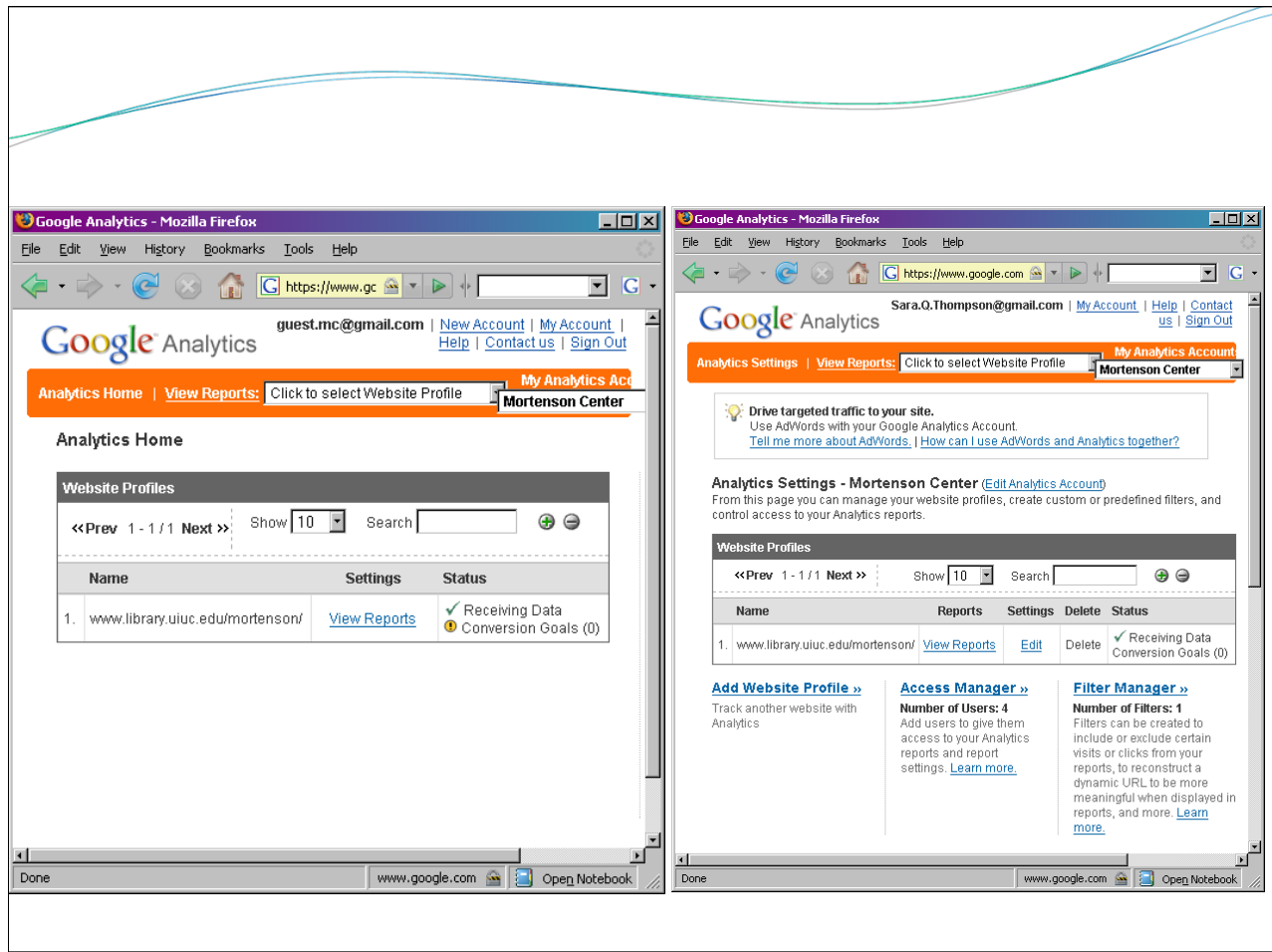


<http://www.google.com/analytics/>

Log in info -

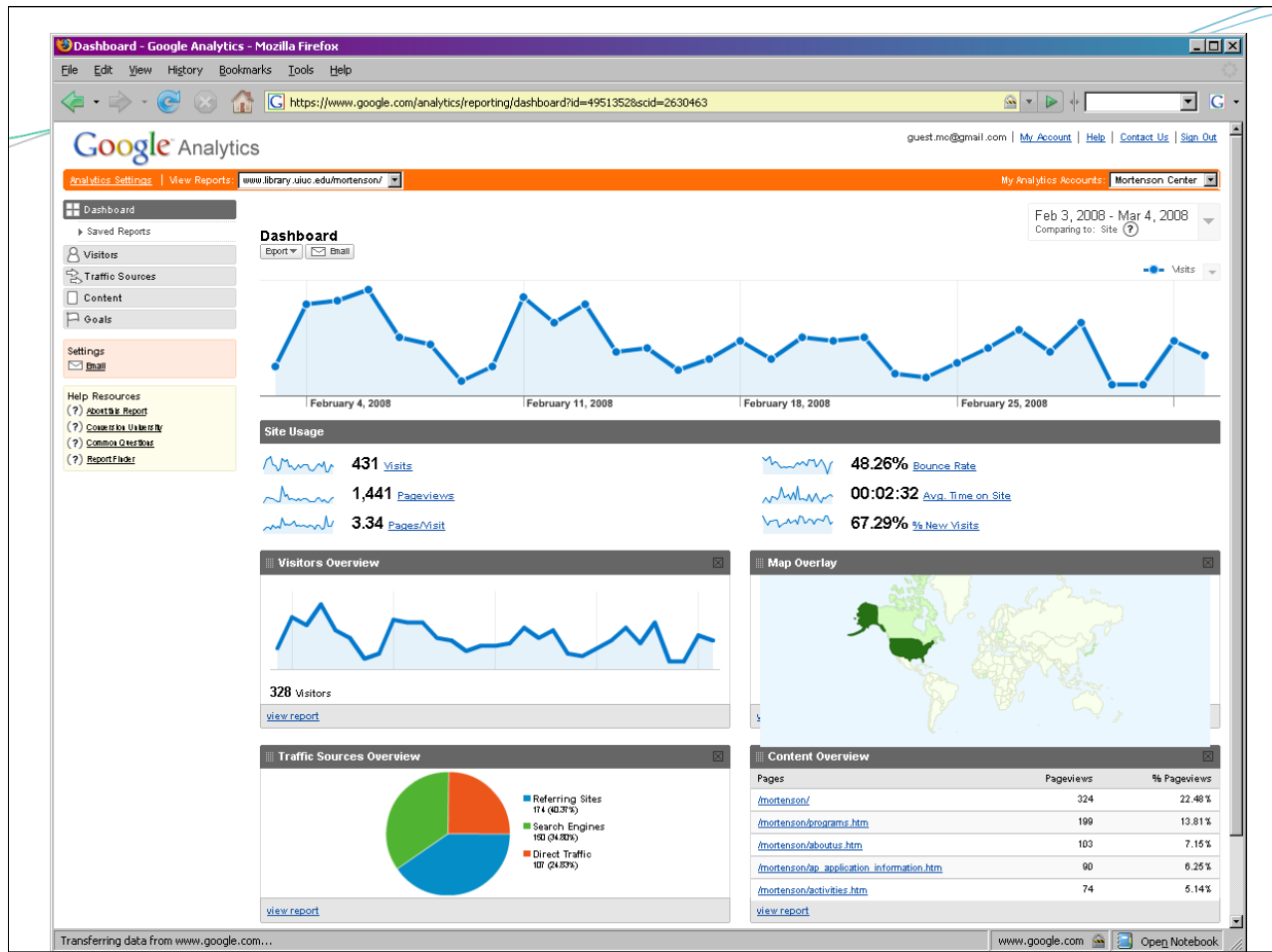
Email: guest.mc@gmail.com

Password: UnderGrad



The account Guest.MC only has “view” permissions for the Mortenson Analytics. An administrator account – such as the one on the right – has the option to add users and manage filters.

For this demonstration, we’re only looking at reports so the Guest.MC account is all we’ll need. Let’s get started by clicking on “View Reports” in the middle of the screen.



The first screen you'll see is called the Dashboard. This Dashboard screen is sort of like the dashboard of your car – it has little windows that tell you a brief status of the different parts of your car. From the Dashboard you can click “view report” from any of these little windows in order to see more about that information.

For a simple quick way to see your data, you can click on the tiny “Export” link below the Dashboard title. This gives you the two options PDF or XML. I always choose PDF, which then gives me a colorful clean report about our website traffic.

You can also change how the windows appear on your Dashboard by dragging them to different spots on the page or clicking on the X to remove the window from the Dashboard. You can always get a window back by going to that section from the gray sidebar on the left side of the Dashboard.

We'll explore: Map Overlay and Content/Site Overlay



# SiteMeter.com

## Pros

- Free
- doesn't use JavaScript
- Simple, straight-forward reports

## Cons

- requires a visible image
- requires access to the HTML code of your web page
- extensive reports require subscription plans



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University of Texas - Austin  
**Title to be announced**  
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2:30pm

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**University of Illinois Department of Finance  
Site Summary**

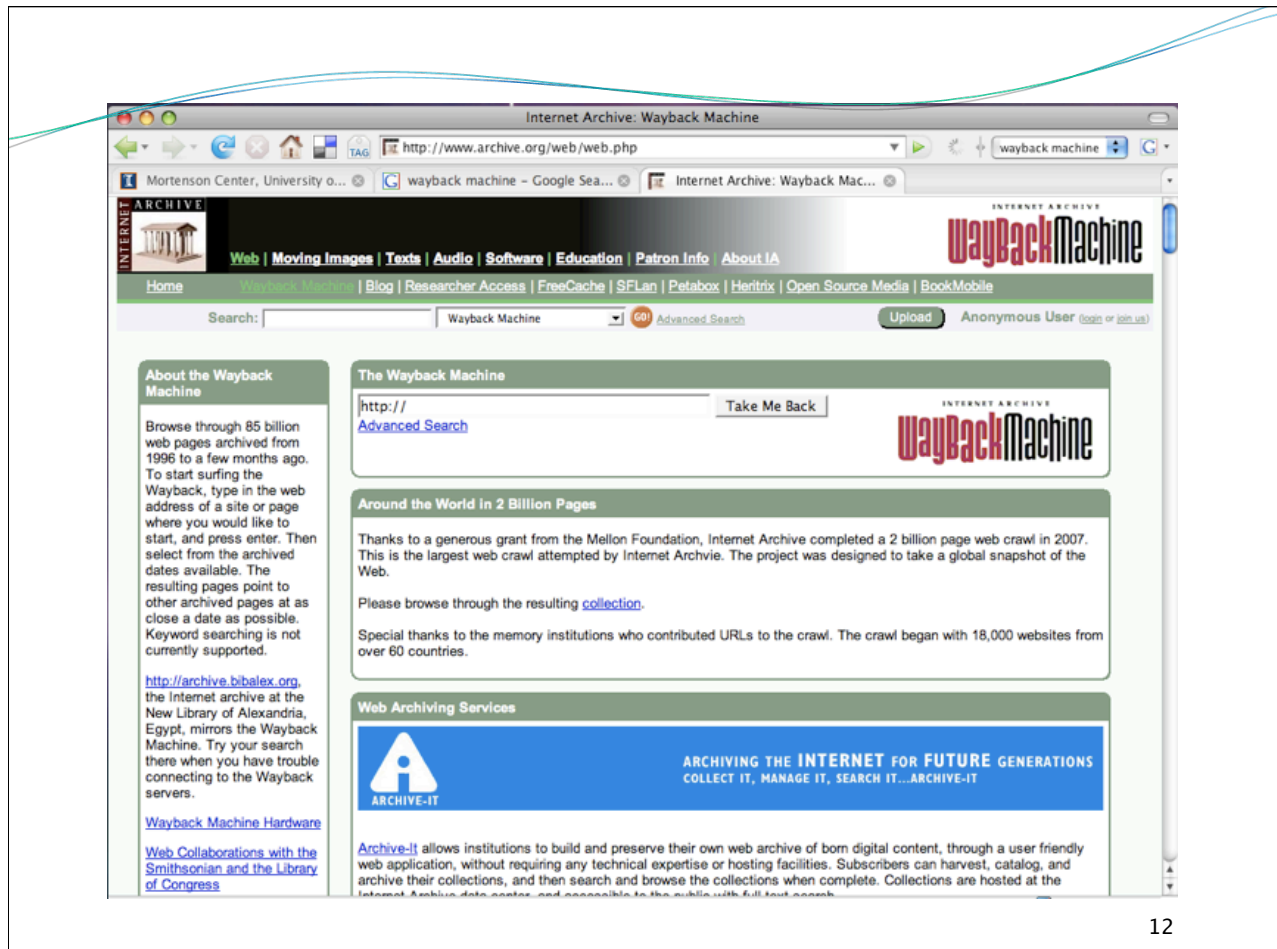
**VISITS**

Total	120,635
Average Per Day	165
Average Visit Length	3:40
Last Hour	4
Today	113
This Week	1,153

**PAGE VIEWS**

Total	371,733
Average Per Day	524
Average Per Visit	3.2
Last Hour	31
Today	324
This Week	3,665

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## The Wayback Machine at Internet Archive <http://www.archive.org/web/>

What is the Wayback Machine? This is a very ambitious project aiming to archive the internet. They crawl through websites and take snapshot of how the websites look at that particular time so that as webpages change, there will still be an archived or cached copy of previous versions. In most of the offices I've worked in, we were diligent about keeping drafts of documents but I haven't really seen any office or organization keep old copies of its website - not in any organized matter at least. We need to be thinking of our websites in the same manner we think of any other documentation - as artifacts suitable for record-keeping. The Wayback Machine attempts to do that but it's not a completely reliable source yet. Don't be surprised if your website only has a couple versions recorded, if any.

I searched for the Mortenson website ...

Note some duplicates are not shown. [See all.](#)

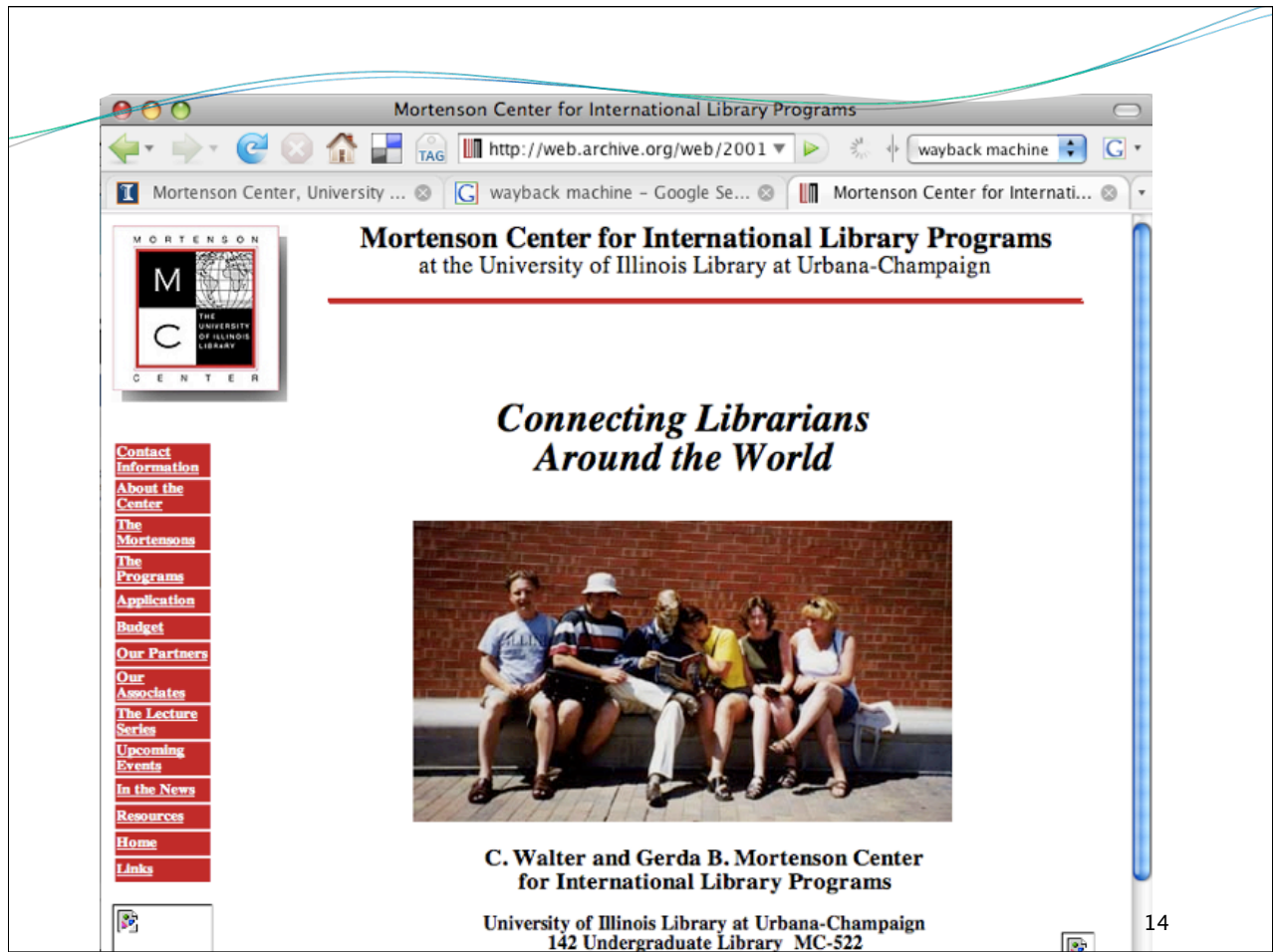
\* denotes when site was updated.

Material typically becomes available here 6 months after collection. [See FAQ.](#)

**Search Results for Jan 01, 1996 - Sep 19, 2007**

1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
0 pages	0 pages	0 pages	1 pages	1 pages	19 pages	5 pages	3 pages	9 pages	9 pages	9 pages	7 pages
			<a href="#">Feb 25, 1999</a> *	<a href="#">Aug 17, 2000</a> *	<a href="#">Aug 23, 2001</a> * <a href="#">Oct 11, 2001</a> * <a href="#">Oct 13, 2001</a> * <a href="#">Oct 15, 2001</a> * <a href="#">Oct 16, 2001</a> * <a href="#">Oct 19, 2001</a> * <a href="#">Oct 20, 2001</a> * <a href="#">Oct 22, 2001</a> * <a href="#">Nov 01, 2001</a> * <a href="#">Nov 06, 2001</a> * <a href="#">Nov 08, 2001</a> * <a href="#">Nov 09, 2001</a> * <a href="#">Nov 10, 2001</a> * <a href="#">Nov 11, 2001</a> * <a href="#">Nov 16, 2001</a> * <a href="#">Nov 20, 2001</a> * <a href="#">Nov 24, 2001</a> * <a href="#">Nov 26, 2001</a> * <a href="#">Nov 29, 2001</a> *	<a href="#">Feb 08, 2002</a> * <a href="#">May 21, 2002</a> * <a href="#">Jun 12, 2002</a> * <a href="#">Aug 02, 2002</a> * <a href="#">Oct 18, 2002</a> *	<a href="#">Apr 09, 2003</a> * <a href="#">Jun 04, 2003</a> *	<a href="#">Feb 15, 2004</a> * <a href="#">Apr 01, 2004</a> * <a href="#">Jun 07, 2004</a> * <a href="#">Jun 11, 2004</a> * <a href="#">Jun 16, 2004</a> * <a href="#">Aug 03, 2004</a> * <a href="#">Aug 12, 2004</a> * <a href="#">Oct 10, 2004</a> * <a href="#">Dec 06, 2004</a> *	<a href="#">Feb 05, 2005</a> * <a href="#">Apr 03, 2005</a> * <a href="#">Aug 07, 2005</a> * <a href="#">Aug 30, 2005</a> * <a href="#">Oct 28, 2005</a> * <a href="#">Oct 29, 2005</a> * <a href="#">Nov 10, 2005</a> * <a href="#">Dec 12, 2005</a> * <a href="#">Dec 18, 2005</a> *	<a href="#">Feb 04, 2006</a> * <a href="#">Jul 11, 2006</a> * <a href="#">Jul 16, 2006</a> * <a href="#">Aug 14, 2006</a> * <a href="#">Aug 15, 2006</a> * <a href="#">Aug 19, 2006</a> * <a href="#">Aug 30, 2006</a> * <a href="#">Aug 31, 2006</a> * <a href="#">Dec 05, 2006</a> *	<a href="#">Jan 20, 2007</a> * <a href="#">Feb 05, 2007</a> * <a href="#">Feb 07, 2007</a> * <a href="#">May 04, 2007</a> * <a href="#">Jul 08, 2007</a> * <a href="#">Aug 26, 2007</a> * <a href="#">Aug 29, 2007</a> *

... and was able to retrieve cached copies going back to 1999. I pulled up October 16, 2001.



And this, according to the Wayback Machine, is what the Mortenson website looked like almost seven years ago. As you can see, some images are missing and I won't even try the links because they most likely won't work -- the Wayback Machine doesn't crawl very deep into any given website.

But if you keep an archive like this (or if your IT department has an archive it will let you access) and you couple that with a long-term robust web tracking system, within just a couple years you can look back on previous webpage layouts and web statistics to see what has worked best for your users. It doesn't do us any good to have the best and most expensive databases if our users can't even find them.

# Questions?



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