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The SeamlessAccess Audit Toolkit: A Framework for Librarians to Audit Resource Access

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Access Audit Toolkit

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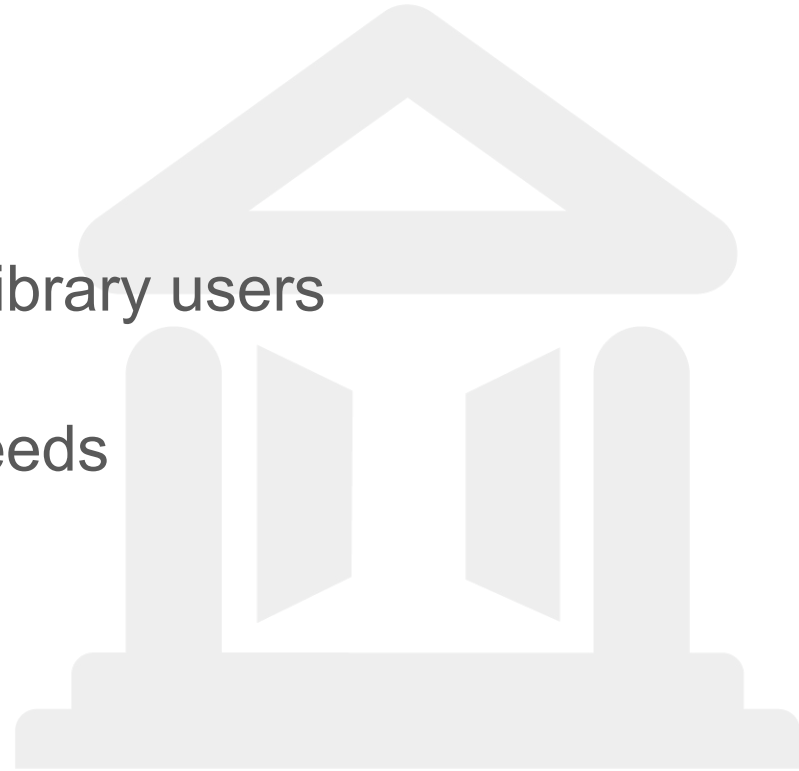
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Why access matters

- User Expectations

- Poor access experience deters library users

- Increased e-resource support needs

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The challenge with staying on top of access

- Technology

- Regulatory Environment

- Scale

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Introducing the Access Audit Toolkit

- **Framework** for assessing the quality of your access experience

- **Recommendations** on best practices, industry standards, etc

- **Communications tool** to improve knowledge and awareness

- **Business case** for investment to improve the access experience

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Usability

Usability #1: Is it obvious HOW to get access?

1. Is the primary access option clearly distinguished from other

2. Do options clearly communicate intent e.g. purchase

3. Are there a maximum of 3 alternative options

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Usability #2: Can I easily select my institutional affiliation?

1. Does the list show all institutions, do not hide institutions.

2. Does the list indicate if an institution may not provide access?

3. Can I quickly filter the complete institutional list?

4. Does it allow for remembering my selected institution?

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Usability #3: Is access accessible for all users?

1. Can users navigate the access interface using their keyboard?

2. Is there appropriate contrast?

3. Can content be easily magnified?

4. Is it screen-reader friendly, including institutional selection?

5. Does it support non-English languages?

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Usability Resources

- [Clarity of access entry point](#)

- [Institution Selection](#)

- [Accessibility](#)

Example (Bad)

A fictitious publisher, which shows discovery options.

Example (Good)

A fictitious publisher, which places access options in the article body.

- [✓] All access options are colocated.
- [✓] Primary access option is clearly visible
- [✓] Secondary and tertiary access options are clearly delineated.
- [✓] Login options are grouped together.
- [✓] Additional help options are provided (e.g. contact Library).

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Privacy

Privacy

Principles

- All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. (ALA Library Bill of Rights)

- It is the responsibility of the library to understand how patron data is collected, used, shared, and stored.

Questions

1. Who controls the data being collected? The library, the vendor, a middle-man?

2. Who could theoretically capture and store the data unintentionally?

3. What data is necessary for information seeking, and what is optional?

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Privacy #1: What patron data is shared automatically without patron knowledge?

- Example questions:
  - Is patron data transferred to vendors without patron approval?
  - What specific pieces of data are shared, and how much of it is personally identifiable information?
  - How is any shared data stored?
  - Is any data shared with third parties?
  - Are patron credentials stored securely if used?
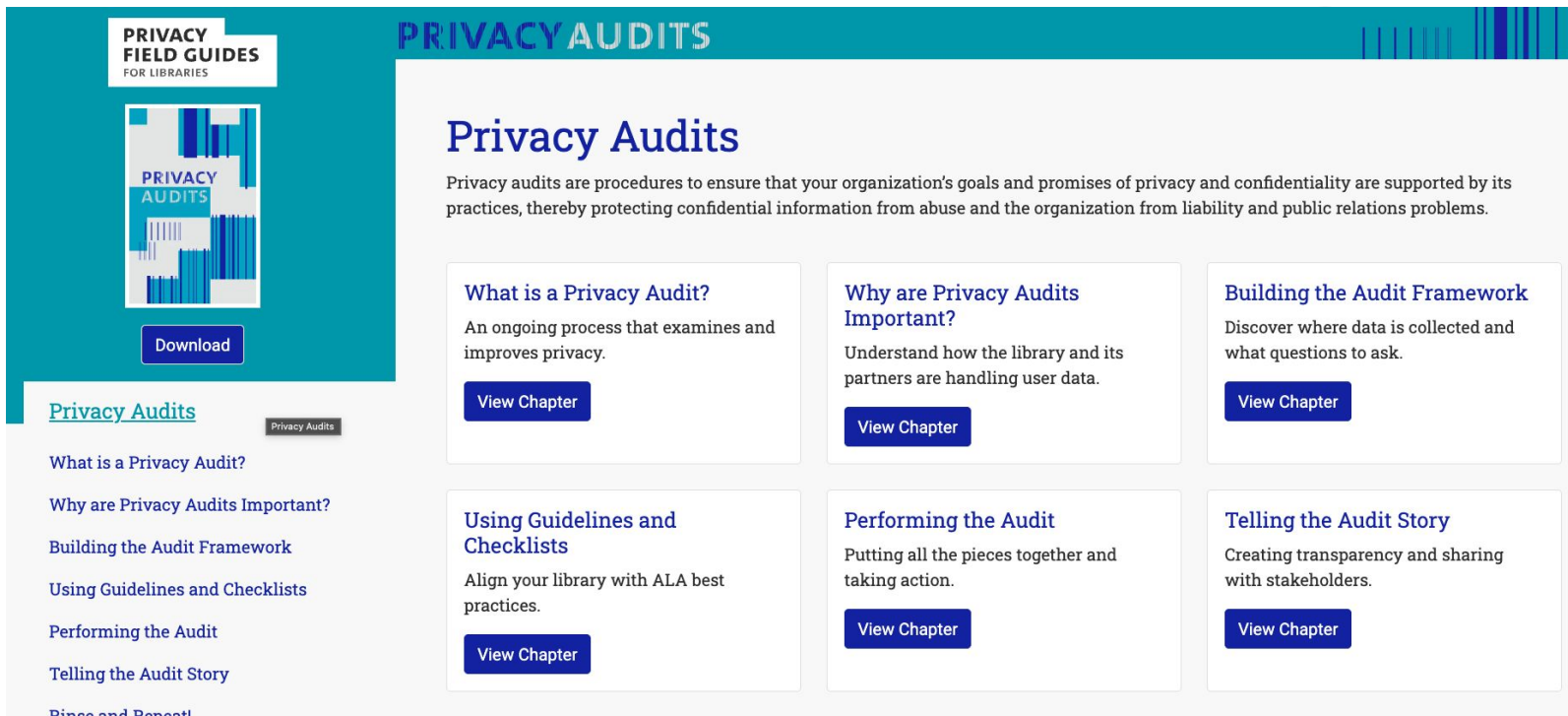
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Privacy #2: What data is shared with vendors with patron permission?

- Example questions:
  - How do patrons authenticate with vendors?
  - Are patrons required to share personal information in order to access services?
  - Do vendors provide reading lists or other saving of reading habits?
  - How is permission gained to store patron information?
  - Can patrons delete their data if they so desire?

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Privacy #3: What data is collected internally by library or library IT regarding patrons?

- Example questions:
  - What are all of the systems in use that could collect patron data? ILS, Proxy server, SSO, LMS…
  - Is anonymous or pseudonymous access supported in any way?
  - Is patron consent required before data is collected?
  - Are patron credentials stored securely if collected?
  - How is any data that is collected used? In aggregate, and if so how?

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Privacy Audit Resources

https://libraryprivacyguides.org

Privacy Audit Resources

Library Freedom Project / Vendor Privacy Audit

YOUR LIBRARY'S NAME

VENDOR

TODAY'S DATE

PRODUCT/DATABASE/TOOL

See the attached Infosheet for instructions on interpreting the questions below. Mark the applicable column for yes, otherwise leave blank.	GOOD	RISKY
Does the vendor have a privacy policy or Terms of Service with a privacy statement that is clear and easy to understand?		
Does the vendor track users?		
Does the vendor share patron data with 3rd parties?		
If the vendor collects patron data, do they collect only what is necessary to provide their specific service?		

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https://libraryfreedom.org/resources/

Privacy Audit Resources

Privacy Field Guides for Libraries

https://libraryprivacyguides.org

Library Freedom Project Vendor Privacy Scorecard and Audit

https://libraryfreedom.org/resources/

ALA Privacy Guidelines

https://www.ala.org/advocacy/privacy/guidelines

Prioritizing Privacy

https://prioritizingprivacy.org/

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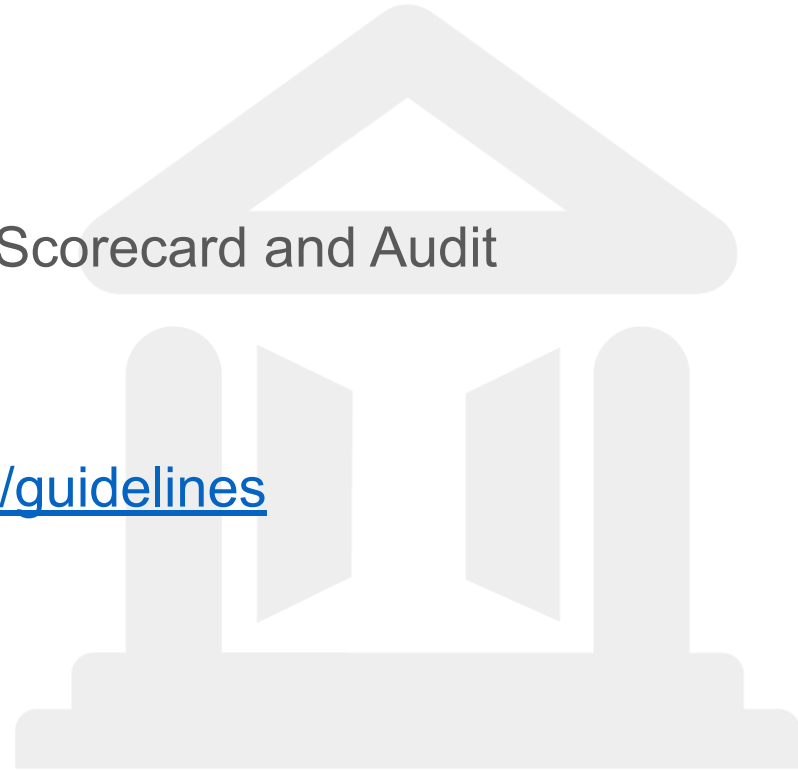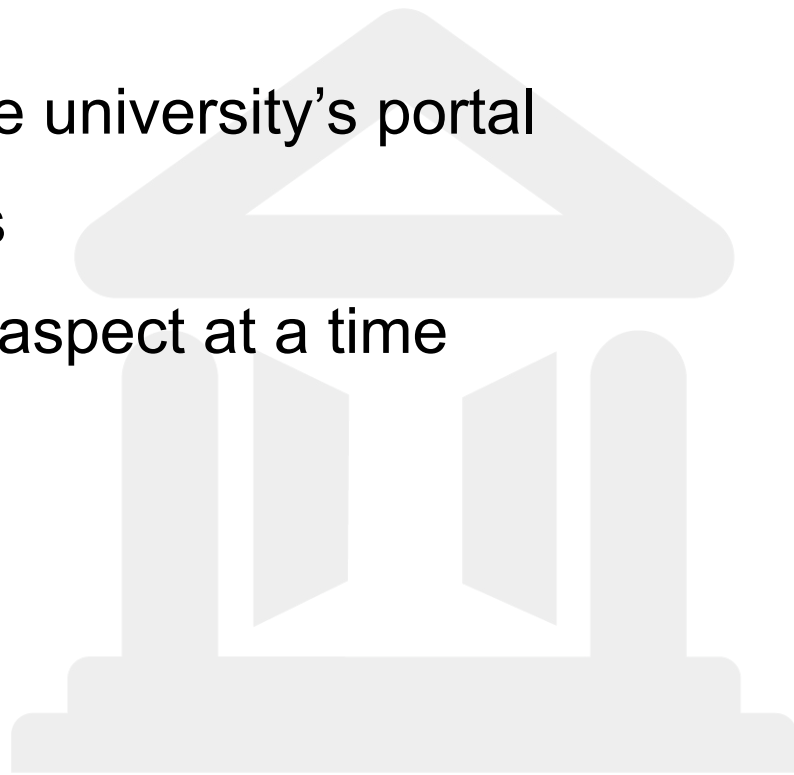Access.org

Using the toolkit

- Start research outside of the university's portal

- Emulate off-campus access

- One vendor at a time / one aspect at a time

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Usability

Authentication

- Very inconsistent access interfaces w/o SeamlessAccess

- "Pay" prominence

- Consistent interfaces when using SeamlessAccess

Affiliation

- Widely varying institutional lookups

- Full of jargon

- Consistent institutional discovery with SeamlessAccess enabled

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Privacy

General

- We're blind to most privacy-preserving practices

- Privacy policies vs. terms of use

Authentication

- Privacy vs. personalization

- Consent fatigue

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Closing

- Valuable
- Doable

- Challenges
- Worthwhile

- Helpful resources

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