

APA Style Central

Preview Date:01 December 2016

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| Recommendation | Comparison Review in Future |
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APA Style Central is an online resource for APA style and documentation, the APA Handbook in an interactive form. It is designed to serve as an interactive tool with which to develop, write, and manage papers and references adhering to APA format for the entry-level college student to the researcher intending to publish.

Method

A CCL-EAR committee member investigated a trial version of *APA Style Central*. The previewer examined several of videos, learning objects including quizzes, the reference books and sample papers as well as explored some of the templates for writing papers and managing references.

Preview

- **Content**

Content is unique in that it focuses on current edition of APA style, and that it has been created and is maintained by the American Psychological Association. Users are able to write new papers and upload/revise papers and references as well as collaborate within *APA Style Central*. There are several interactive tools (sample papers, citation generator, paper templates, title template) to assist users in building a paper or publication adhering to current APA style. *APA Style Central* includes full-text access to 14 reference books, the *Dictionary of Psychology* and *Dictionary of Statistics and Research Methods*. However, full-text access to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* is not included. Several learning objects are also available. These include Quick Guides (short videos on very specific aspects of APA such as “Numerals Versus Words”), Tutorials (longer videos that go more in-depth on broader topics such as “How to Determine Authorship”), Self-Quizzes and sample papers, tables and references. Embed links are available for learning objects for integration into a learning management system course shell or a webpage.

- **Interface**

The interface is clean and directive, and organized by task (e.g. Learn, Research, Write, Publish).

The screenshot shows the top portion of the APA Style CENTRAL website. The header contains the site's logo, the American Psychological Association logo, a user profile area with a 'Welcome' message and a 'My File Cabinet' dropdown menu (containing 'My References', 'My Papers', and 'My Favorites'), and a 'My Alerts' link. Below the header is a horizontal navigation bar with five colored buttons: 'HOME' (blue), 'LEARN' (green), 'RESEARCH' (grey), 'WRITE' (orange), and 'PUBLISH' (red). The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column has a heading 'Welcome to APA Style CENTRAL' followed by a paragraph explaining the site's goal to help users think and write like a seasoned professional. The right column features a 'Learn About APA Style CENTRAL' section with two blue buttons: 'I Am a Student' and 'I Am an Instructor'. At the bottom of the page, there are four large, light-colored buttons labeled 'LEARN', 'RESEARCH', 'WRITE', and 'PUBLISH'.

Included in the header of all pages is a My File Cabinet section so that users can easily navigate to saved papers and references as well as favorite learning objects. Another part of the header is the Welcome section where users can create and update their profile, field and role (Undergraduate Student, Writing Instructor, Librarian, etc.) The need for scrolling on pages is minimal and *APA Style Central* does a good job of directing the user to specific tasks or needs with clear and concise language. For instance, when selecting the Write link, users have two choices: “Start a New Paper” or “Work on Saved Paper”. If they choose a new paper, they are given a choice of templates with bullet points defining each paper type (Empirical Paper, Reaction Paper, etc.). The template for writing papers is directive and easy to navigate.

Home > Writing Center > My Papers > Test Paper

The screenshot shows the writing interface within the APA Style CENTRAL system. On the left is a vertical sidebar with a navigation menu. The 'WRITE' section is highlighted in orange. Below it are links for 'Title Page', 'Body' (with a '+ New Section' button), 'References', 'Tables', 'Figures', and 'Appendices'. At the bottom of the sidebar is a 'CHECK' button. The main area is a rich text editor. At the top of the editor are three tabs: 'Edit' (active), 'Preview', and 'Collaborate'. Below the tabs is a menu bar with 'File', 'Edit', 'Insert', 'Format', and 'View'. Underneath the menu bar is a toolbar with various icons for text formatting (bold, italic, underline, text color, background color), alignment, and other functions. The editor content area is currently blank with a vertical cursor line.

The interface and tools available for the reference books is more limited. The titles are browseable and searchable but there is no print, email or save function for full-text pages. When the previewer attempted to print via the web browser, full-text was only visible for the *Dictionary of Psychology* and *Dictionary of Statistics and Research Methods* entries and not for any of the other titles. There is a zoom feature for changing size of page images.

Reference Books

Quantitative models in psychology.

Supplemental Materials

Abstract

Chapters

4. Practical issues in null hypothesis significance testing.

5. Alternatives to null hypothesis significance testing.

6. Models of measurement error.

7. Latent-variable models.

8. Preliminary concepts in structural modeling.

9. Modeling psychological

Buy the Book

Quantitative Models in Psychology

Browse and search all reference books

Page: 1 / 11

Preliminary Concepts in Structural Modeling 8

An intermittent theme of this book has been the distinction between invented models that are used as tools of inference and the modeling of psychological reality. Null hypothesis significance testing is an invented model that incorporates principles from logic and probability theory to provide a useful tool

APA Style Central also includes an Admin Center for customizing and managing the platform as well as technical support information. Institutions can upload custom logos and Contact Us links. The Admin Center offers access to MARC RDA records for the reference books as well as permalinks for the various sections or Centers (Learn, Research, etc.). Another part of the Admin Center is the Analytics section, where administrative level users can run and download reports on the number of papers started by users, reference users created with forms, personal accounts created and learning objects accessed with options to limit by date range or month. However, since the previewer had access to a trial of *APA Style Central*, there was no data to view in these categories.

- **Accessibility**

The accessibility level of *APA Style Central* seems mixed. While most of the videos and tutorials include captioning and it was possible to move around in a given page via keyboard, there were several errors on the pages that the previewer discovered through testing with accessibility checkers WAVE and aXe. Many of the errors were concentrated on the navigation menu, which seems to be image based. Pages in the full-text

reference books also seem to be image-based, which raises questions about their accessibility as well.

- **Support**

APA Central offers email and phone support. Operational hours are Monday-Friday 6:30 a.m.-11:00 p.m. and Saturday-Sunday 8:00 a.m.-11:00 p.m. EST. There is also a blog and email devoted specifically to questions related to APA style. Finding support information is not as straightforward. Email and phone contact information is located in the footer of the pages in APA Style Central but the only prominent section for support in the interface that, for instance, included a link to the blog for APA style, was on the Admin Center side of the platform.

- **Pricing**

Pricing is reasonable and tier-based on FTES.

Recommendation

The reviewer recommends reviewing this product in future. Given the unique niche that APA Central offers as a learning and writing tool for a core formatting style developed and maintained by the creators of said style, it may be worth a more in-depth review, perhaps in comparison with other citation products on the market.

Other Reviews

None found at time of preview.