



Webmasters' User Group

promoting Web publishing at Western Michigan University since 1999

Meeting Notes: 06/24/09

In attendance:

Nancy Kroes, OIT; Scott Puckett, EM; Ken Schaefer, Admissions; Carolyn Fink, Student Affairs; Kevin West, Music; Tanya Bellamy, LWI; Margaret von Steinen, Haenicke Inst.; Nicole Crocker, AE; Joe Fee, TEC; Matt Newton, EUP; Amy Brimmer, HR; Michael Whang, Library; Deb Withee, COE; Bradley Horstman, OUR; Cindy Wagner, HCOB; Thomas Westnick, HCOB; Thom Myers, OUR; Alex Aivars, CAS

Announcements:

Tuition calculator to go down temporarily

Scott Puckett announced that the tuition increase amount will be announced after approval by the Board of Trustees on July 2. The tuition calculator will be down until it is modified to accommodate any changes. If you are linking to it, you should beware.

www hardware and OS upgrade

The www.wmich.edu server is getting a hardware upgrade as well as changing from Sun OS to Linux. The changes are going in at midnight on Friday night (Saturday a.m.). No problems are anticipated, however, if you do run into any, please contact the Help Desk at 7-HELP.

New Google search appliance

The cut-over to the new search appliance will take place on Wednesday, July 1. This means the search code on all pages using the WMU search and/or site specific searches, will need to be updated. Instructions for doing so are found at <http://www.wmich.edu/oit/news/google-search.html>

Bradley Horstman demonstrated the changes he made to the WMU template – please do follow the link above and modify your copy of the template. In the long run, since he's putting in the changes as server-side includes, your job will be easier because any additional changes can be made by Bradley and your pages, if you are using the WMU template, will automatically change, without you having to do anything.

Update on the Gform to PHP online form conversion

As of June 1, there were 18 Gforms in 8 accounts still left on the server. Gform was removed from the www.wmich.edu server on May 4 so these forms are non-functioning.

Creation of an Educational Technology Committee

It is co-led by Brad Morgan from OIT and Brian Carnell from EUP. One of the things it will look at is video streaming technologies. Notes from this group may be found online at: <http://www.wmich.edu/oit/groups/edutech/index.html>

Reminder about upcoming Web conferences

A new one has been added to the WUG site (<http://www.wmich.edu/conferences.html>). Nancy Kroes, Cindy Wagner, & Deb Withee are attending the highedweb conference in Milwaukee in October. Do check them out and get your requests to go into your departments, if you have any professional development budget available. Not a lot online yet about what is being presented at highedweb. NancyK made the decision on which to attend based upon the agenda of last year's conferences.

Presentations:

Update on the WMU Web initiative

Thom Myers presented an update and passed out the below information, which was approved during the first meeting (May 28) of the Web Governance Council. In addition:

- ✚ The expectation is we will have a new WMU template early in fall semester. It will be released to limited sites, feedback will be gathered and made available during spring semester.
 - A question was asked if the entire University would be asked to move into this template. Answer is yes, with exemptions being granted only by the Web Governance Council.
 - The question was also asked if training and assistance moving to the new template will be made available. NancyK stated that WUG obtained a computer lab and put on training sessions for the last template and we anticipate that happening again. WUG will also assist in a concerted effort to get the entire University on board with the new template when it is made available.

- ✚ One of the first focus groups will address a new CMS. The review team will be 6-7 members, mostly technical, but some functional users. Product review this fall and requests for proposal for an enterprise-wide system. Anticipate having 2 to 3 vendors on campus for 2 or 3 days with meetings occurring and usability testing in a computer lab. We are probably looking at a year out before we begin migration.

- ✚ The desire is to have the entire University moved into a new Dreamweaver template before the CMS migration. The CMS template(s) will mirror the DW templates so conversion will be relatively easy.

- ✚ Web focus groups are in the process of being formed. Five groups have been identified and four of them will be ongoing.

Web Governance Council

May 28, 2009

Agenda Item No. 2

The following recommendation for University Web standards is made by Greg Lozeau, information technology, and Thom Myers, university relations, with the advice and consent of several Web managers, including Tonya Durlach, university relations; Bradley Horstman, university relations; Lisa Knutson, Auxiliary Enterprises; Nancy Kroes, information technology; Nancy Meister, student affairs; and Deb Withee, College of Education.

Domain name standards

Background

Consistency is the most fundamental principal for improving ease of navigation and promoting institutional identity. This is particularly true in the establishment of Web domains, which are an increasingly critical part of an organization's brand.

Western Michigan University supports a variety of domains and root URLs, including www.wmich.edu, xxxx.wmich.edu, xxxx.xxxx.wmich.edu and several .com and .org sites.

WMU has a legal interest in the use of its name and associated trademarks, including those contained or portrayed in domain names. These standards are intended to promote consistency in the ways in which the University, its programs and activities are portrayed on the Web, and to help assure that all sites officially representing the University, its programs and activities meet established standards.

1. The standard for all WMU Web sites will be www.wmich.edu. All pages and sites representing offices, departments, programs and organizations of the University will use www.wmich.edu/name or will, when necessary for technical reasons, have a www.wmich.edu/name alternate address or alias.

2. Only www.wmich.edu addresses will be publicized. Since all URLs will begin with same domain, inclusion of www in print, radio and television promotion will not be necessary, and offices should use wmich.edu/name.

Exempt from the publicity requirement will be units that apply for and are granted permission to maintain a .com, .net, .org or other domain.

Exempt from the publicity requirement are the following Universitywide services: elearning.wmich.edu, gowmu.wmich.edu, homepages.wmich.edu, and mail.wmich.edu.

3. Use of .com, .net, .org or other domains requires approval. There are significant legal and public relations liabilities associated with the Web. Requests for .com, .net, .org or other domains should be sent to the director of electronic communication in the Office of University Relations, which will be responsible for developing a standard application and set of procedures for approving such requests.

Offices with existing .com, .net, .org sites will be grandfathered, but will be required to complete an application for the purpose of registering the information with university relations, which is charged with keeping complete contact and other relevant information about domains and/or third-party Web hosting used to represent official offices, departments or services of the University.

Application of these standards and enforcement

The purpose of this policy is to have a set of standards for Web domains that can be applied equitably across all areas of the University and can assist department leaders, Web managers and others in planning future Web use. If absolutely necessary, the University, through various offices, has the physical ability to assign or reassign Web addresses and to deny payment on unapproved third-party Web services.

Web Governance Council

May 28, 2009

Agenda Item No. 3

The following recommendation for University Web standards is made by Greg Lozeau, information technology, and Thom Myers, university relations, with the advice and consent of several Web managers, including Tonya Durlach, university relations; Bradley Horstman, university relations; Lisa Knutson, Auxiliary Enterprises; Nancy Kroes, information technology; Nancy Meister, student affairs; and Deb Withee, College of Education.

File naming standards

Background

Consistency in the use of naming conventions for Web files and directories is both a matter of best practices and improving ease of navigation. With the anticipated implementation of an enterprisewide content management system, adoption and strict use of University file-naming conventions will be essential.

A. The following standards for file names are consistent with best practices. They are recommended to facilitate usability and marketing of WMU Web sites.

1. Name the main page in every directory index.html. Do not use home, main, default or other options. The file name, index.html, is the default on all Web servers. When index.html is used as the default page, the server recognizes it to be the main page of the directory and does not require that the file name be included at the end of the address. Thus, for publicity purposes in print, the shorter wmich.edu/news can, and should be used instead of wmich.edu/news/index.html.
2. Do not use blank spaces, underscores, or special characters in file or folder names. Although most servers will substitute %20 for the blank space, having spaces in Web addresses is confusing. Underscores do not show up in an underlined link on a Web page, and their use also is confusing.
3. Use lowercase for all file and folder names. It is far less confusing when giving Web addresses over the phone if they are all lowercase rather than mixed case addresses. Use only lower case letters, numbers and hyphens, and use periods only as separators from file extensions. Examples: /report/2008.html, /photos/dunn-john.jpg.
4. Shorten file and directory names. Directory and file names become part of the Web address. Shorter is better. For example, use tools rather than tools-of-the-trade for the name of a file or folder.
5. Use the file extension html rather than htm for WMU pages. It is less confusing if consistent file extensions are used throughout WMU's site.

B. The following standards for file names will improve promotion of Web pages. Names of Web files and folders, become part of the Web address (URL). The relative ease of giving out the full Web address over the telephone or including it in an e-mail message is facilitated by using short names that follow consistent naming conventions.

1. To the greatest extent possible, all primary Web addresses--those for offices, colleges, departments and campus services, will be composed of a single, relevant, easy to spell, easy to remember, easy to market, English language word. [Examples: wmich.edu/music, wmich.edu/alumni]
- 1a. Existing Web addresses will be honored to the greatest extent possible. Any changes would likely be tied to migration to an enterprisewide content management system.
- 1b. The Web Governance Council will determine assignment of Web addresses for common words, which might apply to a variety of units within the University. For example, words such as academics, art, business, conferences, education, engineering, faculty, health, language, leadership, learning, news, research, resources, students and others, which might apply to a variety of units, will be assigned based on institutional priorities as determined by the council.
2. In those cases in which a single word is not practical or has already been assigned, multiple words may be used. Hyphenation should be avoided unless absence of hyphenation produces an undesirable combination. [Example: /faculty-senate/ is preferable to /faculty-senate/, and /faculty/ or /senate/, unless already assigned, would be better.]
3. Acronyms and abbreviations should be avoided to the greatest extent possible. [Example: /business/ instead of /hcob/]
4. Directory names describing common functions will be identified by the Web Content Group and established as Universitywide

standards by the Web Governance Council. [Example: /contact/ would lead to a standard page containing relevant contact information for the associated Web site. Contact information for the University would reside at wmich.edu/contact, and for the Department of Dance at wmich.edu/dance/contact.

Application of these standards and enforcement

The purpose of this policy is to have a set of standards for file naming that can be applied equitably across all areas of the University and can greatly assist Web developers by giving them a common set of rules to follow for file naming. If absolutely necessary, the University, through various offices, has the physical ability to assign or reassign Web addresses and accounts, and to remove noncompliant material from University Web servers.

Web Governance Council

May 28, 2009
Agenda Item No. 4

For the purpose of codifying longstanding University policy and practice, the following recommendation for University Web policy is made by Greg Lozeau, information technology, and Thom Myers, university relations.

Web advertising and listing of sponsors

Background

Western Michigan University, is a 501(c)3 non-profit, tax-exempt organization, and is subject to federal and state laws regarding sources of income, political activities, use of property, and other matters.

Furthermore, .edu domains are intended to designate non-commercial, academic Web sites.

Furthermore, the University has exclusivity agreements with certain vendors to provide certain products and services. Such agreements may or may not include noncompetition clauses for advertising in campus facilities or via University media.

The University, therefore, has a vested legal interest in all forms of sponsorship and advertising that might appear on official University Web pages.

Definitions

For the purposes of this document, "donors" are defined as those who contribute to the University through the WMU Foundation and are eligible for tax-deductible consideration as defined by the International Revenue Service. See "donor listings."

"Sponsors" are defined as those who make direct contributions to University activities, which might typically include local retailers who may anticipate public recognition or other benefits for their contributions. See "sponsor listings."

A. Commercial advertising

Consistent with existing WMU Rules For Use of Computing Resources, which prohibits commercial use, it is University policy to prohibit commercial advertising on all wmich.edu Web pages.

Commercial advertising may be permitted on University-owned .com domains, provided a request to include advertising was part of the original or supplemental WMU application to purchase and maintain a .com., .net, or other domain.

B. Political advertising

Political advertising is expressly prohibited on all Web sites and pages funded in part or whole by Western Michigan University or maintained in part or whole using any University resources.

C. Sponsor listings

Listings of sponsors of a specific event or series of events are permitted. [Example: A list of local retailers sponsoring Bronco Bash or other student activity.]

Listings that imply sponsorship of a WMU Web site or page, or of a University college, department, office or other unit are prohibited. WMU is the exclusive sponsor of all University units and Web pages.

Sponsor listings may contain any or all of the following:

1. Simple text listing of sponsor names, addresses, phone numbers and/or Web addresses.
2. Sponsor logos.
3. Web links to sponsors' Web sites.

Web sponsor listings may not contain hours of service, price information, inducements such as coupons or special offers, or any information other than listed above. Such additional information might constitute commercial advertising, which is prohibited.

D. Donor listings

Donor listings are permitted on WMU Web pages. Recognition of persons and organizations supporting the University, its academic programs, its students and faculty, and other activities through charitable gift contributions as defined by the Internal Revenue Service and as recognized by the WMU Foundation are permitted.

There are specific IRS regulations with regard to limits on donor recognition and other benefits given to donors. To protect the tax-deductible status of donor contributions, departments are strongly encouraged to contact the WMU Foundation before publishing any donor listings.

Application of these standards and enforcement

The purpose of this policy is to have a set of standards for advertising and sponsor listings on WMU Web pages that can be applied equitably across all areas of the University. If absolutely necessary, the University, through various offices, has the physical ability to remove any noncompliant or offending material from University Web servers and to cancel any third-party Web hosting services purchased in the name of the University.

Next Meeting - Wednesday, July 29 in the Stewart Tower conference room, University Computing Center.