Who Moved My Website?

Experiences in Obtaining End-User Buy-In

Kelly Sattler
Kevin Finkenbinder
Jenny Brandon
History

• Centralized editing control of the website
  – Frustrated editors
• Next step: Content Management System
• CMS Decision Chart
  – Cascade Server
  – Drupal
  – Joomla
Project Management

• Scope and solid build
• Communications
  – “World Tour” of meetings
  – Beta users
• Usability studies
Migration

• Targeted 1,496 pages to move
  – Dynamic – Web Services
  – Static – Content owners (spreadsheet)

• Training

• Drupalpalooza

• On August 14, 2013 we launched with 803 published pages.

• Received the MSU Libraries’ Special Projects Staff Award
Software Development - Goals

- Retain all existing functionality
- Simplify existing code AND USER INTERFACE
- Move theming and design into CMS theming layer
- Use public Drupal modules when possible to speed deployment
Software Development – Challenges

• Existing code was very disjointed
  – written by numerous people – most no longer at MSU
  – student intern code
    • Some pages had 20 SQL queries where only 1 or 2 were needed.

• Java Server Pages (jsp) code is a different paradigm than PHP.
Software Development – Challenges

• Moving from professionals maintaining content to users maintaining content
  – Limit ability to “destroy” the site.
  – Maintain unified theme
  – Accessibility and usability requirements

• Access to legacy information
Software Development – Solutions

• Agile principles
  – Iterative development
  – Communication/adaptation cycle

• Multi-layered development environment

• Specialized, not compartmentalized, development
  – Ben - forms
  – Jenny - theming
Software Development – Solutions

- Focus on functional equivalence with more flexible design for future changes
- Lock down editing tools and generously give extra permissions where needed
- Transparently forward to existing site where functional equivalence was not possible
Training

• Started with more tech savvy “Intranet Editors”
• Training materials included annotated screen shots whenever possible
• Classroom assistants
• Working on “live” page if possible
Training

• Training used as feedback/beta test for development
• Iterative training materials
• Work session ending each class
  • Drupalpalooza
  • Videos
  • Online instructions
Who moved my website?
You did!
Information Architecture

• Site migration = overhaul of information architecture?

• Decision to retain information architecture and continue with iterative changes
  – UX team - usability testing
  – Large website, large audience, many editors
  – Stable architecture required for Fall library instruction sessions
  – Best for buy in!
Theme

• Build custom theme or use base theme?
• Decision to use a base theme
  – Small staff = not enough time to create a custom theme
  – Build on a well supported theme / framework
Selecting a Base Theme

• Criteria:
  – Accessible
  – Responsive
  – HTML5
  – Most number of installs = well supported

• Decided on Omega
  – 960gs (grid system)
  – GUI for setting up custom layouts
Design

THE WEB SITE NEEDS TO BE MORE WEBBISH.

BUT NOT TOO WEBBISH.

HOW LONG WILL THAT TAKE?
Template Design

• Same information architecture / refresh design
• Make it responsive
• Create header where image can be easily swapped out for branch libraries
• Follow then current University Brand Standards
  – MSU wordmark option
  – MSU Brand Toolkit Color Palette
Content Design

• Page layouts
• Tabbed search boxes
• Home page and branch pages
• Edited content
  – CK Editor
  – Object oriented CSS (OOCSS)
  – Added new classes as requested by editors
  – Unified look across site
Site on August 14, 2013
Life at Michigan State University...

September 4 - November 30, 2014
MSU Main Library, 1st floor Lobby

Since its inception 159 years ago on the banks of the Red Cedar River, Michigan State has undergone dramatic changes. This exhibit illustrates aspects of campus and student life 50, 100, and 150 years ago.

Take a journey through life at Michigan State University from the early years of the 1860s, through the College’s growing pains in the 1910s, and into MSU’s expansion into a world-class university in the 1960s.

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Questions?