

Special Initiative Report

Design and Implementation of The WSU Innovation Web Site

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Introduction

This project involved the design and implantation of a WSU Innovation web site, including a link to a new, "spring update" L-21 web site. Both sites provide news on recent initiatives on campus. The sites showcase faculty, student and staff research and creative activities, L21 initiatives, professional development projects, innovative curriculum development, and other current university projects. The main Innovation site includes links to pages on the Initiative to Promote Excellence in Student Learning (IPESL), Special Initiative Award (SIA) reports, the Center for Integrated Health Science Education and Practice (CIHSEP), the Leadership Academy, lists of recent undergraduate research and travel awards, and faculty and staff professional improvement fund awards. The L-21 update site focuses on a number of programs that were initiated through L-21 efforts, such as the Common Book, river studies, travel studies and sustainability efforts.

Process

In March 2007, I began to study the Dreamweaver software program, working through the tutorials. My supervisor provided a rough Word document design for the Innovation and spring update pages and dictated the basic site structure. During the last week of March, I researched state symbols (Did you know we have a state muffin?) and downloaded various photos and images and constructed 10 Dreamweaver web pages. Then, in consultation with Information Technology, my supervisor and I were encouraged to move to the RedDot content editing platform. I spent the first two weeks of April learning the basics of RedDot and created (and/or recreated) the main page, six first-level pages and six second-level pages.

By mid-April, it became obvious that RedDot did not allow for the creativity Dreamweaver did, so we went back to using Dreamweaver. (The sites now had 14 pages).

The availability of the site was announced on May 11, 2007. The innovation site includes 8 main pages and 8 second level pages. The updated L-21 site includes 10 pages. The Innovation site will require at least annual updates and additional links may be added to existing pages. A template for adding new pages is available. More sub-level pages will be added as Special Initiative Projects are completed. At least one more page will be added to the spring update site, which will eventually replace the old L-21 site.

Timeline

I had not anticipated completing the site until the end of summer, but while there may be a few more additions, the basic site is done. Work on the site actually continued after the May 11 announcement, because in mid-May we were again asked to put the site on RedDot. As a compromise, we re-did eight first level pages in RedDot. The remaining pages will be

maintained in Dreamweaver. We will promote the site again at the beginning of the fall semester.

Assessment Plan

Since half of the site is in RedDot and half in Dreamweaver, assessment is problematic. I had planned on adding counters to the pages, and they were added to the Dreamweaver pages, but I was informed I could not add counters to the RedDot pages. I will need to submit monthly requests for reports on RedDot hits. Monitoring hits on the second level Dreamweaver pages will only give us information on those pages, not the entire site, so those counters may be removed.

I had also planned to include an email link on all the pages for comments and feedback, but the RedDot pages only identify the page creator and don't allow for the addition of an email address on that line. The updated L-21 site's main pages will include an email address for comments and feedback.

RedDot also does not allow for the inclusion of the proposed online web survey without the support of a programming team.

Hence, the planned assessment strategies don't appear to be workable. Any assessment will be done on an informal, continuing basis, by asking individuals highlighted on the site for feedback and input, and randomly interviewing people across campus and tweaking the site accordingly.

End Product

The Red Dot pages will be activated shortly. Dreamweaver placeholder pages are in place and information on those pages will not be changing, so users can now view the site in its entirety. To explore the site, go to <http://www.winona.edu/21stcentury/innovation/>.

May 31, 2007 Addendum:

The planned additional page for the L-21 update site has been added, as have several additional SIA pages. The two sites now contain 33 pages.