

**re.web**

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Thursday, September 20, 2007

***AGENDA and NOTES***

**Present:** Ambler, Bailey, Broaddus, Carpenter, Evans, Gamage, Mellor, and Wallace (ex officio – Connolly)

**Guests:** Voltaire Santos Miran, Patrick DiMichele, and Mark Sheehy from mStoner

**Unable to Attend:** Donaldson, Kane, Kuffel, and Martin

**1. Initial Impressions of W&M based on strategic discovery meetings**

**What is the W&M ethos?** It is described thus far as undergraduate focused, research intensive, liberal arts based, and public. This makes the College distinctive and inscrutable. Continuing discussions with stakeholders will confirm how the College is described and why it matters.

mStoner team is impressed. W&M is interesting with a unique niche. Constituency meetings are generating a lot of useful information. There is a convergence/consistency in what is being said – groups are conflicting with each other in their descriptions.

One challenge is that because we cater to students with such diverse interests, it becomes hard to describe the “typical student.” Our web messages need to capture the self-definition that is possible at W&M so that we draw the right students. No place is for everybody; if it is, it’s for nobody.

mStoner team had an great discussion with the President and Provost. Goals include a desire to programmatically include and celebrate civic engagement; an international curriculum; a deliberate interdisciplinary environment; and student/faculty research. The new web messages can make W&M more of what it already is. It can allow us to be less shy about being proud of it; boast a little (but being proud in a W&M way).

**Functional Perspective?** There is a fair amount of frustration with the current site; a better arrangement is needed. It is currently organized around institutional boundaries; we need to provide a topic-based structure with a robust search.

Most interviewed like the idea of a content management system. The campus wants to embrace the technology. More standardization is needed (e.g., comprehensive calendar). Staff who are maintaining the W&M web are anxious for the sustainability that will be possible with a web content management system.

## **2. Process**

Voltaire Santos Miran outlined the six steps within the W&M web redesign project.

1. Strategic Discovery
2. Plan Development
3. Content Development
4. Technology Specifications
5. Design and Testing
6. Implementation and Launch

The Strategy Report that results from the first visit will include recommendations about:

- Information architecture
- Preliminary wireframes
- Key messages and how to implement them
- Long term staffing
- Policy and procedure changes
- Governance and committee structure

The Report will be available in a complete format, a digested format, and an online format. A presentation of the report will be made during the second mStoner visit.

The third mStoner visit will be a presentation of design concepts. Two to four concepts will be tested online with target audiences. Data is available to indicate that people get an impression from an organization's home page within two to three seconds.

## **3. Setting Expectations**

Most departments and administrators have very high expectations about web redesign projects. It will be important to identify how groups will come into the new design and CMS. It might make sense for the web advisory committee to identify the priority and order of sites and establish a long-term calendar.

W&M will need to identify one departmental site that will serve as a prototype for using the new design and architecture. This departmental site should be manageable – not a three page site and not a 300 page site. It might make sense to use an internally focused site for this purpose.

#### **4. Questions to be considered by the Web Advisory Committee**

What is the order and priority for sites to be included in the project?

Who will review drafts of the Strategy Report?

Who will attend presentations of the Strategy Report?

What groups will be surveyed to test and confirm designs and concepts? (alumni, current students, prospective students, faculty and staff, etc.)

Will we host Town Hall sessions? If so, at which milestones?