


The low-maintenance approach to keeping your web site useful and up-to-date




Merribeth Advocate

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Or,

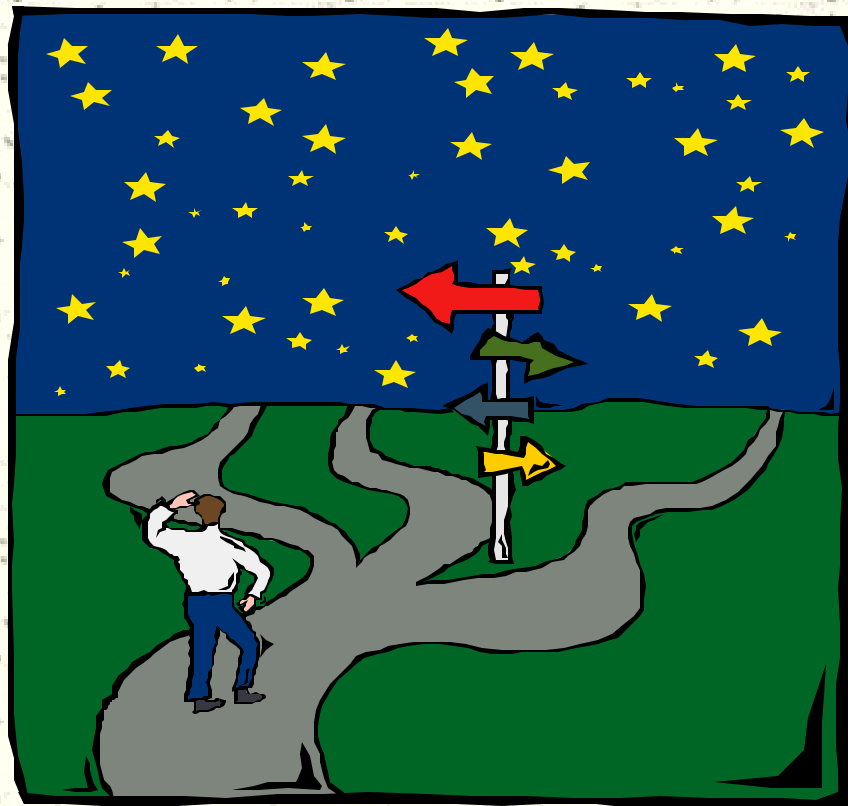


how NOT to use every
spare minute to keep
your Web site current

Information to impart

- # Where we were and goals
- # How to grow a team
- # AmeriCorps help
- # Low-cost resources available
- # Foundations first
- # Problems, problems, problems
- # You CAN do it

Getting to there from here



Getting to there from here

- # Existing site was cumbersome and failed navigability analysis
- # Site was not a priority for anyone for information dispersal
- # No forms, no HTML, no pdf
- # What member library pages?
- # How to implement HomeAccess
- # Content, content, content

Goals



- # A re-designed low-maintenance up-to-date web site in 6 months

Goals



- # Include unique information to meet member libraries' needs

- Archival

- News

Goals



- # Search engine for site--to help find pages (from keywords in title or content)

Goals

Initiate a
news/new items
area

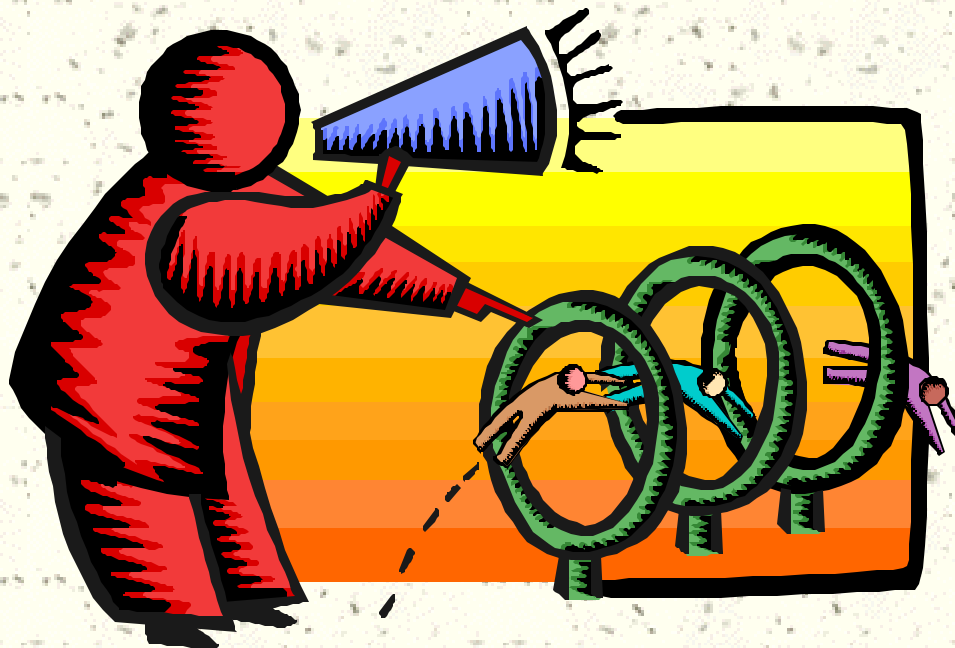
Goals



* Keep it useful

- Continual user testing
- Implementation of user-suggested ideas

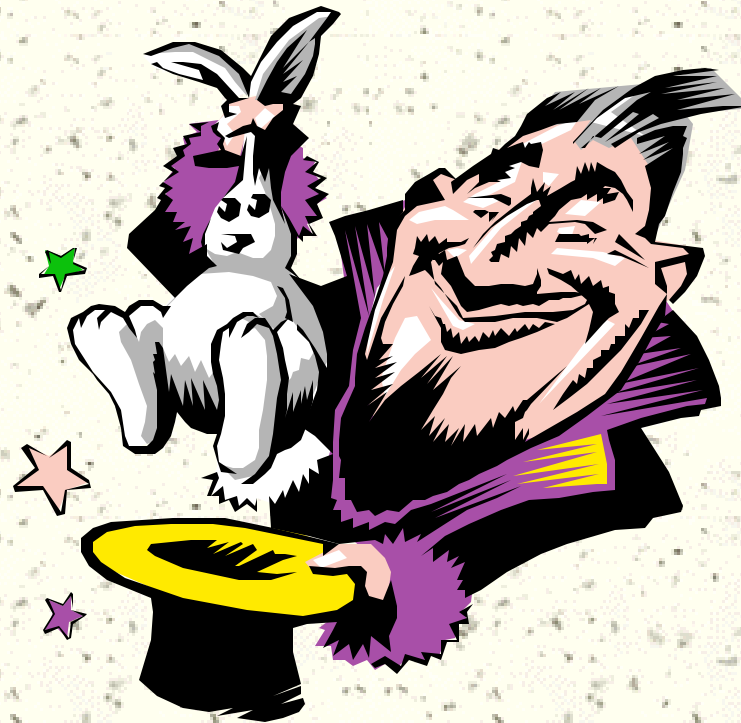
How to grow a team



How to grow a team

- # Formed Team based on individual interest
- # Foster participation
- # Looked at other sites and formed "wish list"
- # Software to make Web page creation and editing easier
- # Training when needed

AmeriCorps help

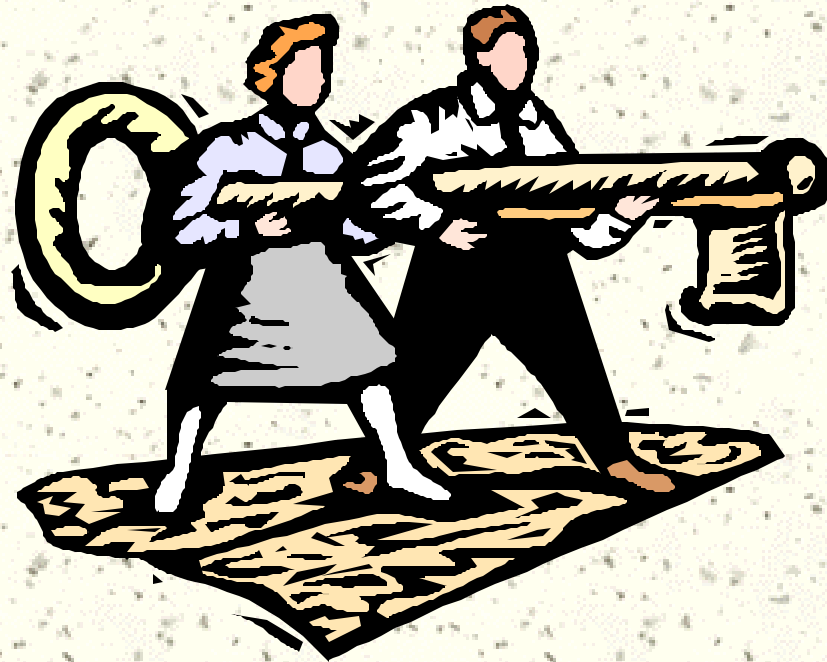


AmeriCorps help



- # How to become a participant
- # Default pages
- # Alpha list
- # Domain names for libraries
- # Designing templates

Low-cost resources available



Low-cost resources available

- # Web counters
- # Form(s)
- # Strong search engine
- # Link checker(s)
- # Validator(s)
- # Bobby
- # Design info sites and resources

Foundations first



Foundations first



- # Site structure
- # Server stability
- # Back-ups
- # Workflow
- # Document types (HTML, pdfs)
- # Database-driven data
- # Templates

Problems, problems, problems...



Problems, problems, problems...

- # Getting data from Access to Filemaker to the Web
- # Display differences between Netscape and I E
- # Board mandates to have documents on Web
- # Domain names for libraries

What we learned



What we learned

- # Publish regular publications to Web
 - Use HTML and pdf formats
 - Provides consolidated access to documents such as our 2000 word weekly *Bulletin*

What we learned

- # Mount a usable and readable calendar
 - Show one year at a time
 - No need for last minute updates
 - Upcoming dates for next year can be shown

What we learned

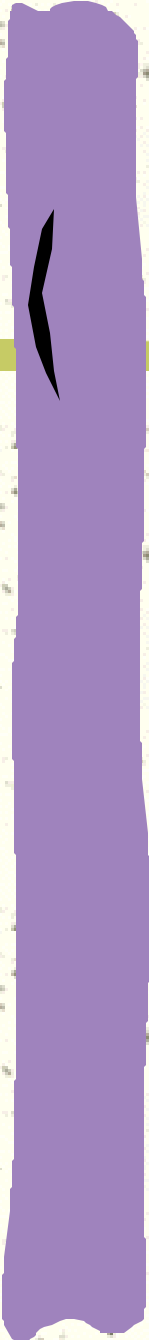


- # "If you're gonna post it, make it show"
 - Homepage has a column for news and highlights
 - New content is featured
 - Pointers to relevant internal pages given

What we learned

Site search engines are useful

- Help users find your good content
- Examine the search engine's weblog
 - See what people are searching for
 - Gives you ideas for needed content



"There's nothing worse than searching a Website for some nugget of information and coming up empty-handed. Make sure your customers find what they're looking for...PicoSearch makes your entire site searchable by keyword so visitors can zoom in on what they need." -- *ZDNet PC/Computing*

What we learned

#FAQs

- Great way to add content
- Help deal with repetitive information needs
- Add a response to the page—"what question would you ask?"

What we learned



- #Statistics, statistics, statistics
 - Grantors like to see these
 - The Team liked to see these
 - WebTrends tracks data that is useful for statistical analysis

What we learned



- # Conversion of data from Word to Web
 - Many of our site's pages started out as a Word document
 - Use Dreamweaver to remove extraneous code
 - Don't worry about altered formatting or missed graphics in HTML version—the pdf version shows everything

What we learned



- # Default library Web pages
 - For libraries not able or interested in creating and maintaining their own Web site
 - Just give the basics—library name, address, phone, hours, e-mail, the OPAC and HomeAccess graphics and links

What we learned

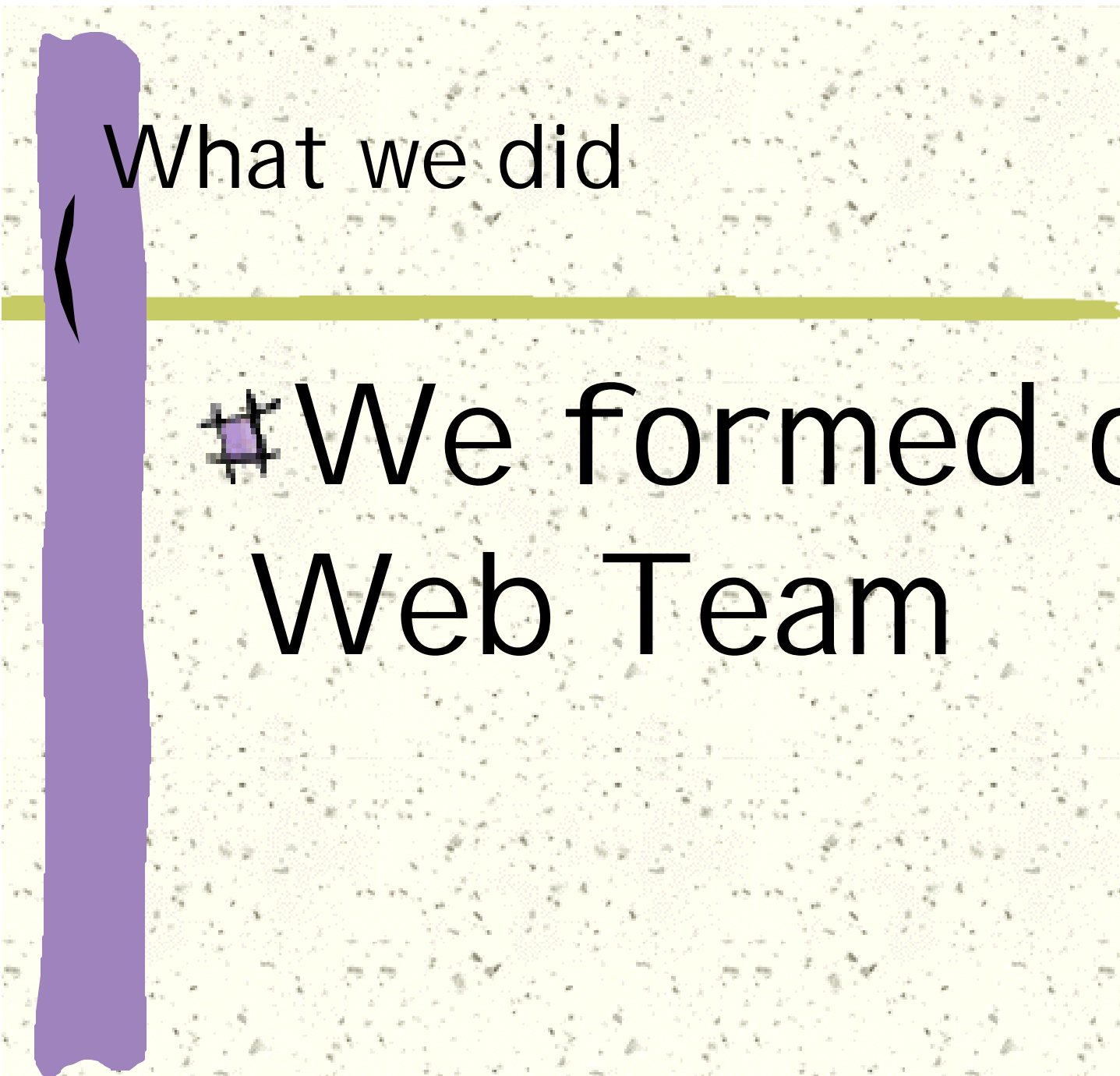
#FTP access essential

- For libraries creating and maintaining their Web pages hosted by us
- Gives the libraries the power to update and keeps System staff out of it
- Seamless and the libraries love it

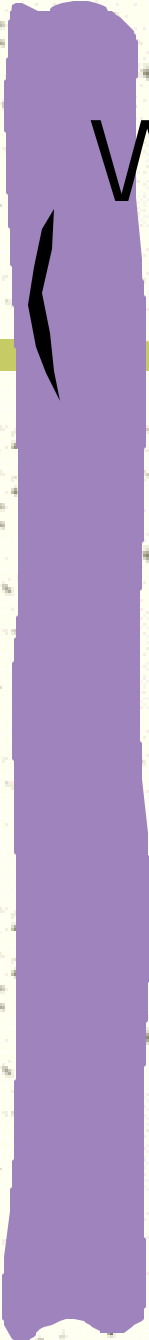
What we did



What we did



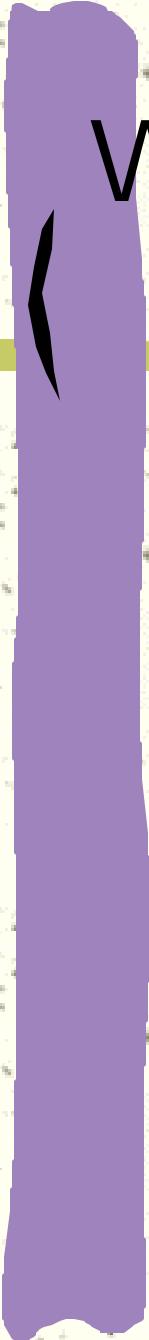
We formed our
Web Team



What we did

- # We initiated a user survey

What we did



Designed new Web homepage

- Highlights news and new items
- Provides access to existing material

What we did

#Consolidated
access to
information

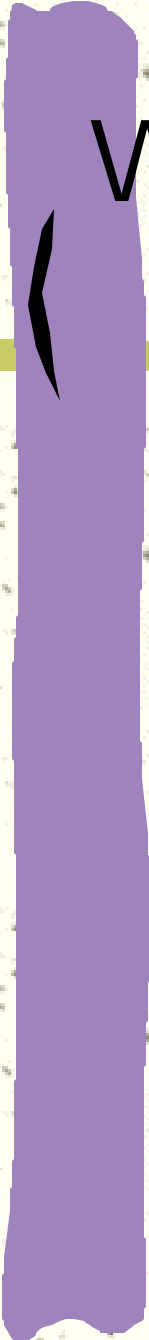
What we did

- # Moved to a new Web server with solid structure and backup capability
 - # Zip drive
 - # Compaq Web server

What we did

- # Acquired software to do the site better
 - ▣ *Adobe Acrobat 4.0*
 - ▣ *Dreamweaver 3.0*
 - ▣ *WebTrends*

What we did



- #Redesigned the site section by section based on importance/visibility

What we did

- # Gave all new pages a uniform look
 - Use HTML and pdf
 - Some pages were from a database, some from Word, some were Web pages

What we did

- # Added the weekly *Bulletin* and other regularly published documents
 - Board of Trustee meeting documents
 - Directors Association presentations
 - HomeAccess instructions and information and press release

What we did

- # Added a site search engine
 - Re-index each week
 - Spot check the weblog to see what people are searching for
 - React to weblog check accordingly

Questions?



Helpful Web sites

Accessible Web Page Design

<http://www.washington.edu/doit/Resources/web-design.html>

AmeriCorps

<http://www.americorps.org>

Best Viewed with Any Browser

<http://www.anybrowser.org/campaign/>

Bobby

<http://www.cast.org/bobby>

Cooltext.com

<http://www.cooltext.com>

Doctor HTML

<http://www2.imagiware.com/RxHTML/>

And more helpful Web sites

Free Forms on the Web

<http://demaio.addr.com/tools/forms.html>

Free Website Counters

http://www.emailaddresses.com/email_counters.htm

HTML Validation Tools

<http://www.weblint.org/validation.html>

LinkCheckers

http://www.webstat.net/Remotely_Hosted/Link_Checkers/

LSTA Grant Information (NY)

<http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/lsta/>

And even more helpful Web sites

Mid-Hudson Library System <http://midhudson.org>

Response-o-matic <http://www.response-o-matic.com>

Sharewire <http://www.sharewire.com>

Two4U's Color Page <http://www.two4u.com/color/>

US Domain <http://www.nic.us/>

Usable Information Technology <http://www.useit.com>

Web Building <http://home.cnet.com/webbuilding/0-3880.html>

The last few helpful Web sites

Web Design for Librarians

<http://scc01.rutgers.edu/SCCHome/policies/web.htm>

Web Design Group

<http://www.htmlhelp.com>

Web Developer's Virtual Library

<http://wdvl.internet.com>

WEB4LIB

<http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/Web4Lib/>

Writing for the Web

<http://www.webdevelopersjournal.com>