

ITTS Report to the Website Advisory Committee
Philadelphia
Monday, January 14, 2008
8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Pennsylvania Convention Center: Room 309

4.1. Website Usability/Redesign

At Annual Conference in Washington, DC, wireframes (draft web structures) for the redesigned website had their debut. These wireframes were built by UserWorks based on all the inputs received up to that point, including stakeholder interviews, focus groups, online surveys, heuristic analysis, card sorting exercises, and a preliminary content inventory. Following Annual Conference, input received via an online survey attached to the wireframes was incorporated into a second version of the wireframes. These were subsequently released to the ALA membership (and the world) for review. The revised wireframes included another online survey, which was started by about 2000 people and completed by about 1500. This input was analyzed and incorporated into four draft graphic design concepts.

The four graphic design concepts were introduced to two focus groups in mid-December. One group consisted of ALA members, the other, non-members. The groups like some elements of each of the graphic design concepts, but one was clearly the favorite of both groups. Based on this feedback, UserWorks has created a composite graphic design concept, incorporating favored elements from the other concepts into the favored overall design.

Concurrently with the graphic design activities, UserWorks has been working on the information architecture (IA) of the site. This includes the survey that was done in October and November of 2007, which asked a random sample of ALA members and non-members to sort and group a list of terms that many had found confusing in previous exercises. More focus groups were convened to validate the draft IA in late December, and the results were incorporated into the draft graphic design concept.

This graphic design concept is being presented at Midwinter in Philadelphia, with wider dissemination expected through blogs. UserWorks will incorporate viewer feedback into a final version of the graphic design that we will begin implementing in the spring of 2008.

4.2. Collage Implementation

Since Annual Conference in Washington, DC, many units of ALA have gone live in Collage. What remains at this stage is one major division (ALSC) and one major office (PIO), plus the “general” sections of the website, such as “Our Association” and “Products and Publications.” These sections have been converted and reviewed and are being cleaned up by Duo. Here are the units currently live in Collage:

<u>Divisions</u>	<u>Offices</u>	<u>Round Tables</u>
AASL	Accreditation	CLENERT
ACRL	Chapter Relations	EMIERT
ALCTS	Diversity	FAFLRT
ALTA	Government Relations	GLBTRT
ASCLA	Human Resource Development and Recruitment	IRRT
LAMA	Information Technology Policy	LHRT
LITA	International Relations	LIRT
PLA	Library	LRRT
RUSA	Library Advocacy	LSSIRT
YALSA	Public Programs	SRRT
	Research & Statistics	
Remaining: ALSC	Remaining: Development, Intellectual Freedom, Literacy & Outreach Services, Governance, Public Information	Remaining: ERT, GODORT, IFRT, MAGERT, NMRT, SORT, VRT

Other Units

American Libraries

I Love Libraries

Remaining: Publishing, Conference Services, “general” content

4.3. Moodle (Online course support software)

Our WebCT license lapsed on November 29, 2007. All courses in WebCT migrated to Moodle before the deadline, and all new courses are now being created in Moodle.

4.4 Sympa Upgrade

We have begun testing a new Sympa installation that will both move Sympa on to its own dedicated server and upgrade the software to the latest version (5.3). It is expected to go live in February 2008.

4.5. Dreamhost

We continue to enjoy and expand upon our relationship with external hosting service Dreamhost. Dreamhost's offerings include large amounts of disc space and bandwidth, as well as one-click installs for many popular open source applications (such as WordPress, Moodle, Joomla, and MediaWiki). Blogs and wikis currently hosted on ALA equipment are being migrated to Dreamhost to take advantage of ease of software upgrading. All new blogs and wikis are being created on Dreamhost. Dreamhost costs ALA nothing, due to our 501(c)3 status.

4.6. Installment Payments for ALA dues

As of December 5th, 2007, members can choose to pay in two installments when joining or renewing online or by telephone, if their total membership dues are greater than or equal to \$125.00. There is a service charge of \$3.00.

4.7. Training

ITTS has scheduled four Collage classes during conference (three basic and one advanced) and 18 available 30 minute tech-tutorials for one-on-one and small group help with specific problems. We are preparing an electronic registration form so that members can sign up. We will use the staff liaisons and the Collage Information list to disseminate this information to member-volunteers. Participants will need to bring their own notebook computers to the sessions.

4.8. ALA 2.0 and Social Networking

Online Communities – After researching multiple commercial and open source platforms, it appears that the best solution is to use Drupal to replace our current Online Communities service. Migrating to software that is more widely used and supported, especially one with such a large and active community of developers, will allow us to ramp up the project quickly.

Based on the results of the survey ITTS ran during the fall, the core community modules at launch will (ideally) include:

- the ability to forward messages to personal email, or just use of personal email instead of an internal messaging system (66.7%)
- document sharing/repository (58.85%)
- collaborative web pages/documents (wiki-like, but not wikis per se) (63.9%)
- announcements (47.1%)
- discussion boards/forums (47.1%)
- RSS feeds (44.4%)
- wiki functionality or integration (41.7%)
- blogs (33.3%)

If possible, the following features will be included at launch. If not, they will be part of a phase two implementation:

- photo/image galleries (19.4%)
- forms, surveys, & polling (17.6%)
- chat (14.7%)
- ability to display an external RSS feed in the community (14.7%)
- calendar/events manager (11.8%)
- link lists (11.8%)

The intent is to connect Drupal to iMIS to allow users to authenticate using their website login so as not to burden members with yet another password. The backend for Drupal will be a MySQL database on our new hosting service so in terms of a migration, we'll need to test whether we can export from the current DotNetNuke installation into the new one. At this time we have no theories or data supporting whether this will work or not.

Currently, Online Communities is restricted to members only, but moving to Drupal would give us the ability to open some communities (or only parts of some communities) to anyone. The intent is to allow for a basic level of functionality that is available to anyone (member or not) for every committee/group that does not require confidentiality (such as awards committees, etc.). The different levels still need to be detailed out, but one current thought is to make the open, social modules such as blogs and discussion forums open to anyone, while reserving more direct channels such as chat, form creation, and surveys for members. We expect to start selling ads on this site at some point, so nonmembers would see more advertising, and they may not be able to opt out of other types of ads. All of this piece still needs to be decided, but we will solicit input from members.

Projected timeline:

February-March = install and configure Drupal; work with designer on a usable interface

April = beta test the installation with five communities who have already volunteered; tweak and resolve issues

May = soft launch of new OC to iron out any scalability issues

June = launch OC at Annual 2008

July = begin work on phase two items

August+ = continue enhancing and improving the service as necessary

ALA Connect Network

This will be ALA's professional/social network that lets members connect with one another to enhance their professional development and careers. While there will definitely be social features, and external sites like Facebook will be integrated through existing Drupal modules, the goal is to allow members to more easily find and connect with one another within ALA's space. The site will be opt-in, rather than opt-out, so members will have control over whether or not they share their profile information with

others and how. Members who do not wish to participate won't need to remove existing personal information or do anything else in order to remain outside of the network.

The foundation of the site will be user profiles, as this is what will allow the software to expose new content, new colleagues, and new services to members. In addition, the use of Drupal for both Online Communities and ALA Connect will allow us to mesh work, play, and career in one place (especially under one login). Examples of proposed components for the site include (but are not limited to):

- personal learning networks that connect participants with others who want to learn the same things (sort of like a geographically-dispersed "Personal Learning 2.0" ad-hoc group that could create their own Online Community)
- a "six degrees of separation" professional network that lets you find friends of a friend who share your interests or goals; members could then form their own communities of practice in Online Communities
- embedded mentoring opportunities where participants can self-identify as mentors or mentees that the software would then connect based on common areas of interest (and library type if desired)
- extended profiles would also allow members to find others who are acknowledged experts in an area where they need help; while ratings may not work, testimonials might help boost member profiles within a search for expertise
- a visual timeline of your professional career that shows when you joined committees (as a physical or virtual member), won awards, published articles, gave presentations, etc.; participants would be able to enter additional data to produce a timeline they could share with their friends or the whole world, including potential employers
- conference networking that allows you to see which of your friends are going to conference and who has self-identified that they need a roommate or a ride

Ideally, we'll be able to integrate our content into external social sites (and just out into the ether via APIs and RSS), as well as to incorporate into our network content from sites such as:

- Facebook
 - Flickr
 - Twitter
 - LibraryThing
 - WorldCat
- etc.

Eventually, we hope to build a CE Clearinghouse based on Moodle and Drupal that integrates with Online Communities (classes or team projects could create their own Online Community) and ALA Connect (find a mentor to help you with your team project and invite them to be part of your Community). Drupal appears to be flexible enough that we can consolidate all of these projects into the software in order to facilitate the sharing of information, exposing of data in multiple places based on your login, and single sign-

on. A future phase will ultimately bring all of these resources together through an authenticated landing page that will be a true "My ALA."

ALA Connect will also offer a very basic level of service to non-members, but all of the pieces that help participants connect with each other would be reserved for members. For example, non-members might get limited profiles only and would not be able to participate in the mentoring program or the "friend of a friend" services. Again, this all needs to be decided, and we will seek input and feedback. Tiers of service, though, should provide value-added benefits exclusively for members.

Projected timeline:

July = the beginnings of profiles will be in Online Communities when it launches in June, but we'll need to start extending them in July; begin working on next modules for AC that are deemed most important

August-December = continue implementing modules and introducing new functionality for more formal launch at the beginning of 2009

2009 = continue enhancing and improving the service as necessary

Second Life - ALA has assumed possession of an "island" in Second Life and with expert, cost-free help of San Jose State University MLS students, created a multiple-use site to promote ALA, disseminate information about the organization, and facilitate networking and resource sharing among more than 800 virtual-world librarians.

4.9. Staff Changes

Web Developer Position – On December 19, 2007, ITTS hired Donavan Vicha to be our new Web Developer. Donavan has been working with Amos Lieberman two days a week. Amos will leave ALA on January 15, 2008 to pursue a master's degree in Spanish at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Amos will continue to do contract work for us on an as-needed basis.

Usability Officer Position – The search for the new Usability Office position closed in early December. We received twenty resumes and have selected seven to review with the search committee. The search committee will meet in early January to select three or four candidates. These candidates will be interviewed by telephone in early January. The results from the telephone interviews will be shared with the search committee and two candidates will be chosen for final interviews. Final interviews are scheduled for the first week in February.