5 FAH-8 H-200
WEB SITE PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

5 FAH-8 H-210
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(CT:WEB-1;   09-29-2005)
(Office of Origin: IRM/BPC/RG)

5 FAH-8 H-211 WEB SITES

(CT:WEB-1;   09-29-2005)

All Web site programs, whether on the Internet or one of the Department of State's intranets are projects as defined in 5 FAM 623.5. The general requirements of 5 FAM 611 will apply to Web site programs.

5 FAH-8 H-211.1 Managing State Programs (MSP)

(CT:WEB-1;   09-29-2005)

Web site programs may have highly visible or sensitive content, must have formal discipline to achieve effective content management, and will most likely exist for over one year. 5 FAM 621 Managing State Projects (MSP) requires programs having these characteristics must be managed using the MSP method.

5 FAH-8 H-211.2 Program Managers

(CT:WEB-1;   09-29-2005)

A program manager must be assigned to each Web site (see 5 FAM 617.2). Offices that have multiple Web sites may elect to have individual program managers for each site or consolidate multiple Web sites into a single program under one program manager (see 5 FAM 617 Roles and Responsibilities). Complex Web sites may necessitate a management team approach; however, the program manager is ultimately responsible for all the roles and responsibilities defined in 5 FAH-8 H-115.

5 FAH-8 H-211.3 Performance Measurement

(CT:WEB-1;   09-29-2005)

a. Web team members and stakeholders must define goals and objectives in terms that can be quantified (see 5 FAM 622 Performance Measures). The goals and objectives will provide a framework within which the Web site will be developed and will also help define the program stakeholders.

b. Using the goals and objectives, team members must define performance measurements to evaluate the effectiveness of the Web site (see 5 FAM 622 Performance Measures); these must be included in the program plan.

5 FAH-8 H-212 WEB SITE PROGRAM CYCLE

(CT:WEB-1;   09-29-2005)

The program cycle defined in 5 FAM 624 Project Cycle is generalized for all IT projects. This section identifies and describes the specific periods, phases, activities, and approvals that apply to Web site development. The three periods with respective 5 FAM 624 references are shown in Figure 1.
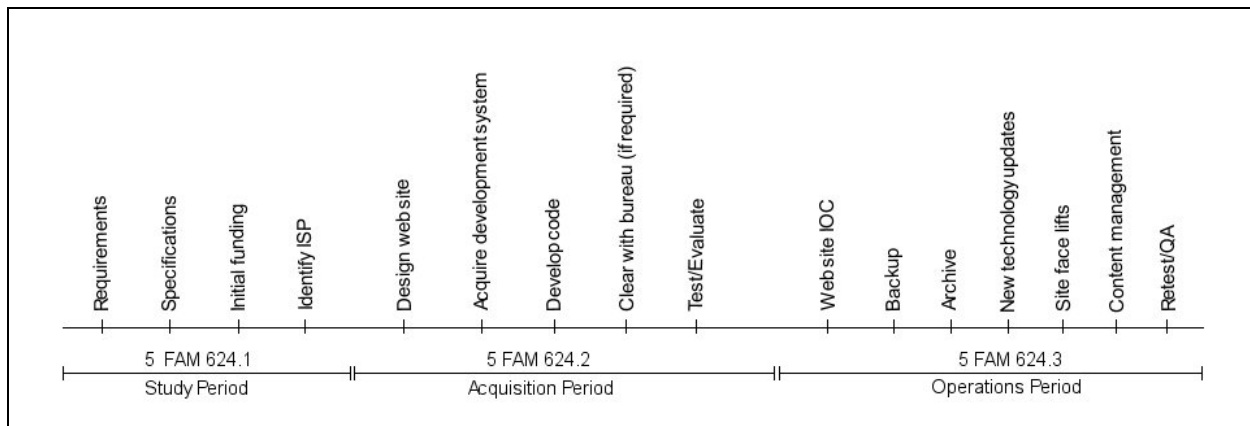

Figure 1. Web Site Program Life Cycle

5 FAH-8 H-212.1 Study Period

(CT:WEB-1;   09-29-2005)

a. Web site requirements (see 5 FAM 624.1 Study Period).

(1)   The office requesting the Web site must state the purpose of the Web site and list the desired content. Guidance in 5 FAM 776.3 must be observed when considering the content of the Web site.

(2)   The office requesting the Web site must define the intended audience. Restrictions based on the Smith-Mundt Act, 22 U.S.C. 1461, must be considered when defining the intended audience.

(3)   The office requesting the Web site must identify initial sources of information.

(4)   The program manager must create a requirements document using information provided by the requesting office.

(5)   The program manager must identify additional information sources.

(6)   The program manager must identify the stakeholders. At a minimum, that will include the office requesting the Web site; the program manager; the source of funding; and for Web sites targeting the public, the Bureau of Public Affairs (PA) domestically or the Public Affairs Officer (PAO) at post.

(7)   The program manager must convene a Web site working group of stakeholders to refine the initial requirements document.

b. Web site specifications.

(1)   The program manager must develop a specifications document incorporating feedback from the Web site working group.

(2)   Specifications should include items such as information architecture (content organization), branding, common functionality of Web pages, data base resources, and content management.

(3)   Specifications must indicate the minimum quality of each item and must be measurable.

c. Web site initial funding.

(1)   The program manager must estimate total funding to develop the Web site, incorporating estimates from the content manager, database administrator, developer and webmaster.

(2)   The program manager must estimate ongoing funding for operation and maintenance of the Web site. Of particular importance, the content manager must provide estimates for editorial support to review, obtain, edit, and write new content on an ongoing basis.

d. Web site Internet Service Provider (ISP) source evaluation.

The program manager must determine the most effective hosting

arrangement for the Web site.

e. Web site development source evaluation.

(1)   The program manager must determine the number of people required to develop the Web site.

(2)   The program manager must recommend composition of the Web site development team after considering the skills required to implement the Web site as envisioned by the Web site working group.

5 FAH-8 H-212.2 Acquisition Period

(CT:WEB-1; 09-29-2005)

a. Contract for Web development services (see 5 FAM 624.2 Acquisition Period).

(1)   Whenever required skills are not available within the organization, performance based services may be obtained by contract outside the Department of State, the IRM Business Center, or other internal source.

(2)   In-house development and outsourced development should be evaluated to determine most appropriate and effective means for development, operations and maintenance of the Web site. Particular attention should be paid to avoid: (a) dependency on individuals, tools or services (single points of dependency); or (b) locking the organization into non-competitive financial obligations.

b. Design Web site. This phase should be a collaborative effort between the Web site development team and the stake holders.

c. Acquire Web site development system.

(1)   The Web site development system must be separate from the operational Web site and must not be connected to a Department of State accessible network.

(2)   A standalone network for Web site development should be considered. If used, it will consist of not more than fifteen user accounts and used exclusively for developing Web sites and local applications. All machines on a development network must be dedicated exclusively to development efforts and must not be deployed or utilized for any other purpose. This restriction does not

apply to Domestic organizations whose function is to develop Web sites and Web applications.

(3)   Development networks using Department of State controlled or managed assets must be configured using the appropriate parameters published by DS/ACD/SAB. System configuration information can be found at DS/ACD/SAB Web site, http://acd.ds.state.gov/branches/sab/sab_securityconfiguration.htm. The development network must remain a standalone network and never be connected to the Internet or any Department of State networks.

d.   Develop code. This is accomplished by vendor, in-house, or a combination of the two.

e.   All Web sites must be cleared in accordance with FAM requirements.

(1)   Information on a post's Web site for public consumption within the country must be cleared with local post management, usually the Public Affairs Section.

(2)   Web sites funded, managed, or controlled by the Department of State must follow OMB regulations.

f.   Web site test and evaluation.

(1)   The program manager must ensure a test script is developed. The test script must be based on the specifications document. For dynamic Web pages, the test script should be designed to evaluate both correct and erroneous conditions.

(2)   An independent test team must be used to perform quality assurance (QA) (see 5 FAM 640 Quality Assurance) testing using the test script.

(3)   The program manager must ensure that the Web site successfully passes all elements of the test script before it is transferred from the development network to the operational network.

(4)   The only exception to complete testing is links that cannot be checked from the isolated development network. All links must be checked immediately on transfer from the development network to the operational network.

5 FAH-8 H-212.3 Operations Period

(CT:WEB-1; 09-29-2005)

a. Web site initial operational capability (IOC) is declared after successful test and evaluation (see 5 FAM 624.3 Operations Period).

b. Backup and archive of Web site files.

   (1) A Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) must be developed for the Web site (see 5 FAM 851 Continuity Of Operations and Contingency Planning). The plan must include provisions for recovering from defacing or compromise due to malicious breach of the firewall (hacking). It should also be submitted as part of the post/office/bureau COOP.

   (2) Regularly scheduled backups of the Web site must be made as required by 5 FAM 852. A copy of the most current backup should be available for restoration of the Web site according to the COOP.

   (3) Older copies of the Web site should be maintained separately from the current periodic backups and kept for historical purposes and National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) requirements.

c. New technology updates.

   As new technologies become available, they should be evaluated in the development environment for use on the Web site and proposed to the stakeholders if applicable.

d. Site refresh.

   Periodic user assessment must be done to determine when the Web sites should be refreshed. The change can be effectively done in conjunction with incorporating new technologies.

e. Content management.

   Content managers must have appropriate clearance and review processes in effect for currency and accuracy. For public sites, see "Information Quality Guidelines" http://www.state.gov/misc/13864.htm pursuant to Section 515 of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act for FY 2001 (Public Law 106-554).

   NOTE: Wherever possible, link to source rather than maintain a "mirror" page or pages.

f. Retest/QA.

Changes in browsers, operating systems, and plug-ins can cause portions of a Web site to become inoperative. The site should be tested frequently to make sure it is compatible with both new and existing platforms. Where there is the possibility of viewers using different platforms, the Web site should be validated against all of them.

5 FAH-8 H-213 THROUGH H-219 UNASSIGNED