

Archived Information

NASA, Office of Education

Goal: Engaging the public

Summary: Establish a more targeted presence on the web for kids, students and educators through the NASA portal to convey the importance to these audience of NASA science, research and opportunities they can take advantage of in their daily activities. Combine “sit-back” visual experience with “lean-forward” learning and involvement to inspire, inform, and involve the general public, kids, students and educators.

- *Inspire* – Transport visitors into a multimedia environment (e.g. 3D visualizations, multimedia desktop applications, interactive games and explorations, virtual tours, rich media astronaut profiles and interviews) where they can experience the emotion, vision and imagination of NASA.
- *Inform* – Recognize needs of each audience segment and ensure the information is accessible, easy to find, and up-to-date; encourage a journey of personal discovery and learning; interface with an eye to facilitate learning and spark a sense of imagination in a visitor’s mind.
- *Involve* – Transition from inactive viewing to active participation through community links, targeted channels and an invitation to sign up for email, customizable imagery, online communities, chats, targeted emails, advisory councils and programs that feature and involve NASA researchers and scientists more visibly on the site.

The kids’ component will be designed to be dynamic, fun, and have an interactive approach to accessing information, emphasizing science, mathematics and technology while providing a rich experience with a game-like interface to additional amusement and information.

A customizable section will include a number of MyNASA profiles. Profiles will include channel content and a look-and-feel appropriate to the selected profile. Educators, parents, students, kids and the general public may further personalize his or her homepage using these reference profiles as helpful starting points to access information meeting their needs and interests.

Purpose:

- To create an environment that facilitates delivery of NASA’s dynamic and engaging scientific and mathematical materials to the attention of its worldwide audience.
- To provide a dynamic, functional, and trouble free interface that enhances usability through clear navigation and intuitive information access.
- To organize and structure information such that invites users to explore the site and that maintains their interest in science and mathematics, while presenting the NASA vision.
- To create a visually appealing and exciting interface that invites users to explore the site and that maintains their interest in science, mathematics and engineering, while presenting the NASA vision.
- To increase number of people making use of NASA resources, thereby increase cost effectiveness of NASA programmatic investments.
- To provide viewing options for low bandwidth and mobile devices to connectivity, and to make information available to people with disabilities (508 Compliance).

Accomplishments/Results:

Phase I of the portal was completed on February 1, 2003. This phase provides a more engaging entry point and has been used extensively due to the recent Columbia tragedy. In the first two weeks, it has serviced requests from 4.5 Million distinct computers resulting in 410 million hits on the site.

Future Plans (next 12 months)

Phase II has been initiated and is scheduled to be rolled out in May 2003 with further capabilities as identified above.