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>> Please stand by for real-time captions.
>> That afternoon, everyone. We will be starting the webinar shortly. If you have any technical questions, please call us at 202208 0668 or email us at webmanageruniversity@gsa.gov. Thank you.
>> Think you come everybody. But after noon. -- good afternoon. I'm the user experience evangelist at the General service administration and I also work with Web Manager University. It is a real pleasure to be here today entered -- and to introduce our webinar that will celebrate world usability Day. It is entitled improving efficiency and usability with design time puts. Our speakers are all noted people in their fields. We are quite honored to have them. Our presenters today are Jeff Horvath, Carolyn Lawson, and Dane Wilson. Jeff is vice president of user experience strategy at human factors international. He is responsible for the government and nonprofit business. He's worked with federal agencies such as FAA, the Federal Aviation Administration, and state agencies such as the California office of the CIO, and nonprofit organizations as well. Just then much of his time helping clients think about how to make user experience a routine part of their organizations work. We also have Carolyn Lawson with us today. She is of rockstar. She is the director of E. services in the offer -- in the office of the seat I owe. She previously said that the California public utility commission CIO and has been active in the national discussion of IT issues related to the service delivery in government. Carolyn sits on several boards of directors including project pipeline, conference on California future, and she's on the editorial advisory board with InformationWeek. Last but not least, Dane Wilson is manager of the California office of technology services and the Web services section. He's a leader in the state he services governance. His background is in customer relations, public information, IT, and he led the technical team that developed the new California portal website design he is going to talk about today. Dane also managed and participated in the states large community of web master. As a result, California is ranked first in the Center for Digital Government Web competition in 2010. Welcome to all of you. Before we start, I got a couple of housekeeping notes. All of our lines are needed so that we can hear the speakers clearly. But we would very much like to hear your comments and questions. We'll take them at the end. You can enter them in the chat box which is in the lower right of your go to webinar control box. As John mentioned, if you have any technical problems during the webinar, please call us. Or email webmanageruniversity@gsa.gov. With that, I am delighted to pass the ball over to Jeff Horvath and he'll introduce the presentation and pass it through to Caroline and Dane. Jeff?
>> Thanks, Nicole. It really is a play bridge to be here to talk with you all today. I am going to talk initially about templates, using template design approach, and sort of at a high-level what they are and why it's a good idea to do that. He the first thing I want to talk about -- and making sure my slides advance here. Sorry about that, folks. Hang on one second, folks. I hope everyone can still see the

screen. If not, please let me know.

>> Yep, we can see your screen.

>> Here we go. Okay. The first thing I want to talk to you about is building a house. Everybody has either build a house, known somebody who has built the house, seen a house being built. The first thing you do to build a house is not go out and get a hammer and somewhat and start building. If you do, you'd likely end up with a house like one of the ones you will see here. It's functional. It's got all the things you want. Doors, windows, rooms, but probably not the kind of house you want to live in. That's because you've built a house without a design plan. Of course, if you're going to build a house, you want to design it first. Want to talk to an architect who is going to ask, what are the requirements? You are able to do things much more efficiently because you've gone through the process of designing with a plan. Of course, by then you can go ahead and build your house knowing that it is something that is informed by your needs. It is consistent with standards and codes. It's going to be done efficiently and effectively. You are not going to end up with a hodgepodge creation we saw initially. If you're going to build some software, the same story. Of course, you are not going to go ahead and simply start banging out some code. Many of you have probably seen this funny cartoon before. If you are going to design some code, you don't start typing before you understand the requirements. You don't start building before you design. And that's the same process as we've talked about of building a house. You are going to want to think about, what are the design constraints for the software you are going to build? What are your database design? What are your architectural designs? What are the performance requirements? Although things you need to understand before you start banging on the code so you can come up with an efficient and effective solution to your software needs.

>>> Of course, then you can start building it. We need to start typing up your code, you are knowing that it is going to be consistent with the requirements. It is going to meet your needs. It is also validated and consistent with standards. Hopefully, it's reasonable. If you're going to type out some code here, you've got one application. Good and why software development has reuse will code so you don't have to redefine everything every time you are developing. It's the same story with UI. If you are going to develop a user interface for an application, which you are not going to do is simply start putting things together. Yes, of course, you are going to need your widgets and forms and fields in different colors for different things, but you're not going to want to throw it all together here. Of course, you are going to want to design things. You want to take an approach to design just like you would for building a house or building a piece of software. You are going to want to understand what the requirements are. You are going to want to start with some architectural information. Screen designs, task force, things like that. You need to spend time going out and understanding the users, their needs, balancing that, and involving them in the design process so that at the end of the day you got a design that is informed and validated here. Once you've got a design, once you've design the interface, you can go ahead and build it. You can come up with something that's very nice instead of a hodgepodge creation that we saw used like that. This is the approach that California took. Dane and Caroline will speak to much more detail about much later on. The big point I want to get to hear is that there is a temp but they approached to design. If there's a lot of energy and time. You don't need to reinvent the wheel every time. The idea is that what you are creating a new website, once you design something new, you don't have to reinvent the AVP sent that is common on each one. You can take the template that has been put together based on best practices, based on the requirements of the business and the users and use that as your starting point. Every application, every website is going to have a little bit that is different. You can use your good talent for designers and developers and business folks to focus on parts that are different and not focus on re-creating the AVP sent that is the same every time. It's going to be much more efficient use of your energy, resources, and time.

>>> As I said, every website, you know, if you are designing a website, you are going to have many, many pages and many, many parts of your website that are going to be very similar. You don't want to have to re-create every different part from scratch. You are going to want to figure out the most common, the most important,

the most frequently used, the most critical parts of your website and designs and templates for them so that you got designs that you can reuse for each part. You don't have to re-create them. And then for the 20 piece set that is different, then you can focus your energy on creating some custom solutions that solve solutions or that differentiate you. You don't have to spend that amount of energy all the time. Once you've solved that initial problem, the initial AVP sent that is common, then that problem is solved. That turns into something that can be reused every time. Like I said, focusing on the 20 piece set that is different for every time after that that you are going to use it. It's a much, much more efficient approach to site design. If you are building their houses, if we go back to her house metaphor, we've got one template. Many, many designs are based on a template. 80% of the house design is the same. Twenty piece and is customized for the needs of users, needs of the owners. It's a much more efficient and effective way for approaching design for housing and software or interfaces.

>>> If we come back to our friends in California, Dane Wilson and Carolyn will talk to us about the approach that they took with developing a set of templates for the design of all different agency website so that they can solve the core 80% ones and focus on the 20% that is different each time and do it in a way that is much, much more effective and efficient then at each agency needing to buy themselves each time. Just to wrap things up here, the benefits are that the approach, the designs you get using templates are certainly much more consistent and predictable for the end-users. We go back our slides here. If I am coming to visit a state agency website in California, I pretty much know what the experience is going to be like. I've been to untie. I understand the experience. That experience is good to translate and I have to figure out how to work with a new website each time because I know it is consistent and predictable. Certainly, that benefits the end-users. The development of them is also much, much more efficient. As I said, you don't have to re-create that 80% every time. You can start from there, refocus your energy on the things that are different. One important punchline to that, or one consequence of that, is that this allows agencies of different sizes to be able to take a professional approach to site design and make sure that what gets developed is consistent with other agencies and is up a high enough equality -- or is a much higher quality than they would be able to do on their own. Small agencies that might not have the staffing or the budgets to create robust and polished websites like they might like can take this approach leveraging templates starting from that core 80% and focusing on the things that are different to create really high-quality websites and web designs and great user experiences for their customers and constituents. With that, I will pass it over to Dane for the conversation about how things have worked out in the state of California.

>> Good day, everyone. Hopefully, everyone can see my screen. Thank you so much, Jeff. Okay. There we go. I am going to carry on from where Jeff -- the. that he made. Basically, you use California as a case study to kind of support a lot of the items that he pointed out. I have to say that we are honored to be chosen to talk to you all as a case study, and I wanted to just start with, you know, who we are in California. Not necessarily me particularly. And why we are here. Here you can see a little bit of history. We started back in the olden days of 2001 were California deployed at that time a state-of-the-art portal and we are able to rank in the Center for Digital Government best Web competition back then. And then because, basically, the web presence for California simply was not paid attention to, it was kind of neglected in favor of other pursuits statewide. We basically dropped off the mat. We went down to like 47 or even worse, not being ranked at all. Until summer of 2006 came along and there started to be a little bit of a spark, I was actually approached to do a redesign of CA.gov. Unfortunately, we've use better designers and myself. Ultimately, we started to look at the concept of developing a template. That brought us kind of up to standing. You can see how it slowly climbed our way from 12th in 2007, third, second, and of course as was mentioned in this last year, California has been ranked as a top state portal. Just to try to get an understanding just so when I am talking about how we are using templates in California to kind of get you to understand the magnitude of that, I've kind of put this graphic together. You can see in the center of that, that's our new California design. In fact, last week we just released an updated template that is more in-line with this this particular color scheme. While it still preserves the state branding

and is fairly common navigation, it does employ some updated UI components, different types of navigation and stuff. That's epicenter. My staff actually maintains this site and a number of core sites, which are the ones arranged around that data. The mobile site, Mike Kelly is actually a youth portal. We have a YouTube Channel, Flickr, Facebook, all those kinds of things. Those are actually maintained by staff that I manage. And then the bigger world in California of the web is the other nearly 500 sites that comprise what Center for Digital Government called the California portal. I don't own the site. We have been working with them for years and years. They are partners with us. We have an organized community that we work with. As you start to look at the complexity of this and you say, how can we do, and branding? How can we increase end-users confident in the data on site? You start to say that using a template or some type of standard-based methodology seems to be kind of the only way.

>>> As Jeff talk about having plans, knowing what you want us to be, we tend to approach it in the same way. What do we want to accomplish? Of course, you know, the whole reason that you have websites is to get people information and/or allow them to do transactions or receive other services. You can see some of the high-level things that we try to achieve here in California. Increase online service adoption, transparency is a very big buzzword going on right now. There's a lot of work to expose the decision making, the financial transactions, those types of things that are going on in government. Of course, from my perspective and those of my designers, we are always interested in improving usability for the users for the bad user experience. You don't get the first increase in service adoption. Another thing that we wanted to do this go around with a template was to reengage users. I don't know about you folks, but we found that when a site stays kind of the same look and feel for quite a while, people think nothing really is happening there and that some kid for adoption to go down. Apart from a few specific things like paying their taxes or renewing their car number they have to go there. Another big one was to improve mobile accessibility. Right now the overall total percentage of folks accessing the Web through mobile devices is still fairly low, but it is steadily growing. If you look at just the mobile use and just those numbers itself, we've seen a 240% increase over the past year. There is a lot of growth in this area. Last but not least, and this is a little bit of an agenda for me as a manager and a someone who is very proud of their staff and believes that they are talented, despite being government workers, we want to demonstrate what could be done and kind of make the case for quality Government websites, good usability, good user experience. So why use a template in California? I think some of this isn't going to be really, you know, a mystery to you all. It is going to a co- a lot of what Jeff talk about. Number 1, we want, and branding. You can see the watermark on this great is the brand. Essentially, that as I describe it to people is the modern-day equivalent to the old state seal. It allows for folks to, when it comes to a site, to say, I recognize this as part of the pantheon of California information portals. At what I get here is reliable and is coming from a source that I identified.

>>> The other thing that we wanted to do is have common navigation. This is purely a usability issue. If you have vertical drop downs, all these different kinds of arrangements that we had in prior years on various sites, every time a user has to jump from site to site, they have to than adapt to a completely different navigation paradigm. The other thing we found is that some navigation types also allow users to start doing those wonderful things like [indiscernible] links and other stuff that kind of flies in the face of commonsense and best practices and good usability. by having common navigation, we are able to impose a little bit of a structure and help with some of that area back in 2007, we also wanted to have new coding standards. We went from a table-based, you know, occasionally frame things here to XHTML with taught -- with stylesheets that separated presentation from structure and really improved accessibility, the migration capabilities of current sites because the code is much cleaner and modern standard-based. We need to accommodate elements. Sometimes those are not my requirements. They are coming out of the governor's office or other executive level institutions here in the state who need us to put in certain things. Improving usability kind of goes without saying along with all of the things I've been talking about. Is that common experience across multiple sites proves usability for the users. I bought a mentioned accessibility. We all know

state and federal law. At least statewide here in California we are required to be fully accessible. This allows us to try to set a baseline for our constituent departments to work from and then improve their accessibility. We wanted to increase user confidence. I kind of talk about that with the branding and with the common navigation. It lets people feel like you are really putting some effort into your site and that they can trust the data, they can trust the information as they move from site to site. Last but not least, and this is where that whole understanding how distributed and big we are in California, it is it allowing us to establish standards even without an official policy? In absence of a big order, we were able to get sites to convert because it made sense and to improve their website. Now we, basically, have standards across the state for most websites, certainly executive branch websites. But we still don't even have an official policy that orders everybody to have to do that. This is what I have called the enticement methodology. If you've got a large organization, potential turf issues and things like that, using a template can actually help with some of that type work to bring people in line, especially if you spend the time making something that makes sense.

>>> For us, a successful template, we actually do find that. One of the issues was with past website was that the lack of flexibility. You can see a couple bullets here. The middle one being flexible. I was a webmaster in the past when I was a public information officer. I was the owner of the departments website. I happen to do some of the coding myself. I knew a lot of the pitfalls of our past templates. They were very inflexible. They would've limited space for content. There was a lot of mandatory things that didn't necessarily add value to the individual site. What we set about doing when we started to look at the design and, basically, promoted the concept of what's to a new template and really support it, let's do something that makes sense. You can see the graphic. For us in California, the template is really just the header and footer. All of the components that are in the middle, even though we give them samples, and I'll talk about the support and a little bit, is where the agency goes. There's a lot more flexibility in the middle there. That has been well accepted by departments, and some of them have really discovered great ways to produce good websites that still in our opinion comply with the statewide template and get all the benefits that we talked about up to this point. Last but not least, we want to make a specific point to address issues. If you create a template line that does not try to address issues of the folks who are there who need to use that template. For instance, flexibility of various types of content -- of content, there need to have a file structure, things like that, then adoption becomes significantly more difficult. A successful template I think I've mentioned already but it has options. We also provide examples. You can see some of the graphics here. These are actually a mixed. If you go to our one or -- if you go to a resource site, you will see some of these as coded examples. They are on our current main site. They are on some of the constituent sites that we own. While we don't make any department use these, we provide them with these pre-vetted, pretested code ready examples. They have the opportunity if their department doesn't have designers or doesn't have experienced encoders. They can kind of do this like a Lego set and come and grab some stuff and put together a nice looking site using components that we provide that have already been tested for accessibility, you know, I have the color contrast, proper code, things like that. That helps the template be successful.

>>> The other thing that we do, and this is something that I think a lot of folks don't pay attention to. It was certainly a new concept here in the state when we started promoting it centrally. The concept of standards. I mentioned already the code. Also, as you can see the graphic that I have here, it's color. My folks in my development shop do except -- do extensive testing for color contrast to meet accessibility. Of course, we've had all the arguments about what sources you go to to find that all out. The kind of settled on a couple of well-known, well-regarded sources like Stanford or [indiscernible] studio. We go into all this stuff. If our constituent departments use authorize or pretested colors, they are guaranteed that these have already been passed. The other thing is identity. We've already talked about the State template. I mean, the state branding. Just having a good template does provide increased identity across your organization. Last but not least is the whole concept of ongoing support. I think this is where California didn't do a good

job in the past. We went and created something in 2001 and put it out there and everybody walks away and forgot about it. We all know about websites and how fast they age and if you build a website and don't touch it for three weeks or three months that that website is old pretty quickly. We provide ongoing support. You see a screenshot humor state of California site. We are constantly looking at the template. We are getting criticisms, getting accolades. We are getting, you know, new types of testing that we have to pass through. We can create new containers. It is evolving. As I mentioned, we just released a new version of the template. We also get community support. It is both good and bad. I mean, they are quick to tell us when we mess up. We've developed pretty thick skinned and learn to work with them because they are a great group of folks. Ultimately, this has helped to move and increase the quality of California Web presence in a real positive way. You can see that web tools address there. by the way, the Web Manager University folks have this. I imagine they make that available in some way. If not, you can quickly write that down. This is a public site. Even though we created it primarily for state webmasters. All of our resources are available to you all by visiting that site.

>>> Some of the challenges. Doing a template is not trouble-free. As I mentioned, the past template was not flexible. Because there was no central management in California, that allowed things to fragmentary you probably have all seen this. The template got released in 2001. There was a lot of talk about it, a lot of buzz for a very short time. Everything went quiet for a long time. What you started to see was people who started to modify the template, they started to say, they're not supporting it. I don't need to use it anymore. All the website started to diverge. Places that had resources tended to diverge even faster than those who didn't. There was also not a lot of trust because history here in California had said, you know, you build this but then you don't support it. You didn't listen to us last time. You just said, here, to have to use this kind of thing. We had to actually work and deal with the community that wasn't going to trust us on day one to do something that was going to be good for them, good for the departments, and help them along. This was more like, okay, what are you going to order me now was kind of the attitude? The other issue, which I think is common in a lot of organizations and I still speak to lots and lots of organizations. Carolyn spent lots of time doing this. It's a management of the particular program. They didn't necessarily understand the issues of the website, including usability. I don't know about you folks, but I still find many people who think that website design or website bills or redesigns are technical projects. Yeah, there is a technical component, but let's not ignore the fact that this is really about communication. It's about service delivery. It's about all of those kinds of things that just happen to have a technical solution. The other thing is that conversion is difficult with limited sources. How long are we going to get to? You know we don't have anybody to do this extra work. We are barely keeping our head above water maintaining our current site. We've had to deal with all of these kind of things as challenges. We were able to kind of do that. The way we did that was through some of these things that worked well. Again, this is very high level. There will be time for questions. I'll have my email at the end. At a high level, we started by just communicating a clear purpose. We have a purpose to say, hey, let's jot -- let's not redesigned website. Let's try to make the whole state better. Let's try to make it easier on the webmasters. Let's try to get that common branding. The next thing was executive eye in. Carolyn showed up probably a couple months into this. I remember having conversations with, it do we just want to do CA.gov? We were able to steer it successfully into a statewide template instead. We created a webmaster user group. That has probably been the primary reason that we been successful is that we have encouraged the communication, collaboration among state webmasters. We have monthly meetings. As much as we possibly can. And from there, we bring in departments to show what they are doing or we demonstrate what we are doing centrally here. We just had one where we showed off the new template. All the options that are available, what they find if they go to web tools and try to download it and how they use it, we even had folks coming in during our conversion process back into thousand seven to talk about what went wrong with their conversion. How hard it was common mistake that they made so that other folks could learn about that and be able to avoid those in their own departments. We made the template flexible. I've already talked about that. We really had to address what we're known issues with the template. If we would have ignored those, I think we

would have not been successful at all. We established the web tools resource site. People have appreciated that. In fact, it's interesting. There is all kinds of anecdotal stories. Carolyn has a number of these, but our state web template is being used even in Africa by I think the Canadian equivalent of the --

>> Of the Peace Corps.

>> Yes. In Tanzania or something like that. I found Catholic Church is using the state website. Things like that. I think we've got some anecdotal and sometimes kind of comedic proof. We've put something together that is fairly usable by folks. We've also provided training. In fact, I myself really were never going downtown. When we released the first template, data training where I actually get a life conversion of the couple pages of the Department of aging here in California. Their website from the design to the new template to show folks how easy it was, the new code. I mean, we had to do a lot of talking. Folks were used to building table-based stuff. As you know, we don't necessarily have a lot of time for research and development and keeping up on the latest because everyone is bombarded trying to do maintenance and operation. Even moving to the separation of presentation and style was a new concept for folks. We've also talked a mapping, RSS. We are working on mobile stuff now. That kind of stuff like that. But most on keeping that ongoing and providing the continuity. Last but not least, we just put a lot of effort centrally into producing quality products. That doesn't mean we don't get something wrong. I just got Web host the other day about we just released a template and three days later that someone said, do you realize that -- and here's the latest thing. We've got a lot of folks watching. We really were to try to put out good quality products. It is not just code that we drop there, but instructions, presentations about that, workgroups to get feedback, all of those kinds of things like that. That's what I got to present to you folks. I think we are at the point where we can have some questions and discussion. Let me advance this summer slide here so that if you do have any questions later on after this, we get communications from all over. We are happy to tell our story. It has been kind of a long time coming. As you can tell, it's hard sometimes to shut me up. I'm happy to talk to folks or you can send us questions. If you forget where web tools is, that stuff, you can reach me. That's it for my presentation. I guess somebody else can have the screen back.

>> I am going to jump in right now and talk a little bit --

>> Go ahead, Carolyn.

>> Hi. I am going to talk a little bit about how Dane and I worked together. It is really important that you focus on communication. We got one individual, her name is Stacy, and you may have come in contact with her. Her entire job when we were building the template in the beginning is communication. It is still a major part of her job. Dane focused on the developers and the webmaster user group and making sure that from a technical perspective they had what they needed, even to the point where remembering our first training meeting he was showing people how to set up their IIS. Some of the folks didn't even have that skill set when we began. My entire focus was everybody above the level of Dane and across to the upper-level executive to make sure that the executive folks understood what was going on, to make sure I could run interference whenever we needed it, to cover all of those other bases so that if you look at it as a whole, it was communicating out to all the webmasters keeping everyone occupied -- keeping everyone up to date. Dane was communicating to the technical team into the folks doing the development, and I was taking care of the top here. If we didn't have that particular partnership, I think we may not have been as successful as we were. I don't know if, Dane, you want to make any comments on that.

>> That inter alia true. We've joked this last year about -- that's entirely true. We've joked about Carolyn flying color. I am getting ready to repeat one that we did down in LA in the bay area here in California. That is one of the concepts. Carolyn has described herself. She is competing projects coming along. We originally started off and there were these dreams of because of the limited resources here in California, and you all know we were under shortened work week's end just trying to get things more done with less, you know, there is always those projects that seem to come at you that suddenly divert you from what you are trying to do. We really thought this was important. I actually asked for a project manager. Lo and behold, they managed to scrape Carolyn out of the Public Utilities Commission and bring her back. Us having worked together before and knew that we could kind of get it done, we just reestablish that relationship where she fended off the executives and things

like that on the top that would have diverted us and kept us from getting our best web project on this year. We focused on design and coding and bringing the webmasters along and finding out what was going on and mobile development. That was a huge one. I can only echo the importance of that particular relationship. You could conceivably in a small organization have somebody who does both of those, but for the size and complexity of California, it just works really well to have the team that we have. Of course, Stacy, we will not tell you all of her name or contact information because she is like gold to us. California would essentially fall apart if any of you tried to headhunt away from us. She really just kind of keeps everything glued together. She is actually the business owner of all of those central California sites that are in that one diagram that I showed. A lot of the continuity and usability and access to the rest of the services in California start with Stacy and her great capability to communicate.

>> I don't think that you can [inaudible] at all. I think that we would have not been successful had we not had that pertinent communication. What I find is that a lot of times to government entities moving forward and they want to do this they projects, there is very little extra communication about what is really happening. There is very little view to what is happening. I guess you could call a transparency. That sort of the buzzword now as Dave mentioned, but by letting our webmasters know what was going on every step along the way and making sure they always had someone to call would speak to them personally and making sure that the connections were made if someone needed a particular skill set or had a particular question, we could find someone who has that skill set. We would get back to them right away. That is one of the key success factors. It's also one of the key success factors as you are going forward with usability. In the beginning, there were a lot of folks who understood that usability was a critical issue. It was something that we had to consider in our designs, so that he had to consider it in our conversation. We were talking to the communication directors or to the Director of the Department or the CIO or whomever it was. There was a lack of understanding of why it was important to spend so much time. By having that communication mechanism in place that was always buzzing, it is radiated a lot of the questioning and what has happened now is these principles have become part of our DNA. If we were to present a design now that wasn't feasible or that the colors were not accessible, our own webmaster user's group would cost on it. This is not the way California does business. Not only were we able to increase the skill set, we change the mindset. We have a whole group of webmasters going in a new direction.

>> In a somewhat shameless plug for Jeff and HFI, they were actually a design partner with us here in 2010. Ideally, there is this concept of I test my own stuff, I learn all of this, I go to assign, and I test it. In the real world, that didn't work out for us. They were actually around while we were designing. It gave us early on feedback. by the time we launched the site at the very end of May when the official announcement was at the beginning of the June, then a Jeff I came in and did formal usability testing. I think was right there in the first couple weeks of June. The site actually fared pretty well. We knew we were in the ballpark. Not only based on what our staff already knew, what we already have this constant feedback throughout the design process to kind of keep us on the straight and narrow. And then you do a little bit of validation. I have to say, being part of our DNA, I would encourage you all if you've never had a formal usability study for you to use HFI or internal resources or some other company. It is an eye-opening experience. Put on your clothing because it can also be humbling to get these folks into a room and they've got video going and they go to test your site and you find out you cannot find anything or nothing works. It is highly instructive. It is an absolutely incredible value for your design and to know that you are delivering things the right way. For our part, we kind of want to do something every two years or so to recheck and make sure that we haven't messed things up or gone off. The other thing is that the folks use of Web changes. Screen sizes change, technology changes, people get used to things being laid out in a particular way. When we all think we know usability, it's because we don't have thought if I don't have time to follow it on a day-to-day basis. Usability back in 2001 is vastly different than 2007, is different than 2010. That's why most of the difference in our templates in California. We went from a flexibly sized template that fills the screen, but now are back to a fixed resolution. Because of the advent of different browsing habits and wider screens and people are scrawling side to side really long ranges and stuff

and it creates usability problems for them. I would encourage you. I just want to tie that back around. Even when you use a template, you've really got to have that kind of third-party testing. Unless you got folks who are really certified to do it internally.

>> One of the things I heard often about usability is that we don't have time. You don't have time to do this. It doesn't have to slow you down. Just to put it in perspective, we did an entire redesign of CA.gov beginning in February, and be released at the end of May. Working side by side and understanding what we needed to do, because of our experience in the past, we didn't have to fight those battles. We were able to pull it off in that short period of time.

>> Carolyn, this is Jeff. I would add to that but you don't have time not to involve usability. Not doing it this way, you are going to spin some wheels. You are going to have to redesign a lot sooner and a lot more often.

>> Absolutely. I completely agree with that.

>> Yep. If I can, I want to leave some time for questions, but two quick-points I'd like to make. I'd like to recap some of the things you said, Dane. One is that I talked early on about solving 80 P. set of the problem, making that part of the template solution. The whole solution, the whole description of what your team did can certainly be viewed as that 80 P. set. Your team, you've got one team, probably not real big. You worked real hard and you solve some problems. You do find some templates. That's the 80 P. set. You guys solve the 80 P. set problem for all the agencies out there. Every agency only has to worry about the 20% and leverage the good work that you guys did. I just wanted to make that connection. Second, you said something which I really liked, which is the mentioned the enticement model. When we at HFI talk to folks about the template-based solution, that is absolutely the model we support. The way I described that is it is always better to provide something that everybody out there is going to want to use because it makes their jobs easier and better. It is better to do that than to try to force them to use it, because you guys are very busy. It probably takes everything you've got to do the work you've already done. If you also had to go out there and police everything, it wouldn't happen. It would fall apart. Providing solutions and services that can make their jobs easier and make their products and services better is a much more effective approach to using templates and standards down the road.

>> Do we have any questions?

>> Janel, do you have some questions that people have for us?

>> Weave your -- we have either been so thorough or we put everybody to sleep.

>> One or the other.

>> [laughter]

>> There might be something in the middle.

>> I think that there were some questions. Let me ask again. Are you there, Janel? Can you hear us?

>> I see one in the Cap box now. If she doesn't jump on into seconds, I'll leave it. -- I'll read it.

>> Why don't you go ahead.

>> I see them from the audience. Interesting that you are working on accessibility for mobile. Many people tell me they generally try mobile sites first because they are more accessible. Corollary, don't walk nonmobile users from your mobile site. Let me qualify that from California. We are not developing mobile specifically for accessibility. I mean, mobile sites by law, every site we produce has to be accessible. What is interesting is, and I have to confess, because I am not my mobile developer. I don't know that there is a lot of assistive technology on mobile platforms yet. So how do you test for that or whatever? It's probably almost not even an issue right this minute. But I think the person asking the question does make a point. There is a different kind of accessibility, not just purely code or what can I see? When we develop mobile sites here in California, at least right now we are doing web-based, not embedded. In other words, we are not in general doing iPhone apps. We have to pass through Apple and loaded up to the iTunes store. We are, basically, doing mobile versions of existing applications and existing websites. The thing is, it is not a straight pore over. If you look at the main CA.gov site and you look at [indiscernible], you will see a subset in the mobile site of things that we believe and we are confidently -- constantly looking for feedback and statistics that somebody who is mobile would want to see and do and use. It is accessibility not even purely from a code standpoint, but what is the low

hanging fruit that somebody would want to see versus somebody sitting at a desk or in an airport on a laptop or something like that where they would see the entire giant portal in the 350 pieces of data that are on the front page. That is not practical for a lot of mobile devices that have smaller screens where people are walking down the street or they are sitting in the passenger seat of a car or some other kind of thing like that. Yes, mobile I think is helping accessibility. Can I say that we are considering it a perfect solution? I've never really thought about that before. We are really doing it because our goal always, and the reason we have Facebook and YouTube and all these other things, is to take state services and state information that we believe people want or we have statistics that prove people want or we get asked for what people want and put it where the people are. The public out there is all over the place. They are on their phones, on Facebook, on Twitter. They are on all kinds of stuff. We are trying to bring the state out there. All of that is good for adoption. Even if you only get 2% over here and 2% over here and over there, pretty soon you've got 16% that you've reached. Otherwise, if he just stuck to your classic website, you would not have reached that audience. With a lot of Web connectivity now days, and the people of kind of been on the Web or whatever, being able to increase and reach another 16% of the business, that's a huge thing. It's bigger than what it sounds like. Hopefully, that kind of answers that question. Anyway, I don't see any others on it. It looks like there is people being stay tuned for other questions. I imagine people can speak.

>> I can see a couple other questions. One person has asked if you are using CMS. They want to know what CMS you are using.

>> Okay. That's a good question. It is something that I have been, both embarrassed and happy about all along. The somewhat lack of technology we have behind our stuff here in California. For a while, that kind of embarrassed me. We used to have the 2001 portal that I mentioned when California won the first best to lead back then. It was an old team site broad vision portal. I have since reported that -- retired that. It was very expensive, creditable to together solution. Anything but in 2010. Currently, I have only an in-house content management system that is actually a homegrown system. The call [indiscernible]. It is not powering our primary CA.gov websites right now. Cut that was a through didn't. Through m-mike the through structure, through before lack of staffing and resources and all that other stuff, I never got around to doing that. I thought, going into this, one more year where we got to kind of be clever and hand code all of this stuff and do all this other stuff. Yet in 2010, it actually ended up being a real positive thing, because our real focus this year was coming back with a bang and really upping the ante for the user experience. That meant presenting data in better ways, more flexible ways for users, obviously a design that was quite eye-catching, that kind of stuff like that. Where I thought not having CMS was a little bit of a disadvantage, it turned out to be an advantage to us because our focus became, how do I want to deliver this particular content? Not will my CMS do it? We have a huge mix of technology. For instance, Google is our primary search, but we have both internal where I own the appliances and the cloud-based Google because you get to do different things with them. You get the data out in slightly different formats. We didn't care. We said, what do I want to do with this? What's the best way to present this to end users that will be able to figure it out, manipulate it. Then there is a little bit of Drew Pullin there, there's a little bit of hand coding and a little bit of all of that stuff. We currently do not have a single CMS, at least not to power the central sites. IMO team this next year to build infrastructure. We are looking at semantic Web for those of you who are looking at those concepts. That is a whole discussion in and of itself. Basically, moving toward data-driven sites and heavy, heavy into the metadata and unique identifiers and that kind of stuff. What our goal is is to try to, hopefully, get a system built this year that will support that and then we will migrate our central sites into a system like that that will allow us to do searches and some affinities. When some researchers for this, they see things that are like that. Kind of like what you do when you are getting shopping experiences.

>> There was another advantage is -- the template are available for any state agencies regardless. If you have a particular CMS, the templates would've been only for the agencies that have the same CMS. Being hand coded, they can go anywhere. They are more easily adaptable to the different CMS environments although there are not many of those in the state of California. Both the workers had on hand codes.

>> There's a few. We've probably got one of everything around California and the

various departments. I love to establish kind of a central one. We are going to do that. As we move down the semantic Web paradigm, we may not actually have to do that to cause of the unique identifier concept. You can put data anywhere and grab it regardless because the systems are allowed to talk to each other. Though we constantly get requests. Are you going to give us the template? Are you going to give us a SharePoint template? We wouldn't have the capability to support that. Again, because the decentralized and large nature here in California. We produced it in XHTML, CMS, below common denominator. Folks take that and create master pages or whatever the case may be. They've been pretty successful. We are kind of sticking with that paradigm right now. Ultimately, when I get a central CMS, I probably will not drop the generic template. It will be kind of like what Carolyn says. I am going to produce for my primary enterprise CMS. Those will be the only two options available. I can't have the skill set in-house to know everything I need to know to support everything that anybody would want to bring in.

>> That's really helpful. Thank you. We had another question where somebody asked, are there tools in the templates available for other government agencies to use?

>> Yes, they are.

>> Any government agency?

>> Yes, they are. I think I mentioned that. It's Web tools .ca .-dot GOP. This is, essentially, the Web resource site for State of California webmasters, but it is a public website. All of our work is paid for with tax dollars. Technically, it is public domain, at least by California law it is. We put it out there. I have even joked that our templates have been used by all different kinds of organizations around the world. Please, I would encourage you. Whether you like her stuff or not, if you are just looking for an example of one way to try to support a template and put out resources out there, we've got, you know, information on accessibility and usability and the state standards. There is actually downloads for the template so you can take them and dissect them and do whatever you want. They are available to any of you to go and look there. We are happy to answer questions about them. You know, you cannot use the CA.gov brand on your other state or federal website. That is our brand. Needless to say, you can at least get the concept there. Likely, I'd like to have feedback. I am, hopefully, not arrogant enough to think that we've got the only way to present this and do that. I suspect that we are always looking for good ideas to tweak an update and provide good support. We have kind of on our way to what we have, but it doesn't mean that there is not always great suggestions out there to improve or see other resource sites.

>> [overlapping speakers] Q-quebec there are members that are in other states. They're ours others in ours. They participate with the webmaster University.

Anything we can do to support one another, we are all for it.

>> That is wonderful. I think there is a lot of opportunity for people to go out and take a look. We have a couple more questions here. I do want to let people know that we will, with your permission, send out the slides and post them afterwards so that people will have access to that information if that's okay.

>> Not a problem.

>> Have a question here. That is, were you able to show cost savings from this output? Was showing cost savings effective for you in continuing to get by in? How much did that play a part in fermenting the support from the rest of your state government.

>> That's an interesting question. I will at least start and give you a piece that Caroline will know because she's the one that did it. The bottom line is we haven't really tracked cost savings that much. It has been one of those things where the focus on the consistency across state websites is completely overshadowed everything else. He blessed a benefit and nobody has even asked us really about the cost. Now, that being said, I think everyone of our departments, you know, can say that we have saved them money because they have not had to do, as Jeff talks about that 80/20. We talked about collaborating. We are trying to do essentially so people don't have to go back and redo that. Individual departments could show cost savings.

Interestingly, back in 2001 we went to the first modern State template, as I want to call it, and we asked that people do the conversion, there was a mild request or a mild order for people to convert to it. Carolyn actually work up the numbers back then based upon the last template change and how many departments got consultants to help them because they didn't have the time and how difficult it was and all that other stuff. At the time in 2007, because of the way we constructed a template, the

way we trained folks, and a methodology that we used to go there, she estimated that there was a \$56 million savings across the state that would have been spent on external i.e. nonstate consulting in order to do that conversion didn't have to get spent. Since that time, I haven't had the time to go attract those kinds of things, but time and time again, we have had departments who are able to take the template. All they have to do is do a branding for their particular department, come up with a new site. It is a significantly lower cost than they would if they had to do a from scratch design understanding the coding. Mobile development this last year, I have a paid mobile developer for the state. We went around 20 departments. We ended up with 40 or 60 mobile applications that became available because of the efforts of my providing my staff members to go out there and help them. We needed to do that because we needed the feedback. We need to be experienced to be able to go and write the mobile template and the curriculum that goes without to build a training. He won't going out -- won't be going department by department. Now we know we've worked out the problems. Now we can teach you in these blocks that is, again, more cost effective. Everything I have to tell you is that you have to buy \$20,000 worth of Apple equipment if you are developing for the iPhone. The software development kit only runs on a Mac. California is not a Mac centric state. Is that the money to purchase that. We developed a template that allows folks to make an iPhone compatible web template without anybody else having the iPhone SDK or the Apple equipment necessary to do that.

>> That's wonderful. You really leverage that equipment.

>> That is central investment kind of thing.

>> That's fantastic.

>> We hit the top of the hour, but I just want to give Carolyn and Jeff a chance to have one more word in here.

>> I will jump in. Nothing specific to add to the conversation, but it has been a pleasure to talk to you all. I would encourage everybody to consider a template page approach to their design efforts. Leverage what you can from Dean's group. You cannot consider ways to come up with a centralized approach to template-based design. It's effective and it will help your organization.

>> Thank you.

>> I would just like to thank you for the opportunity to speak to everyone. Please be watching web tools. Go out to eat services as well. We will help you in anyway that we can. Everything that is there is downloadable, including the Web templates that we've been talking about. Thank you again.

>> Thank you so much. It's a really fantastic set of resources. We will send out those URLs after this webinar along with the slides. We also have some questions that we didn't get answered. If you would be willing, we will off-line see if you can give us some answers to those. We can send those out if that would be all right with you.

>> Absolutely.

>> Fantastic. This has been a wonderful hour. I've learned so much. I know that other members in the community have. It's a great way to celebrate. In addition to going to web 12, you can also get wonderful resources like human factors.com. Of course, the world usability Day has wonderful information about other usability activities that are happening. Thank you very much. Thank you, everybody, in the community. Goodbye.

>> Thank you.

>> Thank you very much.

>> [event concluded]