.gov Reform Initiative

Department of Energy Web Improvement Plan
Working Draft as of 10/11/2011

Background

In the [August 12, 2011 Agency Instructions for Completing Web Inventories and Web Improvement Plans](), Agency CIOs were asked to work with their Agency Web Manager and Office of Public Affairs to submit an Interim Progress Report on their efforts to streamline Agency-managed .gov domains (due September 6, 2011) and to begin development of an Agency-wide Web Improvement Plan.

> "By October 11, Agencies shall develop a Web Improvement Plan that communicates their **strategy for managing web resources more efficiently, improving online content,** and **enhancing the customer experience of Agency websites**." This comprehensive plan will "address the broader objectives of **streamlining content, infrastructure,** and ultimately **improving customer service**."

The purpose of this Web Improvement Plan is to identify the strategy, actions, measurements, and timelines that the Agency is using to streamline website infrastructure, improve web content, and enhance the customer experience with Executive Branch websites.

Agencies are being asked to create a Web Improvement Plan that will be developed iteratively over the next few months. In this plan, Agencies will describe Agency-wide efforts to effectively manage publicly accessible websites in the .gov domain. Only agencies in the Executive Branch are required to submit a Web Improvement Plan. The initial plan for the Department of Energy, due to OMB by October 11, 2011, is in the following section.

Step 1: Current State of Agency-wide Web Improvement Efforts

Over the past few months, Agencies have been reviewing their .gov domains, web operations, and other web-related efforts in response to OMB .gov Reform data collection efforts (individual domain inventories, web governance survey, interim progress reports, etc.). The following describes the state of current web improvement efforts at the Department of Energy.

1) Does your Agency currently have an Agency-wide web strategy?

Yes.

2) How does your agency currently ensure that Agency-wide web resources are managed efficiently (e.g. governance, technology/infrastructure, hosting, staffing, operations, etc.)?

Through Website Reform, the Energy Department is streamlining web operations to reduce duplicative and wasteful spending while also improving overall web and digital communications. The Energy.gov Renewal Project, the initiative to provide a one-platform solution (i.e. branding, content management system, hosting, etc.) for our HQ public-facing websites, is part of the reform effort. In addition, the Energy Web Council provides a space for Web Managers and New Media Specialists from across the Department to collaborate across programs, and share common challenges, ideas and best practices.

The Energy Department Headquarters Data Center also plays an important role providing significant cost savings by leveraging corporate consolidation of infrastructure, cyber security, enterprise licenses, and labor. The Data Center is a secure facility with badge reader controlled access, surveillance systems, and extensive systems to address security and network redundancy.

Application Hosting in the Data Center provides 24/7 support of servers allowing customers to focus on maintenance and development of their applications and business. It is designed to be a fully managed hosting solution and supports Windows, UNIX (Solaris, AIX), and Linux operating systems, corporate database solutions, and application server middleware. The consolidation of services through the Data Center eliminates the need for a large upfront capital investment for premium IT services and reduces labor costs. The Data Center environment eliminates the cost of independent cyber security certification and accreditation (C&A) for infrastructure.

3) How does your Agency currently ensure that website content is readily accessible, updated, accurate, and routinely improved?

Energy Department Offices are required to follow all Federal regulations, Executive Orders and other policies regarding website content. Web Managers and New Media Specialists are encouraged to utilize HowTo.gov to keep current with Federal requirements and find guidance on implementation.

While individual offices have implemented internal processes that provide for regular review of content for correctness and currency, the Energy Web Council facilitates collaboration amongst Web Managers and New Media Specialists across departmental offices.

4) How does your Agency currently ensure that websites are meeting user expectations and needs and that the customer experience with websites is continually enhanced?

The Energy Department employs a variety of tools to solicit and respond to user feedback including web analytics, online surveys, social networks, online forms, usability studies and focus groups.