Structuring Your Web Content Team

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Web Content Management at HUD

- At HUD, the Web Content Team works for the Deputy Secretary
- The Web Content Team:
  - Recommends, interprets, and implements Department Web Policies as determined by the Deputy Secretary
  - Manages content on web based products
  - Serves as consultants to senior managers
  - Markets HUD's web products

Web Content Management at HUD

- The Web Content Team:
  - Serves as consultants to business partners
  - Participates in interagency initiatives related to the content of web sites
  - Acts as customer service representatives, responding to web-related requests from the public

Web Content Management at HUD

- The team also works with:
  - Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
  - Chief Information Officer
  - Office of Information Technology
  - Principal Staff
  - Program managers and staff throughout the Department

The Web Content Team

- HUD's Content Management Team is composed of:
  - 1 Departmental Web Manager
  - 1 Associate Departmental Web Manager
  - 4 Deputy Departmental Web Managers
  - 10 Regional Web Managers
  - 8 Full-time Program Office Web Managers
  - 20 Part-Time Program Office Web managers

The Web Content Team

- ◆ Who are the Web Managers?
  - Management Analysts
  - Non-technical backgrounds (analysis, communications, publishing)
  - GS 13-15
  - Have a working relationship with senior management within their organization

The Web Manager

- The leader of the team - the Web Manager - must:
  - be a leader
  - have stature within your organization that can mobilize staff
  - be someone who can analyze, organize, write, and edit
  - be a skilled communicator and catalyst for change

Keys to HUD's Success

» Functional Alignment

» Organizational Placement

» Programmatic Neutrality

» Access to Top Management

» Centrally Managed

» Strong Partnership with IT

» Dedicated Resources

» Right Skills

» Right Roles

» Commitment from the Top

Keys to HUD's Success

- ◆ Functional Alignment
  - – Since the web team is part of the Chief Operating Officer at HUD, the web site is part of the management of the department.

Keys to HUD's Success

- Organizational Placement
  - Placing web managers within the highest organizational level is important to getting the attention of program and field offices and to representing your organization outside the Department

Keys to HUD's Success

- Programmatic Neutrality
  - The web team has no program responsibilities or ties and no real perceived agenda. This is critical to maintaining the trust of various program areas.

Keys to HUD's Success

- ◆ Access to Top Management
  - – The home page is current and in synch with the Secretary's direction because Web Managers have access to top Department executives

Keys to HUD's Success

- ◆ Centrally Managed
  - – HUD has only one home page for the entire Department. All subordinate pages (field office, program office, others) emanate from the Departmental page.

Keys to HUD's Success

- ◆ Strong Partnership with IT
  - – The Web Managers receive strong support from the Department's Information Technology Office.
  - – Lines of responsibility are clear: the Web Managers define management requirements and IT provides the services.

Keys to HUD's Success

- ◆ Dedicated Resources
  - – From the beginning, HUD has had full-time departmental web managers. To have quality web products, an investment of resources is essential.
  - – Budgeting for the web site is part of the Department's infrastructure and capital planning processes.

Keys to HUD's Success

- Right Skills
  - HUD's web managers are
    - » excellent writers
    - » editors,
    - » communicators,
    - » strong leaders, and
    - » innovators
  - Web managers also have to be cheerleaders, inspiring others to think of their work in new ways.

Keys to HUD's Success

◆ Right Roles

– Web managers play an active role in developing the content

» the facts come from program managers

» the web managers translate those facts into pages the public can understand--we edit and clarify

» the web managers are advocates for the audience-- we understand what the audience wants and make sure the program managers provide it

Keys to HUD's Success

- ◆ Commitment from the Top
  - HUD's Secretary and Deputy Secretary have been completely supportive of the development and improvement of HUD's home page from the beginning.
  - Without commitment from the top, it would be difficult to take advantage of all that technology offers us.

How to Structure A Web Content Team

- The Web Content Team structure should come from answers to some questions:
  - Who will set web policy?
  - Who will decide on design: format, fonts, colors, page layout?
  - Who does the writing?
  - Who edits?

How to Structure
A Web Content Team

◆ Questions (cont'd) :

– Who does the computer work?

» who runs the servers

» who does the HTML

» who does the graphics?

– Who does the marketing?

How to Structure
A Web Content Team

◆ And, most important:

– Who has the last word?

Conclusion

- A recent meeting of Federal Web Content Managers reported:
  - Some were management analysts and writers
  - Others were computer specialists
  - Some were in the CIO/IT shops
  - Others were in Public Affairs

- The conclusion: there isn't a single solution for all organizations

Conclusion

- What is clear, however, is you should ensure your team has the flexibility to:
  - respond to direction from above while also meeting the demands from staff and your business partners
  - take advantage of the rapid changes in technology
  - continue to meet the expectations of an ever-more sophisticated audience

Conclusion

◆ Federal Content Web Managers Group

» Meet monthly to discuss common issues

» Document current practices

» Identify/document "lessons learned"

» Identify/document "best practices"

» Ask specific agencies to do presentations/demos on issues and topics of interest

Conclusion

◆ Federal Content Web Managers Group

» Next Meeting:
Tuesday, December 5 from 10:00 a.m. to noon

» For more information:
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The Bottom Line

◆ Just as the Editor-in-Chief leads the newspaper, the web manager must lead the website.

◆ The Web Managment Team:
  – has to be more than typsetters
  – have to be innovators
  – and have to be perceived as being the leaders of the website not just the keepers of the website

Questions/Comments?

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