

Idaho State University
Web Services Council
Minutes for April 4, 2006

Meeting convened 3:30 PM

Present: Blake Beck, Tony Lovgren, Ken Trimmer, Ali Nelson, Randy Gaines, Libby Howe, Mark Lee, Janet Higgins, Juli Mead

Excused: Kent Tingey, Roger Egan, John Kijinski, Craig Joseph,

Taken by: Janet Higgins

Agenda Item 1 – Approval of Minutes for 2/28/06 and 3/21/06

Both sets were approved as they stand.

Agenda Item 2 – Bylaws for Web Services Council

Blake asked for 3-4 volunteers for a subcommittee that will be charged with writing bylaws for the Council – this is a directive from the Technology Review and Information Group (TRIG). At the February meeting, TRIG requested that all committees formalize their structure, charge, and membership.

Issues to address are:

- Recognize the Executive Committee that meets regularly to set the Council agenda and perform related duties.
- Attendance
 - Should it be mandatory?
 - Should a call for replacement be made if a representative misses a certain number of meetings without sending a replacement?
- Representatives – main organizations to be included were defined in the original charge
 - Determine who the representative should be. By position/title, i.e., department head or someone that uses and understands the web? Rotate among represented departments?
- Length of service

Randy, Blake, and Libby volunteered. Blake will ask Roger to join the group.

Action Item: Contact Roger and set meeting date.

Agenda Item 3 – Contact ISU” and Help Desk Tracking

Tony briefly described a Customer Relationship Management System (Help Desk/Problem Tracking System) that would be a useful tool for the University. If implemented it could potentially track follow-up of requests for help/information so that none of these requests fall through the cracks – sometimes requests are forwarded multiple times before they make it to the correct department. It would also gather statistics on types of questions and categories. In reality a Help Desk tracking system encompasses much more than this. It would also build a knowledge base of questions and answers, receive emails and respond to them, and would integrate into other systems you may have. Unfortunately these systems are expensive and with a new ERP on the horizon now is not the time to act on this issue.

Randy noted that an ERP should come with something like what we have, and if not, we will have to buy one to integrate into the ERP.

The question then becomes should the existing “Contact ISU” form – which is confusing and not very user-friendly – be replaced or removed? After a brief discussion it was suggested that a better way to handle requests for information would be a web page that directs the individual to the right department, based on the type of question they have. Categories would need to be fairly explicit:

- Questions about enrollment go to...
- Comment about web, go to...
- Questions about graduate programs go to...
- Questions about Undergraduate programs go to...
- Questions about College of Technology go to...
- Questions about International students go to...
- Questions about Computer technology help go to...

Mark suggested that the Frequently Called Numbers page may be a good template to follow.

Action item: Mark will create a draft web page for Council to review at the next meeting.

Agenda Item 4: Prioritize Future Projects

See below for discussion. Top priorities are:

Campus Map, Style Guide, Community Services on Visitor’s page, verify Web liaisons for next year, web statistics.

Agenda Item 5: Report on Master Calendar Purchase

Blake reported that we now have the Calendar software and server is in the process of being received. IT staff should be able to install the server and software in the near future.

Agenda Item 6: Other

Randy informed the Council that he put a request for \$15,000 into next year’s budget to fund student help for the Web Services Group. Also, Kent is requesting money for a position in University Relations that would be responsible to get University news out to the public and on the ISU Web page.

Future Projects for the Council:

Mark and others gave brief reports on most of the projects:

Interactive Campus Map

This is being worked on. GIS has almost finished the interface. The main problem now is getting the data from Physical Plant. Blake recently sent an email asking when this data would be available. Basically the Physical Plant will provide building information based on coordinates, GIS then imports the data into their system, and the maps are automatically generated. Mark estimate 1-2 months to completion.

Content Management System

This is a big undertaking that will require a great deal of evaluation and campus discussion.

Phone Directory Redesign

Mark Norviel, from Telecommunications, asked Mark Lee to redesign the online phone directory. They have not yet met, but the basic request is to redesign the pages and find a better search method.

Juli commented that some institutions are taking student directories off of the web because of privacy concerns. For example, if a student has blocked their student records, then their name should not be listed in the directory. In other words, make sure you know what data to use.

Credit Card Payment Options

Ken pointed out that credit card transactions require a secure server and a series of applications to ensure privacy; also Finance would need to approve the process. Juli has also been in on past discussions. ISU would have to subcontract out the card verification process and the fee charged by credit card companies must be passed along, and the use of debit cards is more attractive instead because there are fewer fees.

Council decided that this topic is beyond the scope of our charge and should be dropped from the list.

Forms

No one was sure exactly what this item covers.

Action Item: Janet will review original emails and report back to the Council.

Style Guide

There is a draft published on the Web Services Council website. We talked about the Style Guide at the first few meetings, but it was decided to leave it as a working document only until the initial website redesign was finished.

Council agrees that this document should be finalized as soon as possible so web publishers can use it to guide their efforts this summer, which is when most web pages get reviewed/revisted.

Action Item: Form a small subcommittee to review it and bring back to Council for approval.

Directories linked to web pages

It was suggested that Faculty web pages be listed as part of the directory. Again, no one remembers what this was about.

Action Item: Janet will review original emails and report back to the Council.

Class Schedule link to Syllabus or Webpage

A suggestion was made to link class syllabus to the appropriate class in the online class schedule. Juli reported that faculty can do it now, but the functionality is not available through FS tools and must be maintained separately.

Since an ERP may change much of what we do, Council felt that this item should be tabled.

Community Services on Visitors page

Simply a matter of add some links to the page. Mark knows what needs to be done.

Action Item: Mark will start working on it.

Projects added to the list:

Verify Web Liaisons

Libby: at the end of each year we need to find out if the current liaisons will continue to be the contact for the following academic year.

Action Item: Send email out to the department heads asking for verification. Janet will get the original list of department heads.

Web-based, self service, customer relationship management system

Tony described a system in place at the University of Houston. They found that not having people answer routine questions saves big money. We should seriously look at what U of Houston is doing.

Juli briefly described the EMAS system used at ISU to manage questions for preadmissions screening and recruiting.

Web Statistics

Mark is currently looking at web statistics software. The WUSAG software currently in use at ISU it is not user friendly, doesn't work well, and is time consuming to use. He is looking at open source solutions.

Search Engine

The current search engine also leaves a lot to be desired. Mark will talk to Kory Wheatley. Tony remembers a replacement being expensive—some research was done a few years ago at Duggan's request.

Replace WebXM

Limited discussion.

Adjourned at 4:50 PM