

## WCMS/Web site mini-redesign Q&A

**Q. Why is UW-Eau Claire making the transition to the use of a Web content management system (WCMS)?**

**A.** A WCMS will be beneficial for several reasons, some of which include:

- Employees can update their Web sites through their favorite supported Web browser virtually anywhere they have an Internet connection.
- There will be no need to load and learn additional software (such as Dreamweaver), since the WCMS uses a browser to publish pages.
- The WCMS will eliminate the need to map a network drive before accessing a Web site.
- Employees will not need to know about HTML coding, file structure, etc. before they can manage their Web sites.
- The WCMS allows individuals to be assigned various levels of access to a Web site. So some might be content contributors only, while others can be authorized to review, edit and publish (i.e., "make live") contributors' content. These various levels of access can apply to an entire site or to specific pages within the site.
- There will be greater consistency in design, key content areas (headers, footers, etc.) and other elements across UW-Eau Claire's Web site.
- Editors of sites within the WCMS will receive automated feedback about broken links, outdated images, content needing updating, etc.
- WCMS users can schedule when content will appear on their sites.
- The WCMS has rollback capabilities — meaning old content need never be lost.
- Four other campuses in the UW System are in the process of implementing CommonSpot (the WCMS software UW-Eau Claire has selected) and are sharing resources.
- The WCMS will facilitate the sharing of resources among the Web sites of UW-Eau Claire departments, units, programs and offices. The software includes RSS for sharing of news and calendar items among sites. (Learn more about RSS at <http://www.whatisrss.com/>.) It also includes a common photo gallery from which all campus users can take images and to which they can contribute their own photos.

See more details about these benefits on the WCMS Web site, <https://web.uwec.edu/wcms/>.

**Q. How was CommonSpot by PaperThin chosen as the WCMS product to use?**

**A.** A WCMS selection work group (<https://web.uwec.edu/wcms/selectiongroup.htm>) including representatives from across campus drafted and used some very specific selection criteria (<https://web.uwec.edu/wcms/criteria.htm>) when considering several different types of WCMS products. CommonSpot ultimately was selected because it met those criteria more fully than the other products. Minutes from the selection work group's

meetings leading up to the selection of CommonSpot are available on the WCMS Web site (<https://web.uwec.edu/wcms/selectionMeetings.htm>).

**Q. Why will there be a "mini redesign" of the university's Web site as part of the implementation of CommonSpot?**

A. UW-Eau Claire has received high marks for its current Web site design. However, the WCMS implementation group (<https://web.uwec.edu/wcms/implementationgroup.htm>) determined that some changes would enhance the site.

Part of the implementation of CommonSpot involves developing templates to be used for the conversion of existing university Web pages to the WCMS. The implementation group further determined that the best time to incorporate design changes was as the CommonSpot templates were being developed.

**Q. What changes will the "mini redesign" include?**

A. The changes will include a fresh, new look that leaves the site's basic navigational structure intact, so people accustomed to the site will find most links in the same locations as before.

The "mini redesign" will, however, include the relocation of some links. It also will include the implementation of a larger page width.

**Q. How were decisions made about the new features of the redesign?**

A. The WCMS implementation group determined that the changes would enhance UW-Eau Claire's Web site after examining statistics and link-tracking tools regarding the way people use the site, conducting a focus group study with students and reviewing many other college and university Web sites. The group also took into account that the last redesign of the university Web site was in the summer of 2004, nearly 3½ years ago.

The decision to use a larger page width is due to the increased use of larger monitors and the phasing out of smaller monitors among computer users in general. An increased page width has been instituted on many other college and university Web sites.

**Q. Will we have to convert our Web site to the CommonSpot templates?**

A. Aside from the top-level pages of the university's site, converting to CommonSpot will be voluntary. However, given the many benefits of doing so, converting to CommonSpot will be a plus for all university departments, units, programs and offices — enabling them to more easily maintain their Web sites and to include dynamic elements that make their sites more attractive to visitors.

**Q. Will we receive help converting our site to the WCMS?**

A. The staff in Web Development Services will convert your site and the BITS training team will provide training at no charge.