

NCSA Web Presence Design

Project Definition Document

Primary Goal

The primary goal of the Web redesign is to focus our top-level public information pages with up-to-date content that clearly states what we do at NCSA. We will also work to make each page reflect the new NCSA branding strategy. Additionally, we will better serve out target audiences by creating a more intuitive and usable navigational structure.

Project Requirements

Below is an initial outline of the specific tasks (in order of importance) the Web Redesign team recommends

Definition/Branding Strategy

- Define our target audience
- Make it clear what we do (up to date content)
- Projects, teams
- Grids page example
- Make Web site reflect NCSA's focus (skill sets)
- Create Tagline
- Position NCSA as a technical leader
- Subdue Alliance content (make it a project)

Organization

- Adjust organization in accordance with definition/branding strategy
- Include task & audience specific forms of navigation
- Perform testing to create an easy navigation system
- Reduce number of pages that we maintain
- Relegate pages/info to divisions/project teams
- Reduce the amount of home page content
- Incorporate user feedback into reorganization
- Reorganize the archive

Visual Design

- Adjust visual design in accordance with definition/branding strategy
- Consistent styles for ALL pages
- Templates for 2 styles (text & 4.0 browsers)
- Incorporate new NCSA logo design
- Archive design (make it more obvious it is not being updated)
- Access online/datalink redesign (less work for students)
- Reduce "busyness" of home page
- Inclusion of more images (DISCLAIMER: updates, redesign)
- Rethink color scheme

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Development

- Automate all possible areas to make maximum use of content
- Two templates for content (text & 4.0 browsers)
- Plan for future redesigns
- Rebuild site to comply with Web standards recommended by the W3 Consortium
- Build technology in components that can be used in other Web projects
- Defined URL structure (and policy)
- Development in accordance with definition/branding strategy (advanced)
- Flexible database structures (i.e. easy to go from archive to Web)
- Script for locating updated files and printing report
- Search interface & reliability
- Sitemap Automation
- Better Web log analysis (regular reports by email)
- Automatic construction of project/division Web sites (take into account non SSI)
- Regular (automated) scans for broken links
- Web-based software development tools (MIS?)
- Visualization of hours on the machine or what science is happening
- Web "store" for NCSA press-related images
- NCSA store to sell calendars, books, etc (to public)

Maintenance

- UP TO DATE content
- Policy for divisions/projects content updating (more frequent timeline, QSR)
- Contact Information for Divisions, projects (on all pages)
- Gear ALL content toward specific audience
- Create "destination" pages
- Archive policy
- Reduce amount of maintenance
- Create new access online/data link design (limit design time)
- Interactive NCSA History timeline
- Add "About this Web site" content

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Web Audience Goals

In order to best serve our audience, we have compiled a list of goals that users have when coming to the NCSA Web site. The bulk of our top-level content is aimed at HPC Users and Funding Agencies. We've grouped the expressed interests of HPC Users and Staff together, as they have many similar content needs. We've also grouped the Funding Agencies, Press, and Public, as they exhibit a similar range of content needs.

NCSA Web Audience Goals					
	Funding Agencies	HPC Users	Staff	Press	Public
Read about Success Stories	x		x	x	x
Learn about Projects	x		x	x	x
Learn about NCSA's skill sets	x			x	x
Contact NCSA staff	x	x	x	x	x
Learn about NCSA staff	x		x	x	
Get HPC User statistics	x				
Get an overview of NCSA	x			x	x
Get Progress Updates on NCSA projects	x		x	x	x
Learn about NCSA History	x			x	x
Find out about Outreach & Education	x			x	x
Read about our partnerships	x				
Review upcoming & past events	x		x	x	x
Get Hardware specifications	x	x	x	x	x
Get Software		x	x		
Get Hardware/Software documentation		x	x		
Get "How To" and FAQs (Help Desk)		x			
Get Allocation Info		x			
Find out about training events		x			
Read HPC user policies		x			
Get HPC user updates (Datalink)		x			
Use Monitoring Tools		x			
Subscribe to Mailing Lists		x		x	
Find available jobs			x		x
Learn about Private Sector Program			x	x	x
View Organization Charts			x		
MIS Applications			x		
Headline News			x		
Download Photos/Slides & Permission Forms				x	
Download Logos			x	x	
Get Boiler Plates				x	
Mosaic, HTML Primer, & misc.					x
Campus Relations				x	x

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NCSA Staff Survey Results

The Web redesign team conducted a survey of staff members confirming that there are a number of commonalities in the ways people use the Web site and also the ways in which they would improve it. The following list shows a few trends in the responses:

Question #1: For what purpose do you most often use the NCSA Web site? (46 responses)

- 41%: Contact NCSA staff
- 15%: Learn about projects
- 15%: Get hardware specifications
- 13%: Get hardware/software documentation
- 11%: Learn about NCSA staff

Question #2: What information do you consider the most important on the NCSA Web site? (46 responses)

- 28%: Contact NCSA staff
- 22%: Get progress updates on NCSA projects
- 20%: Get hardware/software documentation
- 13%: Get hardware specifications
- 13%: Read HPC User policies

Question #3: What improvements would you like to see made to the NCSA Web site? (48 responses)

- 17%: Up to date
- 15%: Colors and design
- 15%: Technical documents
- 13%: URL structure
- 13%: Text-only version

Question #4: What would you like to see added to the NCSA Web site? (29 responses)

- 7%: Web technology information
- 7%: Maps
- 3%: Children's information
- 3%: Frequently-asked questions

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HPC User Survey Results

The Web redesign team also conducted a survey of the HPC Users to determine how they use our web site and what were some common concerns and ways for improvement. The list below shows some of the most commonly given responses:

Question #1: For what purpose do you most often use the NCSA public Web site? (43 responses)

- 35%: Get hardware/software documentation
- 21%: Get Allocations information
- 16%: Contact NCSA staff
- 14%: Get "How To" and FAQ's (Help desk)
- 14%: Use monitoring tools

Question #2: What information do you consider most important on the NCSA Web site? (41 responses)

- 22%: Get hardware/software documentation
- 17%: Get Allocations information
- 10%: Get hardware specifications
- 10%: Get "How-To" and FAQs (Help Desk)
- 10%: Use monitoring tools

Question #3: What improvements would you like to see made to the NCSA Web site? (32 responses)

- 13%: Technical documents
- 13%: Text-only version
- 9%: URL structure
- 6%: More images

Question #4: What would you like to see added to the NCSA Web site? (23 responses)

- 13%: More hardware documentation
- 9%: Better FAQ
- 9%: More images