



Computing
Lessons Learned

Fermilab News Portal

Version 1.0
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PREPARED BY:
Matt Crawford

Lessons Learned Approvals

Name	Signature	Date

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1. Attendees

ATTENDEE NAME	DEPARTMENT / TITLE	ROLE	PHONE NUMBER
Matt Crawford	OCIO	Project Manager	x3461
Leah Hesla	OC	Team Member/Leader and user	x5136
Lauren Biron	OC	Team Leader and user	x2326
Maura Barone	OCOO/OC	Team Member	x4690
Katie Yurkewicz	OC	Project Sponsor and user	x4112
Kevin Munday	Xeno Media	Subcontractor	708-482-0939
Carolina Manel	Xeno Media	Subcontractor	630-599-1550

2. Feedback Received

A. Project Team Feedback

NAME / ROLE	COMMENT	PHASE
Time line		
Leah	We didn't stick to the schedule for various reasons: infrastructure availability, staff availability. But on the whole, we stayed close to schedule in comparison to other IT projects.	Execution
Kevin	Mailchimp integration went relatively smoothly, but we weren't prepared for the throttling of our first issue. (This happened due to a large number of imported addresses.)	Execution
Mailchimp		
Caro & Kevin	We had a lot of issues, and learned a lot, about authenticating the sender of the news portal email, so it would be trusted by our Outlook users.	Execution
Importing old articles		
Leah & Katie	We hadn't planned on needing all the help importing old articles. Legacy content was more complicated than expected. Ditto for press releases. There remains a large number of old articles that have not been imported.	Execution
Technical restrictions		
Katie & Kevin	We did not understand at first the restrictions the SaaS security architecture would impose.	Planning
Caro	WordPress' cron didn't work on the SaaS. We had to ask Pete to run a cron job on the system for us.	Execution

NAME / ROLE	COMMENT	PHASE
Katie & Kevin	The unique configuration of the SaaS presented several challenges that did not allow us to achieve our initial vision. For example, we had to launch with two separate calendar systems in use so that users outside the Fermilab network could see an online calendar. The externally visible calendar often required intervention and was finally replaced in late June 2016. As another example, syndication of content to other websites will not be possible until at least late calendar 2016. As a third example, Services password and IP address restrictions are in place for anyone submitting content, which was unexpected and provides some barriers to off-site users who have services passwords to easily submit content.	Execution

B. User Feedback

NAME / ROLE	COMMENT	PHASE
User Testing		
Katie, Leah, Lauren	Testing process was well defined from the start, but it had to be adapted quickly as it became evident that we wouldn't be able to hold to our rollout schedule. The end stages of user testing were rushed and the result did not expose as many issues as it could have with more time.	Planning, Execution
Subscription management		
Leah	Users get confusing messages when they go to change their subscription options.	Operation
Email reception		
Kaletka, others	Some users with tight settings on their email filters could not see images. Delivery of the emails (initially) from daily-changing mailchimp sender names also triggered spam filters for many users. Once both problems were solved, opens and views went way up.	Operation
Submitting content		
(Katie, for users)	People love being able to submit ads and announcements over the web.	Operation
Ease of use		
Leah	WordPress is so easy to use, I feel like a Genius	Operation
Lauren	When I fill in for Leah, it's very easy now.	Operation

3. What Was Done Well

WHAT WAS DONE WELL	PHASE
1. This was the first collaboration of its kind between OC and Computing and it worked very well (from OC & XM point of view).	All
2. The whole thing could have fallen apart at the 80% completion level, but the team persevered and overcame the difficulties.	Execution

WHAT WAS DONE WELL	PHASE
3. We got the full scope & functionality of the news portal system we wanted, with the minor exception of a publicly visible calendar.	Execution
4. The infrastructure has run very well, including through software upgrades.	Operation
5. The PM was praised for excellent work in interfacing between CCD and OC people.	All

4. What Could Have Been Done Better

WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN DONE BETTER	PHASE
1. Had we known about the throttling in the first MailChimp mailing process, we could have sent a benign "coming soon" message to the subscribers.	Execution
2. Workflow: we had a lot of discussions going on and we didn't always keep the entire team informed of the latest decisions.	Execution
3. Delays: There was one delay waiting for the SaaS to be ready.	Execution
4. Delays: The developed product worked in Xeno Media's environment, but hadn't been tested in the SaaS' security-restricted configuration. As the project hadn't originally planned to use the SaaS, development began on the Xeno Media server well before the SaaS was available.	Execution
5. It cost us some delay to get the full scope and functionality	Execution
6. We ran into some server load issues. They were solved.	Execution