The Evolution of the Website

Then...2008
- Websites designed for PC/desktop
- A website should be redesigned every five years
  - Only a few screen sizes (PC or Mac)
  - Had control of how content was displayed/viewed
  - Could predict future technology
- Total unique visitors on MCC site in 2008: 235,000

Now...2014–2015
- Websites designed for mobile devices
  (20% decrease in PC usage since 2008)
- A website should constantly offer new experiences to the user
  - Various screen sizes, speed of networks and modes of use
  - Must develop variable versions for different devices
  - Future technology changes daily and is surprising
- Total unique visitors on MCC site in 2014: 554,000 (42% increase)
POPPULAR
- Get Started at MCC
- Academic Calendar
- myMCC: Register, Pay and Check Grades
- Course Schedules
- Majors and Areas of Study
- Give to MCC
- Visit MCC
- Purchasing/Gift Information

SPOTLIGHT

EVENTS
- Gardenfest April 11
  Featuring keynote speaker Roy Diblik.
- Free Resume Writing Workshop
  April 14 at 3 p.m. in 8166. No registration required.
- Job Fair April 24
  From 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Multipurpose Room 039m, Building A
- Fall 2015 Scholarships Available!
  We can help you afford college.
  Apply now →
- Make the most of your summer! Register for summer courses
  Summer weekday credit classes begin May 18, 2015.
- MCC is a military-friendly institution
  as nominated by GI Jobs.

- See our Veterans Services

Supporting Our Veterans
Current MCC Website

- In 2014:
  - 4.6 million page views
  - 554,000 unique visitors
  - 32% new visitors vs. 68% returning visitors

- Approximately 60% of all visits are from a mobile device—either on smartphone or tablet (on trend)

- Most commonly visited pages:
  - Homepage
  - Academic Directory
  - Future Students
  - Current Students
  - Community
  - Admissions
Current MCC Website

- Most popular pages/search:
  - myMCC
  - Canvas
  - Catalog
  - Schedules
  - Registration
  - Tuition
  - Athletics
  - Summer (special summer registration campaign)

- Over 2,000 pages of content updated regularly
- An average of 20-30 web-related projects per month
- Google Analytics used monthly to track web statistics and user information
- Website last “refreshed” in 2012 – brand identity update
- Fully integrated with social media
Current Expectations of a College Website User

- An institution’s website is the first—and often only—source of information a person accesses to make a decision.
- It takes less than seven seconds for a user to determine whether or not they will stay on a website.
- A user often determines if he/she wants to do business based on the ease and look of a website.
- Specific information that a user is looking for should be easy and quick to find.
- A higher education website must have a certain level of professionalism—how professional equates to the perception of quality by the prospective student and his/her family members.
- A website must keep a user’s attention, even though a user now only pays partial attention to online content.
- An average smartphone user visits up to 24 websites per day.
Future Site Considerations Based on User Expectation

- Content and navigation must vary based on how people view it
  - Accommodation of a variety of devices
Future Site Considerations Based on User Expectation

- Well organized, clear and easy navigation from homepage and from any point in the site
  - Visitors who know nothing about the College should be able to find what they are looking for quickly
  - All navigation should be visitor-centric, with terminology that is understandable to a variety of audiences
- Ability to deliver similar content in different capacities
  - Content should be shared in a variety of locations on the site, as well as on social media
- A content management system that allows for all content to be created, edited and published in one system
- Fresh, consistent, responsive design
  - Follow institutional branding and style guides
  - Looks and functions well on devices and screens of all sizes
- Relevant search results
- Must reflect strategic direction and specific goals of the College
- Must be functional and reliable during emergencies
What the Experts Are Saying

- "Websites that are hard to use frustrate customers, forfeit revenue and erode brands." -Forrester Research, 1998

- “We really need to shift now to start thinking about building mobile first. This is an even bigger shift than the PC revolution.” -Kevin Lynch, CTO, Adobe

- “We're just now starting to think about mobile first and desktop second for a lot of our products.” -Kate Aronowitz, Design Director, Facebook
Proposed Strategy – Focus on the User

1. **Discovery**
   - Research/Analysis
   - User Testing

2. **Development**
   - Information Architecture
   - Content Editing
   - Content Management
   - Design Enhancements

3. **Pilot/Testing**
   - Launch of Full Site

**Continuous Improvement**
- Data Analytics
- Ongoing User Testing
- Responding to New Technologies
- Incorporating Best Practices
Need for Hiring a Project Partner

There are significant benefits of bringing in a project partner to help the web services team manage this initiative. A good partner will:

- Bring extensive experience to the project based on similar projects and environments (specifically in higher education, as well as other industry)
- Serve as a reality check so that ideas are practical and relevant
- Ensure we are choosing among the best options for the project and MCC’s needs
- Ask the right questions to make the best choice for strategic direction and budget
- Can sit down with users of all groups and perspectives to glean how site is being used, where there are issues and how to improve
- Provides an outside, objective voice that breaks through possible roadblocks
- Allows for internal staff to continue existing efforts and projects
- Rounds out expertise with diverse skill sets to ensure that the project is correctly staffed and managed
Next Steps

- Develop a Request for Proposal for web usability services, including three phases: 1) Discovery/Research; 2) Site Development; and 3) Pilot and Launch.
- Request approval from MCC Board of Trustees to move forward with lowest responsible bidder on project.
- Launch phase 1 (discovery) in Summer-Fall 2015.
Estimated Timeframe

On average, a complete website update takes approximately 18 months:

- **Phase 1: Discovery**
  - July-October 2015
- **Phase 2: Development**
  - Fall 2015-Summer 2016
- **Phase 3: Testing and Launch/Implementation**
  - Fall 2016

**Budget Forecast**

- Project cost estimated at $150,000
- $90,000 of total budgeted in FY 2016
Questions/Discussion

References:

– Forrester Research