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MPLA Webmaster Report
10 October 2007

If you haven't looked at the MPLA website lately, it is sporting a new color scheme, new logo, new font (or, as I like to call it, "Dan got the broom out and cleaned the place up a bit.") This was necessitated by the new MPLA logo which was approved at the last meeting. We couldn't keep the colors on the website because the new logo didn't contain them (and frankly, I was bored with the red and cream color of the former design.) My plan was to complete the changes to the site before putting them online, but in the conversion process, there were things that needed to be added to pages which I had already converted but not uploaded. So, I went ahead and put everything online this week. The remaining area to be converted to the new style is mostly the Board Report Archive, which contains the bulk of the unique MPLA web pages. My plan is to complete that by the time of the conference call.

Here's a "snapshot" of the redesign:

This is phase one of a two phase revamp of the website. Essentially, I consider it the "heavy lifting" part of the process. Phase two is going to concern, mostly, the MPLA home page, the root level page – the one you see when you visit www.mpla.us. I want to make that page more "people" oriented. I've asked Wayne to write a "welcome" for visitors – one where we can put a face on MPLA's website. I'm also going to take a dozen or so photos from the Conference Photo part of the website and set them up as a rotation on the home page, so whenever you visit you'll see one of a dozen different photos of MPLA in action (don't worry, these photos won't include people in bathing suits or the infamous "Fargo Splash Photos" ?) I'd also like to encourage members (board members can put the word out a the state level) – that I'll regularly swap out the rotation photos on the home page, and add new photos submitted from members of their local library events. At least, that's what I'm thinking at this time.

Also, I've been in collaboration with David's TF on the Member Portal for electronic communities (whatever that group was officially called ?.) We've tried to duplicate the new MPLA style on the drafts of the member portal mockups set up by Roy and David. Both sites should closely (or exactly) resemble one another. Further, I think I've been persuaded to port the MPLA website to whatever site we select to host the electronic communities portal. There are many benefits to having the MPLA website and the Member Portal in the same place. Simply put, it should automate some of the things I do to maintain and update the current MPLA website, and it will allow us to set up some easy-to-remember domains for parts of the MPLA website – such as conferences.mpla.us, talk.mpla.us, photos.mpla.us, reports.mpla.us, etc. These sub-domains will be easy (and free) to create, easier to remember than the current paths to things we have (such as the Board Report Archive – http://www.mpla.us/documents/reports/index.html, etc.) That's just one of the benefits. There are many. Consider the disposition of the MPLA website an evolutionary process. We outgrew the services offered when we were hosted at the University of South Dakota, we gained a lot of new things when the Oklahoma State University Library hosted us, but there are some things we could do which I didn't want to impose upon my Library's systems staff. MPLA has never paid for web hosting services, and I think this is the

next phase we should grow into. We might be able to run the MPLA elections on the new site, as a real electronic ballot, as opposed to co-opting polls on MemberClicks. ? Roy and David have been exploring hosting services, and it seems to be money well spent – and it's not really very expensive.

As I know more regarding this proposed shifting of the MPLA website, I'll keep you all informed.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan Chaney
MPLA Webmaster