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MPLA Webmaster Report
12 November 2014

Website Rebuild/Redesign

For the past 6 months or so, I have been actively engaged in redesigning and rebuilding the MPLA website using an open source content management system, MODX. We (Roy and I) have finally, tentatively, completed this project. Our plan is to "flick a switch" when we return from the conference and go live with the new (and hopefully improved) MPLA website.

At the current time, we are basically running two simultaneous websites – the "old" website at http://mpla.us, and the "new" website at http://new.mpla.us. When we go live, the new website will take the place of the old, with no change in the URL. If you have bookmark set to specific MPLA webpages, you may want to be aware that individual page links will be changing, as we reorganized the website content behind the scenes. Know that if you click on a link and it is "dead" (pointing to a resource that has a different location), you should get a response that offers a search box, to allow you to search for it as well as an outline of MPLA website architecture for browsing.

Navigation

Primary navigation is via the navigation bar atop each MPLA webpage:

Navigation Bar is composed as follows:
- MPLA Logo – active link on every page, takes you back to the homepage.
- Login – opens a modal window to allow you to login to MemberClicks. Also offers links for Memberclicks help and "forgot your password" prompt.
- Join – MPLA membership information page and membership forms.
- Donate – another modal window that displays the MPLA Donation form for donations to the Association for things like the MPLA Leadership Institute or other initiatives.
- Contact – another modal window that displays the contact information for Judy and Webmaster, as well as a short form for questions and comments (the form responses will be directed to Judy to forward as needed.)
- Quicklinks is a menu listing of the 8 most accessed/viewed MPLA website resources:
  - Join
  - Jobline
  - Calendar
  - Conference
  - Leadership Institute
  - Grants
  - Newsletter
  - Continuing Education
- About – this is a menu listing links about MPLA:
  - Executive Board members
  - Committees
  - State Association members
  - Past Presidents
  - MPLA History
- Documents – this is a menu listing all the MPLA content:
  - Calendar
  - Bylaws and MoP

- o Long Range Plan
- o Newsletter
- o Board Reports
- o Conference Handouts
- Services – a drop down menu featuring links to all the MPLA Services:
    - o Membership (Join)
    - o Jobline
    - o Grants
    - o Leadership Institute
    - o Awards
    - o Conference
    - o Continuing Education
    - o Grocery Card Program
    - o MemberClicks
    - o Web Forms
- At the very end of the navbar are link to MPLA social media:
    - o Facebook
    - o Twitter
    - o YouTube (videos)
    - o Flickr (photos)
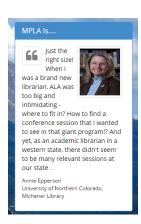   - o Google+
    - o LinkedIn
- Finally, there is an icon that looks like a magnifying glass – that opens a modal window to allow searching the website by keyword.

MPLA Is….

One of the things about MPLA that we want people to see is the members. Faces. Names. I think it's important that we give faces to the Association membership. This is why we have Executive Board members listed with photos and contact information (more on that later…) The MPLA Is box is a furtherance of that giving faces to the Association. You will see the box on the top of the new website.

I have invited board members to offer their "sales pitch" for what they love about MPLA. We have about a dozen of these statements from board members, and we have crafted these MPLA Is boxes for each, and set them to rotate on the website. Each time you visit, you should see a different box. We can use more, though. If you would like to participate, please contact me after conference. We'd love to have you featured in the MPLA Is box!
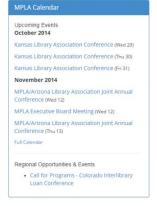

Content Boxes

One of the things Roy and I did when we rebuilt the website in MODX was re-envision how we might reuse MPLA content across the website. There's a lot of content on the website, but on the "old" website, it's buried under the old architecture. I wanted to bring it out more across the site and make it easier to discover things. The

middle of the website features three content boxes: Announcements (formerly MPLA NEWS), MPLA Calendar, Recent Jobline Listings. The boxes feature a short list of items, with links to more. There are also RSS options for the Announcements and the Jobline.

The Footer

The bottom of the homepage is known as the footer. It, like the navigation bar on the top of the page, is present on every MPLA webpage. It features several components:

- State Association Partners – I wanted to give some attention to our state association members. I wanted visitors to see all the states. I settled on the design style of taking the association logo and presenting it as a clickable link. They are all there. State reps, I would encourage you to explore whether the MPLA logo/website is linked prominently on your state association pages (I've looked ☺)
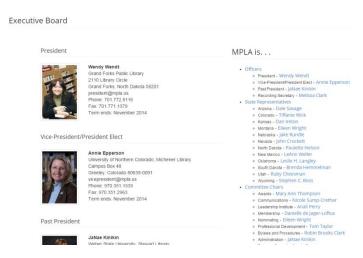

- Find Us Online: links to the same social media linked in the navigation bar up top, using larger icons.
- Contact Us – mailing address and Judy's email address.
- Creative Commons licence: CC BY

- Finally, the MLA Logo is represented large format. This is basically branding (and filling up some open space that I couldn't decide what to put there.)

Other Notable Resources – New and Improved

The Executive Board page (http://new.mpla.us/about/executive-board/) – What's notable here is that we have done several things behind the scenes to facilitate updating member information across the website. In the past, when officers or chairs changed, I needed to "touch" multiple pages where that name appeared. For example, the Awards Committee Chair name appears on the Executive Board page, the Awards Committee page, the form to nominate people for awards, etc. It's not easy to remember where the names would

appear, and Judy would invariably catch an old member name and let me know. Now, we have coded the position name to the listing, as opposed to the individual's name. What we are doing is creating MPLA jobs and filling them with names, etc., then across the website we list the job name in an information field and MODX looks to see who is filling that job and lists their contact information. I should have thought of this years ago. Kudos to Roy for helping me enable that.

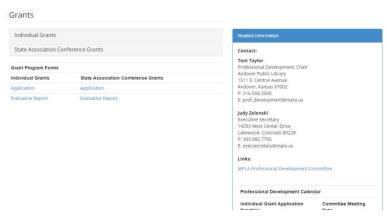Something new is that due to the new behind the scenes web architecture, every

board member has a page on the website. It will feature their photo, mailing address, contact information, their "role" with MPLA, and if they have given me an MPLA Is statement, it is featured on their page. Note: We are not making these individual pages customizable, that is, you can't suggest links or personal interests, etc. The content is generated entirely from other MPLA sources and formatted to look pretty.

Another resource I'm pleased with is the new and improved State Association members page. Again, we are pulling content together from across the website to build this resource. The listings will feature the state rep photo and contact information and links to the State Association website, the state association publication (if any), the state job line, and state board reports. It should help members and prospective members see what the state associations have to offer and help further strengthen the MPLA partnership with them (I hope.)

The secondary webpages share common design and style elements. A common element that you will see is a "Related Information" box on the right of almost every page. This box contains information and links pertaining to the content of that page, again, bringing in information and content from other places and putting more information at the vistor's demand. I'm also really proud of the Grants page. There are expandable boxes for each type of grant, so that the page doesn't drag on and on with information. Visitors can click on the box to view that information, and click on it again to shrink it. And the Related Information box contains the names/contact information of the Professional Development Chair, Judy, a link to the PD Committee, and the PD Calendar.

Those are the, admitedly, log winded website enhancements. As always, I appreciate any input, and if you have problems finding things on the new site, please let me know, so I can try and find a way to make it more discoverable.

Respectfully sumitted,

Dan Chaney
MPLA Webmaster