Evolution of IS&T on the Web

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The Information Services & Technology Division at West Chester University offers a broad range of IT services in support of the WCU mission. Some are IT infrastructure services, others are educational technology or distance education services. Some are web services or enterprise application services, and some are training, help, or support services. We try to provide information about these many services on the web, and in this way make it as easy as possible for people to find the information they need, learn about resources available to them, learn about new IT capabilities, etc.

We recently updated the "look and feel" of our site so that we could take advantage of current web technology and trends. As always, this involved use of campus photos, official logos, and new layouts and graphics. While researching current trends in modern web sites, we choose to implement those newer elements that seem to work well with our site.

This update, though, went well beyond appearances.

In the past, we organized our information on the web by the department work group responsible for that service. This seemed like a natural way to organize the information, with each department within our division updating their own pages on whatever schedule made sense in their case. While this may have been simpler for us, it wasn't always ideal for users who might have to guess which workgroup provided a service in order to find it on the web.

With all of the above in mind, a thorough redesign of the WCU IS&T web presence was undertaken. We developed a new user-focused way of organizing information by service area (rather than by the group that provided it). This approach, known in the IT field as a *service catalog*, strives to organize information within a small number of areas that are intuitive from a user perspective. In each of those areas, we list the services and provide links to information and resources.

Our new web presence is now live, but we are still moving some content from the old site, adding new pages, and fine tuning. We want the IS&T web site to be as useful as possible for all of you. So please tell us what you think! Is this idea of a user-focused web presence, designed around services rather than the IS&T organization, a winner? We'd love your feedback. Send us your thoughts.

Links:

- https://www.wcupa.edu/ist/