Draft Policy for Consultation

Institutional Web Policy

Feedback can be sent to Policy@Mun.ca

Authority

Vice-President (Advancement and External Relations) through the Division of Marketing and Communications (MarComm)

Purpose

To ensure the User experience with Memorial University’s institutional Website (mun.ca) is professional, compelling, consistent, accessible, effective, and aligned with Memorial’s brand and web standards.

To ensure the management of mun.ca is efficient and that information on mun.ca is accurate, appropriate, up-to-date, legitimate and unduplicated across University web pages.

Scope

Memorial University’s institutional Website, www.mun.ca. Sub-domains, such as library.mun.ca or affiliated domains, such as www.mi.mun.ca, are not included but must be assessed for compliance with brand and security standards.

Definitions

Accessibility Standards – Standards that ensure Web Pages comply with WCAG 2.0 accessibility standards to accommodate users with a wide-range of needs.

Content – Text, images, videos, tables, graphics, forms and other information.
**Content Type** – Block of Content designed for a specific purpose. For example, the news Content Type is designed to effectively present news stories.

**Contributor** – A CMS user who can create, edit and delete web Content, but cannot publish web Content

**E-Commerce** – Also known as electronic commerce or internet commerce, refers to the buying and selling of goods or services using the internet and the transfer of money and data to execute these transactions.

**Moderator** – A Web CMS user who has all the privileges of a Contributor plus can approve and publish content and assign rights to contributors. Moderators are responsible for approving all Content published on their Web Pages and ensuring that the presentation of Content follows web best practices, web standards, brand standards and the University’s policies.

**mun.ca** – All Web Pages and sub sites of Memorial’s institutional Website, mun.ca

**Search Engine** – A web service that helps users find Websites. Google, Bing and Yahoo are commonly used Search Engines.

**Unit** -- Academic or administrative body, as defined in the University Calendar, or any board or other body appointed or elected to carry out University business.

**Unit Head** – For the purposes of this policy, the term used to mean heads of departments, divisions and schools; deans; directors; executive directors; the University registrar; associate vice-presidents, and vice-presidents, as applicable.

**User** – Can refer to a person who visits web pages or to a Moderator or Contributor who works on the university’s Web Content Management System (Web CMS).
Web CMS -- A Web Content Management System is a digital application that is used to manage web content, allowing multiple contributors to create, edit, delete and publish. Content in a Web CMS is typically stored in a database and displayed in a presentation layer based on a set of templates. Usually referenced as “the CMS.”

Web Page, URL -- A document for the World Wide Web that is identified by a unique uniform resource locator (URL). A Web Page can be accessed and displayed on a monitor or mobile device through a web browser. Web pages usually also contain other resources such as style sheets, scripts and images. Users may be able to navigate to other pages through hypertext links. (from Technopedia)

Website -- A collection of publicly accessible, interlinked web pages that shares a single domain name. Websites can be created and maintained by an individual, group, business or organization to serve a variety of purposes. Together, all publicly accessible websites constitute the World Wide Web. A Website is also known as a “web presence” or simply “site.” (from Technopedia)

Web Template – A Website guide that standardizes design, layout, fonts, font sizes, colours, underlying code and functionality to align with institutional brand and web standards, ensuring cohesive user experience, requisite accessibility and Search Engine optimization.

Policy

Memorial University’s Website is often the first interaction that prospective students, faculty, staff, donors, news media and other key stakeholders have with Memorial University. It is therefore essential that the Website reflects in design, content, functionality and tone the University’s vision to be one of the most distinguished public universities in Canada and beyond, and fulfill its special obligation to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. The Division of Marketing and Communications is responsible for administering the policy, procedures and standards that guide the development of mun.ca
1. To ensure Content consistency and accuracy and to promote operational efficiency and collaboration, Memorial University uses a highly ranked vendor-supported Web CMS to support mun.ca.

2. The Web Page naming or URL standard format for Memorial Websites on mun.ca is determined by MarComm in consultation with the Office of the Chief Information Officer. Typically, it is www.mun.ca/name.

3. Each Unit’s Website must have a Moderator who oversees Content and functionality of the Unit’s Website. Moderators are responsible for ensuring that Content is up to date and current.

4. Content on mun.ca must be public information pertaining to the University, such as information directly related to the teaching, learning, research and public engagement mission of the University and administrative information in support of the mission.

5. Content about other organizations does not normally appear on mun.ca, including advertising, solicitations, profiles, etc. Where other organizations, such as partners, sponsors or similar, must be referenced for operational purposes, links to their Websites should be included.

6. Fundraising on mun.ca for non-Memorial University programs, organizations or services is prohibited without the express written approval of the executive director of the Office of Development.

7. Content on mun.ca must comply with University policies and applicable laws.

8. E-commerce conducted on mun.ca must use Payment Card Industry (PCI) compliant solutions that have been vetted by the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) and Financial and Administrative Services. This ensures PCI compliance, risk mitigation and security of credit card information.

Responsibility

Unit Heads are responsible for ensuring that their Unit’s Website(s) adhere to this policy.

Deviation/Non-compliance

Policy questions or deviation requests may be directed to MarComm through its request for services form.
Failure to consult with and receive approval from MarComm may result in the removal of the relevant Web Page(s) from mun.ca.

Please contact Grenfell Campus and Marine Institute for issues related to their Websites.

Related Documents

- Accessibility for Students with Disabilities Policy
- Brand Standards
- Information Management Policy
- IT Investment Policy
- Photo Permission Release Form *(To be developed)*
- Privacy Policy
- Public Engagement Framework
- Research Strategy Framework
- Respectful Workplace Policy
- Teaching and Learning Framework
- Visual Identity Policy
- Writing Style Guide

Procedures

Web Standards and Procedures *(Consultation Draft Below)*

Contact

Division of Marketing and Communications
Draft Procedure for Consultation
Web Standards and Procedures

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This document applies to St. John’s campus, Signal Hill Campus, Harlow Campus and Labrador Institute. See Grenfell Campus and Marine Institute for their web standards and procedures.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Division of Marketing and Communications (MarComm) is responsible for:

- developing and maintaining the mun.ca Web Template to ensure it meets accessibility, brand and web standards;
- providing guidance on web best practices to Units;
- providing end-user support for Memorial’s Web CMS;
- reviewing and approving all forms hosted on mun.ca—see Procedure for Requesting Online Forms;
- providing guidance on information hierarchy and new Website development.

Units are responsible for:

- assigning Moderator roles within the unit to ensure its mun.ca Content is accurate, appropriate, up-to-date and in accordance with University policies, brand and web standards, and the Intellectual Property policy;
- linking to the authoritative sources on mun.ca rather than duplicating or re-creating Content;
- using the Web Templates available within Memorial’s Web CMS to build its mun.ca website, without modifying html code;
- ensuring Web Pages and forms collecting personal information contain a privacy notice approved by Memorial’s privacy officer.
Hosting, Domains, URLs

Memorial hosts Websites for Memorial University Units only. These Websites are hosted on a central server managed by Information Technology Services.

The URL standard for Memorial Websites is: www.mun.ca/name. Consistent use of our primary domain (mun.ca) delivers a consistent user experience and creates the expectation that all Memorial information can always be found under the mun.ca domain.

A domain name is often the first step in a user’s journey and is an indicator of a site’s Content and purpose. A well-named or trusted URL can influence whether users click on a Website listing in Search Engine results or in an advertisement, and can also help audiences easily recall a website address. Example: www.mun.ca/payment_methods vs. www.mun.ca/waystopay. MarComm reviews and recommends URLs to ensure they are effective in reaching target audiences and are not required for another purpose within the university. All requests for new URLs must be submitted through MarComm’s request for services form.

A “vanity URL” is a type that is often used to in communications and/or advertising campaigns. For example, the long running Got Milk campaign has https://www.gotmilk.com/. The preferred approach for campaign URLs at Memorial is to use a shortened URL that uses the trusted primary domain, mun.ca, but can be customized for promotional purposes; for example, www.mun.ca/masterplan.

Shortened URLs point users to the final location of a page within your site. These URLs are typically used when a URL is too long to include in ads, social media posts and other communications. A shortened URL keeps marketing and communications pieces clean and succinct. URL shorteners may also be used, particularly for social media or in cases where the full URL does not need to be displayed. When building a site, consider the pages that you may use for promotional purposes as this will help avoid the need for shortened URLs in the future.

All mun.ca sites should be sub-folders rather than sub-domains. The use of subdomains is not recommended as they dilute as our primary brand (mun.ca), negatively impact Search Engine rankings and make it difficult to measure user journeys via web analytics. Exceptions will be considered; for example, sub-domains may be permitted to meet technical requirements.
Online Forms

All forms on mun.ca should be fillable online, not PDFs. All requests for fillable forms hosted on mun.ca must be reviewed by MarComm to first determine if the form can be built within the approved form solution offered by Memorial and approved by the University Privacy Officer to ensure any personal information being collected conforms with the Privacy policy. Privacy best practices include ensuring you have authority to collect personal information, minimizing the personal information requested so as to collect only what is necessary, and avoiding the collection of sensitive personal information. Form requests must be submitted through the request for services form. MarComm staff will determine form location, prevent duplication with other units’ existing forms, assist with user logic and ensure the forms are mobile-friendly.

MarComm will work with ITS and the requesting Unit to draft and finalize the form. If the standard form solution cannot meet the needs of the Unit’s request, MarComm will work with ITS to review other approved solutions. Please note that third-party form tools like Google Forms or TypeForms are not permitted.

All forms collecting personal information must contain a Privacy Notice.

Requests for Web Service

All requests for web services must be submitted through MarComm’s request for services form. MarComm receives all requests for web services and responds to the majority of these using available resources within MarComm. Requests for web services include but are not limited to requests for user permissions, URLs, how to’s, Web Content Management System training, new or refreshed websites, new functionality and assistance with information architecture. When requests go beyond the current capability of the Web CMS or the available MarComm resources, MarComm reviews the requests for possible solutions, including working with its partners in the Office of the Chief Information Officer or external vendors.

Requests for custom web applications must be reviewed by MarComm and the IT Governance and Collaboration Council via an IT investment proposal. A custom web application is any request for functionality that does not exist in the current WCMS and/or the current web presentation options.
User Management Roles

New users – Faculty and staff who wish to be added to the Web CMS must fill out the request for training form.

Contributor – Units may choose to have one or more contributors to create, edit and delete Content. Contributors cannot publish Content. To ensure Content meets minimum requirements, all content is approved and published by the Website’s Moderator (see Moderator below).

Moderator – Each university Unit’s Website must have at least one and up to a maximum of three moderators. Moderators are responsible for approving or seeking approval of all Content published on their web pages, as well as ensuring that the presentation of Content follows web best practices, web standards, brand standards and the university’s policies. Moderators should work closely with MarComm for advice on web standards and best practices. Units that require more than three moderators should contact MarComm.

MarComm – All requests for web Content services are reviewed by MarComm to ensure the optimum solution is applied; to reduce duplication of effort; and to maintain security standards, brand standards, web standards, accessibility standards and web content best practices.

Information Technology Services (ITS) – ITS is responsible for hosting Websites, databases, custom applications, the Web CMS and the infrastructure these operate on. ITS works with MarComm to deliver web services, with MarComm being the first point of contact for the University community’s inquiries.

Web CMS Training

Users seeking training must register for training on the MarComm website. There are a number of options for training, including self-directed modules, and the options will be confirmed after registration.

Website Development

University Units interested in creating a new Website or considering updating one should first submit a request for services form. MarComm will contact the requestor within five business days of
receiving the request to discuss and set up a development Website based on requirements. The Website creation process typically includes:

- Content clustering session to determine information hierarchy and site structure
- Confirmation of site contributors and moderators
- Review of Website analytics
- Selection of branded web templates, Content Types and widgets to customize Content
- Access to multimedia elements through the media library

Moderators are responsible for notifying MarComm when deactivating Websites created for a limited purpose, such as projects or Unit-organized conferences. If a project Website needs to be maintained beyond the project end date, the Moderator should notify MarComm and contributors should ensure the Content is regularly updated. Short-lifespan Websites with Content or topics that are no longer relevant will be archived, files given to the owner and then removed from Memorial’s web server.

**Types of Websites**

Memorial hosts and offers branded Web Templates for all academic and administrative Units. These templates are available within the Web CMS and will be offered during the Website development process. Websites that require additional functionality must be reviewed separately by MarComm and may require submission of a proposal to IT Governance. Example: blogs.

Course and teaching material must be appropriately placed in the University’s learning management system, Brightspace. More information on educational technologies is available on the Centre for Innovation in Teaching and Learning website.

Faculty members can create professional bios or profiles on their respective faculty or departmental Unit Websites and link to additional information, such as publications or research materials which should be hosted outside www.mun.ca.

Due to the high internal demand for MarComm services, the following types of Websites are not supported: external organizations’ conference Websites; professional and student associations, unions and clubs Websites; and research project Websites.
For additional information on types of Websites supported by MarComm, please contact the Division of Marketing and Communications.

Internal Content

Consider your audience for each piece of content. If the Content only applies to faculty or staff, consider placing it on shared servers, or use other collaboration tools as listed on the OCIO website. This approach reduces the amount of information external audiences have to sift through on mun.ca to get what they want and it protects sensitive information. If it’s necessary to host internal Content on mun.ca, it should only be accessible via MUN Login.

Site Launches

Once a development Website has been populated and is ready for launch, site moderator(s) should submit a request for services form including site launch details and preferred launch date. Please note that MarComm requires a minimum of one-week notice to plan and schedule a site launch. Website redesigns that require structural changes, including redirects, will require additional time.

Analytics

MarComm manages web analytics for mun.ca via the Web CMS analytics dashboard, Google Analytics and Google Tag Manager. If you need access to analytics beyond what is available in the Web CMS, please submit a request for services form.

Applications: Custom or External

All external applications proposed for use on mun.ca must be approved by ITS. Memorial has reviewed and approved the following external applications for use on mun.ca:

- Photo gallery: Flickr
- Social media: T4 solution
- Videos: YouTube for external-facing or public Content. Video-hosting solutions for content that cannot be shared openly are available through the Centre for Innovation in Teaching and Learning.
Maps: Campus Maps, Content Type for maps within T4

Custom applications: Require IT Governance approval. Examples include but are not limited to: policy database, programs page, Cognos applications (finance and provost dashboards), COVID density calculator.

Prohibited Web Content

For reasons of site security, legal requirements and University policy, certain Content is prohibited, including but not limited to Content that:

- Displays or promotes pornographic or obscene material
- Promotes violence or the use of weapons, alcohol or illegal drugs
- Contains abusive or threatening language or imagery that targets individuals or groups
- Contains personalized attacks
- Ridicules or promotes stereotypes, discrimination, intolerance or hostility towards any race, sex, colour, ancestry, place of origin, ethnic origin, creed, marital status, gender identity, gender expression, family status, sexual orientation, age, disability or citizenship
- Publishes information to cause harm or which would reasonably be known to cause harm

For more information, see the University’s Respectful Workplace Policy.

Privacy

Memorial uses web analytics to collect and analyze information that supports university business processes, and displays privacy notices to alert site users to this.