

WordPress Case Study

WPMU as a CMS for Organizational Intranet

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Introduction

Anca



- Web Developer
- Information Architect
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- Freelancer, Entrepreneur

Tech Liminal



- Technology Hotspot & Salon
- Co-Working
- Workshops, Conferences
- Expert, friendly help with web & social media

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Agenda

- The Goals
- The Implementation
- Key Features
- Lessons Learned

Project Goals

Project Overview

- Govt. organization with approximately 300 employees
- Intranet:
 - Static HTML pages, updated by only 1 person
 - Twiki, Jira, eRooms, and proprietary systems for solving specific problems
 - Lots of documents, images, some video

Project Goals

- Improve Information Architecture & Usability
- New Look and Feel that can be used across apps
- Allow individual contributors greater control of their content outside of the Twiki pages
- Provide a platform for feedback, blogs, and other dynamic elements
- Improve internal Search Results through improved content organization
- Migrate existing (internal) WordPress blogs to new environment

Why WordPress?

- Simple tool with lots customization capability
- Existing users within the organization
- PHP / WordPress programming expertise in organization
- Open Source platform
- WPMU allows for more granular permissions and organization



Implementation

The Solution

The screenshot shows the JGI Intranet Home page. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for Public JGI, TWiki, Venonat, JIRA, People Out, LLNL, LBNL, and Gmail. There are also links for Logout admin and Dashboard. Below this is a search bar and a 'Find People' button. The main content area is divided into several sections: 'Site-Wide Announcements' (with sub-sections for Independence Day Holiday, Finding JGI Videos Online, and Building 310 Fridge Cleaning), 'This Week's Events' (listing ping-pong tournaments and a lecture series), 'Safety Blog' (with articles on Safety Consumables, Failure to wear PPE, and Electric Shock Hazard), 'Ergo News' (with articles on Safety Committee Meeting and July 2010 Ergo Tip), 'Today's Wireless Password', 'Inside JGI', and 'Flatscreens' (with articles on Next Agricultural Revolution and Enzyme Produces Fuel Additive). A callout bubble on the left points to the 'Site-Wide Announcements' section, and another callout bubble on the right points to the 'Safety Blog' section. The footer contains a report website issue link, login/logout options, and copyright information.

Aggregate announcements from all site areas

Aggregate events postings from all site areas

Feeds from other tools and areas

The Intranet

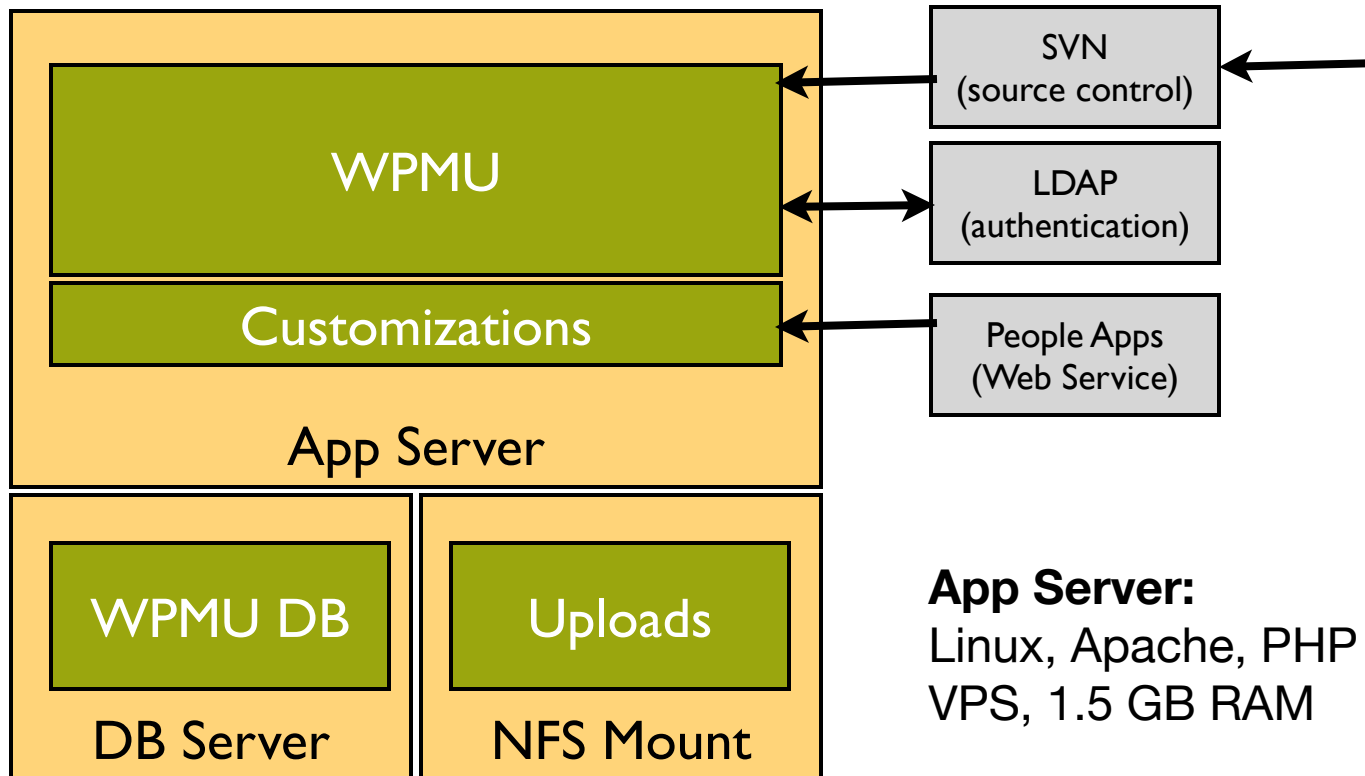


Consistent look for all site areas - This is the PR Dashboard

More feeds - useful for PR team

Lots of link to internal content

WordPress Architecture



WPMU Architecture

- Theme: Thesis 1.7 (started w/ 1.6)
 - Ease of customization
 - Good features for creating standardized L&F
- Plugins
 - WPMU LDAP
 - Sitewide Tags
 - Breadcrumbs NavXT
 - Alkivia SidePosts (Customized)
 - FlexiPages
 - TinyMCE Advanced

Deployment and Adoption

- Project launched May 20th
- Stakeholders have been adding content, updating their sites
- Ongoing training is needed to reinforce and drive adoption

Key Features

Site Areas

- Each Site Area = 1 “Blog”
 - Specific set of people to update, maintain
 - Some have sub-blogs
 - Same look and feel, standardized widget placement
 - Combined through Navigation Menu



Links - the All-Purpose Tool

- Many landing pages = “Link Farms”
- Links were also used for Site Navigation
- Customized Links widget

Computers & IT Systems

EDIT

[Backup Information](#)

[Computer Systems Support Overview](#)

[Computer Work Requests](#)

[Filesystem Overview](#)

[Google Apps at LBL](#)

[House Storage System: Policies, Usage and General Information](#)

[JGI Mail Aliases](#)

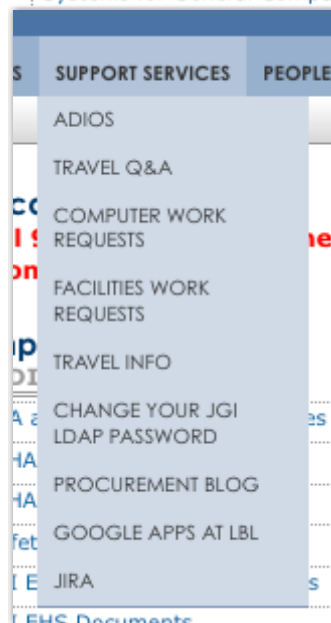
[JGI Mail Lists](#)

[Networking & Communication Tools](#)

[Printing from a UNIX System](#)

[Supported Application Server Platforms](#)

[Systems for General Computing](#)



A screenshot of the 'JLinks: Beyond HSS' configuration dialog box. The dialog has a title bar with 'JLinks: Beyond HSS' and a dropdown arrow. Below the title bar is a dropdown menu showing 'Beyond HSS'. There are four checkboxes: 'Show Link Image' (checked), 'Show Link Name' (checked), 'Show Link Description' (unchecked), and 'Show Link Rating' (unchecked). There is also a checked checkbox for 'Sort by Rating?'. Below these is a text input field for 'Give the widget a custom class (optional):' with the value 'class_hss'. There is another text input field for 'Widget Image URL (displayed above the links):' with the value 'https://www.jgi-psf.org/ehs/files/20'. At the bottom, there are 'Delete | Close' and 'Save' buttons.

This Week's Events

- Feature is intended to replace weekly emails
- Aggregate content from within site areas
- Custom development

This Week's Health & Safety Events

THURSDAY

11:00 AM [Safety Committee Meeting](#)

[ALL EVENTS](#)

This Week's Events

MONDAY

09:00 AM [Ping-Pong Tournament \(Rm 350\)](#)

TUESDAY

09:00 AM [Ping-Pong Tournament \(Rm 350\)](#)

WEDNESDAY

09:00 AM [Ping-Pong Tournament \(Rm 350\)](#)

12:00 PM [Carbon Smackdown Summer Lecture Series](#)

THURSDAY

09:00 AM [Ping-Pong Tournament \(Rm 350\)](#)

11:00 AM [Safety Committee Meeting](#)

FRIDAY

09:00 AM [Ping-Pong Tournament \(Rm 350\)](#)

[ALL EVENTS](#)

“Safety Blog”

- A place for feedback from the community, with responses from Safety Team
- All employees have been added as “contributors”
- Anonymous feedback through Contact Form 7
- Email notification using
 - Peter’s Collaboration Emails
 - Subscribe2

Lessons Learned

Content and Authoring

- People must be able to create Tables in their editor
- Ongoing Training and support will drive adoption - Intranet Manager will continue to work w/ stakeholders as they become familiar with yet another internal app
- WP levels of access & permissions provide a great light-weight workflow for publishing content

Design

- Custom Classes are very helpful on Widgets
- Thesis approach to CSS took some getting used to
- Thesis import/export of options was VERY useful

Development and Performance

- RSS feeds (and the default widget) were slow and somewhat problematic
- For WPMU, you really need a whole server
- Sitewide Tags plugin saved a ton of time in terms of aggregating content
- Setting up new sites takes some time - need to configure several plugins

And one last one...

- Bureaucratic purchasing departments have a hard time buying through PayPal - if you want to sell a theme, provide a mailing address and contact #

Q & A