

# Web Redesign Project Summary

## Chico State Web Redesign Project

September 18, 2009

### Background

Initiated in 2008, the Web site Redesign Project is a campus-wide effort to re-envision and redesign the CSU, Chico Web site. The project has a number of goals, including improving site usability and organization, better meeting the needs of users, better reflecting the brand of the University, creating Web pages with a consistent look and feel, and updating the site through the use of evolving technology and best practices in Web site design. The site is projected to be complete by January 2010.

Detailed reports for completed phases can be found at [www.csuchico.edu/ires/plans/webContentComm/index.html](http://www.csuchico.edu/ires/plans/webContentComm/index.html) under Meeting Minutes.

### ► PHASE 1: Project Definition COMPLETE

The scope, goals and focus of the project were defined. A process and timeline was established, teams were created and responsibilities assigned.

	Sep-08	Oct-08	Nov-08	Dec-08	Jan-09	Feb-09	Mar-09	Apr-09	May-09	Jun-09	Jul-09	Aug-09	Sep-09	Oct-09	Nov-09	Dec-09	Jan-10	Feb-10
Phase 1: Project Definition	█	█																
Phase 2: Research and Analysis			█	█	█													
Phase 3: Develop Site Structure & Content					█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█				
Phase 4: Develop Site Design								█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█			
Phase 5: Implementation													█	█	█	█	█	█
Phase 6: Launch & Beyond																	█	█

### ► PHASE 2: Research and Analysis COMPLETE

The research and analysis component of the project provides qualitative and quantitative data regarding the CSU, Chico Web site and its users.

**USER SURVEYS** were used to help identify motivations, frustrations, and preferences of our users. More than 17,000 survey invitations were sent by e-mail to prospective students and their parents, current students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, and corporate partners. The survey link was also released through the media. A total of 1,253 responses were received from 12 different user groups.

**BROWSER STATISTICS** were collected to provide quantitative data concerning usage patterns for the CSU, Chico site. Google Analytics revealed the most commonly viewed pages, most common search terms, user characteristics, and specific user behavior. The click-tracking service, Crazy Egg, visually tracked the location and pattern of every click visitors made on selected pages in the site. This data was used to help site architects optimize site design and organization to best serve the needs of users.

**BEST PRACTICES RESEARCH** was conducted to reveal industry standards and best practices regarding the structure, content, and organization of higher education Web sites. It was also used to identify trends in Higher Education Web development and visual design practices such as navigation and layout standards, page width, content type, photography size and ratio, video, and multimedia.

### ► PHASE 3: Site Structure COMPLETE

This phase included a detailed inventory of current site, and established page structure, navigation, content and features on the future site. Effectiveness of structure and content were tested in focus groups; relevant content was confirmed by stakeholder meetings.

#### DEFINE PAGE ELEMENTS AND STRUCTURE

- Definition, goals, and constraints for all the home page elements (identity, navigation, common tasks, search, The Big Picture, Discover Chico, highlights, news and events) were established.
- Goals, objectives, constraints, and content regions for 2nd and 3rd level pages were created. 2nd level pages include any page that is a direct link off of the home page; 3rd level pages link off of 2nd level pages.

#### FOCUS GROUPS

To improve the content and provide appropriate information for each audience, separate focus groups with 70 participants were conducted with each of the following audiences: current students, faculty, staff, parents, mixed group of high school students, parents, counselors, and high school seniors.

#### STAKEHOLDER DISCUSSION GROUPS

Discussions with 55 participants, each knowledgeable in specific areas, ran July 2–16, with 1 meeting per page. E-mail follow-ups were conducted with the participants of the Student Life group. After each meeting the page wire frame and links spreadsheet were updated.

#### FINAL STRUCTURE

A final site map was created based on the new structure. Structure has been reviewed by the Web Management Committee and the Web Content Committee.

#### ▶ PHASE 4: **Visual Design and Content** IN PROGRESS

The visual design and content phase consists of designing a visual look and feel and creating a navigation system, testing both with focus groups. Once the visual design has been chosen, the design will be applied to additional pages. A delivery schedule for content and photography has been set up.

#### DESIGN DIRECTIONS

Four design directions were developed. Since the seal reproduces so poorly on the Web, Alan Rellaford created a new identification graphic. Both were approved by the Web Management Committee.

#### DESIGN FOCUS GROUPS

A matrix was created, and focus groups with current students, prospective students and parents, and the Web Content Committee were held early September. The groups were asked to rate each design on: general appearance, ease of locating the navigation, how the design reflects on the University, overall impression. They were asked to write down a keyword that described the design. Rating the designs was followed with an open forum. At the end of each session, participants were asked to put a star next to their favorite design.

One design scored consistently higher in all four categories and also received 64% of the popular vote. There will be minor adjustments made to help improve navigation and hierarchy before submitting the design to the Web Management Committee for final approval. At that point the design will be applied to the rest of the site.

#### ▶ PHASE 5: **Implementation** IN PROGRESS

During the Implementation phase, technical standards and site functionality in Web Content Management System will be set up. Page templates will be built and content will be added to the site. Browser testing and a usability study will be conducted. The site will be proofed for content, visual consistency, accuracy, and technical standards.

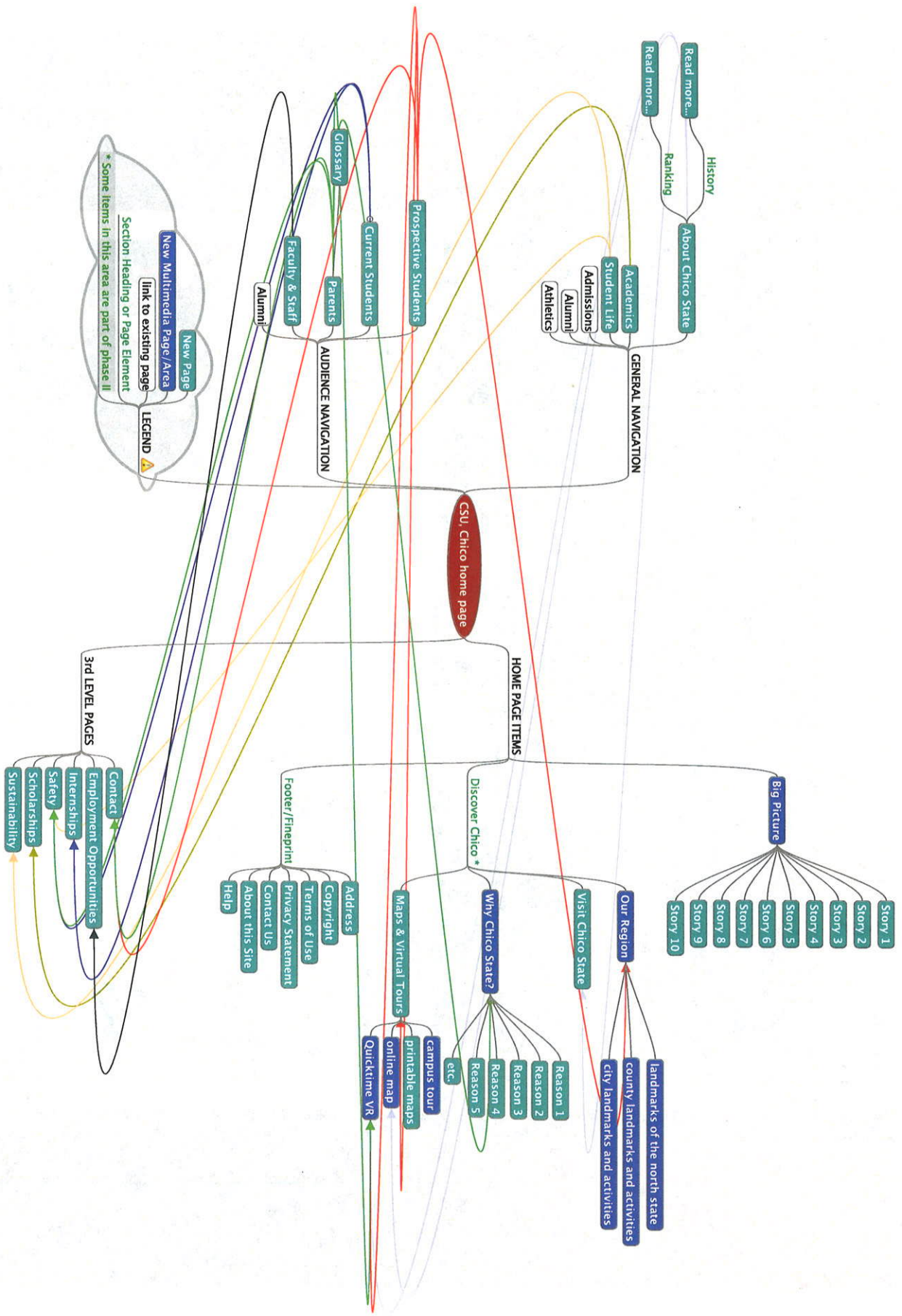
#### ▶ PHASE 6: **Launch and Beyond** GO LIVE IS PROJECTED FOR JANUARY 31, 2010

After the site has been launched, campus templates will be implemented and documentation will be written. A maintenance and update schedule will be set up to ensure timely updates.

#### ▶ **Part 2**

Areas that require a higher concentration of staff hours and more advanced technology will be phased in after the site goes live.

# Site Map Overview





Chico  
sustainability  
looks like this  
learn more ▶



- Prospective Students
- Current Students
- Faculty & Staff
- Parents
- Alumni



California State University, Chico  
400 West First Street  
Chico, CA 95929

Contact Us  
530-898-INFO  
webmaster@csuchico.edu

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Events

- Sep. 11 Chicago Blues Reunion with Charlie Musselwhite  
7:30 pm Laxson Auditorium
- Sep. 12 An Evening with Deepak Chopra  
7:30 pm, Laxson Auditorium
- Sep. 13 Annual Concerts of Elegance  
10 am - 4 pm, Kendall Hall Lawn

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