

During sprint 13 we changed our approach to the playbook from something that creates a set of principles focused only on facilities to one that uses existing VA principles and style guides to support the goals of the new [VA.gov](#) and helps readers understand how these guidelines will help meet specific goals that VAMCs have.

Andy, I'd love to meet with you to get your take on this, or if you'd prefer, we can talk via slack, Jira or email. If you're OK with this approach, we're going to go forward and fill out the outline included below. If you have issues, please let me know and we can course correct.

Finally, because we changed our approach to the playbook mid-way through the sprint, we thought it would be better to give you an outline and an explanation of our approach, rather than a draft that you may not like.

Thanks so much.

New playbook approach:

1. Use existing principles rather than creating new ones
  - a. Why? Folks have spent a lot of time and effort developing these principles and style guides (which are closely aligned with the new ones we were proposing).
  - b. Also, VA content creators are familiar with these principles, which could increase buy in.
2. List goals for new VAMC content and show how existing principles support those goals
  - c. We can create these goals using the principles Melinda created
3. Incorporate in the playbook (or via demos) side by side "static" comparisons to show people the benefits of the new [VA.gov](#).

Playbook outline:

4. What is the new CMS?
  - d. Value statement: (The new CMS implements the new [VA.gov](#)):
    - i. The new Drupal content management system (CMS) is a tool for VA to manage content that powers the Veteran-first experience on VA websites. The driving force behind creating the Drupal CMS is to satisfy certain aspects of VA's digital modernization plan. The new approach is part of an effort to disentangle VA's many websites, consolidate multiple VA brands, create opportunities to programmatically crosslink related content, and provide an experience that represents best practices for digital content experience and design.
  - e. The new CMS will make it easier for you to know which aspects of the Veteran experience you are responsible for and help you create content that meets shared VA goals.
  - f. The new CMS helps you serve Veterans in an easier and more efficient way.
5. Why this CMS?
  - a. Help meet these goals
  - b. Demonstrates an understanding of the Veteran's patient journey.
  - c. It Uses straightforward words, design, and information hierarchy.
  - d. It follows guidelines for content ownership and authority.
  - e. It maintain harmony among VA national, VA regional, and VA local content.
  - f. It will measure the impact of website content and use data to improve it.

- g. It drives users to self-serve digital tools, which drives them to create or sign in to their [VA.gov account.](#)( previously: understand the digital user experience on [VA.gov.](#))
- 6. How principles can be applied to meet our goals (also, demonstrate how we've already used existing principles to create the MVP)
  - g. Use side by side "static" demos of the old website and the new [VA.gov](#) to show people the benefits of the new [VA.gov](#)
- 7. How you should plan to use the CMS
  - h. Use design principles
    - i. Understand human need: design for people, rather than VA's systems
    - ii. Assume every visitor is new
    - iii. Speak clearly, respectfully and directly
      - 1. Use content principles and design system components
        - a. <https://www.va.gov/playbook/editorial/>
        - b. <https://design.va.gov/content-style-guide/content-principles>
    - iv. Help people reach their goals every time
    - v. Connect with customer
    - vi. Create opportunities for feedback and dialog
    - vii. Research, observe, test and continuously improve
    - viii. Measure what matters
    - ix. Be device agnostic
    - x. Employ modern development practices – be agile