

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS – COLLOQUIUM HEALTH WEB MEMBER PORTAL

# NEEDS Statement

At present, the situational understanding Advisicon has of the needs Healthcare Accreditation Colloquium has for their website member portal functionality is twofold:

1. The need to be able to review and watch recorded webinars
2. The need to be able to review written blog information
3. The need to control who access the back end of the website
4. The need to maintain the current front end look and feel

Present Architecture: Word Press with plugin Magic Fields

Office365.com (Customer has Login)

# PROBLEM STATEMENT

**Summary**:

1. The current website has been heavily modified from an original WordPress website
2. WordPress is not a true Content Management System application for which it is being used
3. WordPress is a vertical blog application yet being pushed as a vertical and lateral Content Management System (CMS) application
4. The existing architecture solution will not maintain scalable future growth
5. The failure cycle will perpetuate with continued content creation and storage

Advisicon understands that continued efforts to repair and manage the WordPress application to allow it to function have resulted in numerous frustrations from Healthcare Accreditation Colloquium and perceptions of Advisicon’s failure to adequately meet the needs of the customer. This by no means is a standard at Advisicon, nor a desired effect as the long term business relationship continues.

Review of the current architecture revealed that this website had been built by another vendor using WordPress as the fundamental platform. As the needs of Healthcare Accreditation Colloquium grew, this application was modified by another vendor to use the Magic Fields plugin to manage multiple layers of content. This modification has undermined the core permalink structure, relating to need statement #2. This fundamental breakage results in dissatisfaction from both Healthcare Accreditation Colloquium users and portal members.

The first need was to be able to watch and manage webinars, adding value to members logging into the portal. Both of these issues have a commonality to them, which is contributing to the problem and will inhibit a true long term solution to meet the needs of the client.

WordPress is a great open source application designed to manage singular or multiple blog entries from one or more authors, archiving them and making them searchable as a vertical linear element within WordPress. As a user enters a blog entry, it shifts the previous entry downward, moving the current entry to the top layer (i.e. blog entries are listed in reverse chronological order.) As entries are added, this cycle repeats itself. In essence here is the operational view of this procedure:

 User enters a blog entry on a given date, and submits it to WordPress. This entry is time stamped and cataloged as the latest entry. This entry remains at the top of the “heap” until a second blog entry is completed. A link is established in the system for entry 1 and available to portal members as a result.

User enters a new blog entry, which rises to the top as the latest entry, and shifts the older entry downward. Entry 1 receives a link within the system, and a GUID (Globally Unique Identifier.) Permalinks is based off this GUID. Due to Magic Fields managing content, and placing content within content, the GUID gets broken and the links begin to fail. This cycle repeats itself as entries are continuously stacked upon each other, with chronic and repetitive link breakage.

Magic Fields was purchased and installed to allow WordPress to begin to functional hierarchically in a vertical environment. WordPress is truly a chronological environment; however for the purposes of explanation, vertical is implied as each new post pushes the older posts downward in the chronology. This meaning that Magic Fields is responsible for attempting to nest blog entries like a Content Management System (CMS) would catalog entries, and broadening the vertical approach while maintaining the system link structure. This plugin is written by volunteers in an open source environment, and its functionality is dependent on re-writes and modifications by the authors. In addition, this plugin is dependent on a non-modified environment to properly function. The WordPress environment at Healthcare Accreditation Colloquium has been modified and this plugin is having difficulty maintaining the permalink information to avoid problematic break downs the portal users are experiencing. It remains questionable that neither this plugin nor programming resources is going to solve this problem on a long term basis.

A true CMS is designed to manage large varieties of categories and subjects that individual content is placed into. These categories and subject areas enable both vertical and lateral growth as the software continues to archive information. End users are capable of searching entries through keywords, or textual data searches. As the needs of a client grow, new categories can be added, and new subjects can be added within them. All of this information can be user access controlled through logins and user rights within categories, sections or areas of the site. Multiple layers or user rights can be created, much like a subscription based process that allows deeper or broader access to informational resources as needed. Multimedia can be placed within the content using standard web program coding that allows a rich environment that is easy to manage, accommodate growth, and meets both the owner and end user’s needs. News media companies like CNN, NBC, ABC and such use CMS systems to manage their news articles, reporter access to author articles, editors access to review and fact check the articles, and publishers access to push the article live or archive old articles. This constant progressive cycle continues as more and more information is added to the site.

Continuing to use WordPress to attempt the above is an option however will continue to result in irritable failures that can be sporadic and difficult to assess and correct. This is a short-term solution to a long-term problem. Fundamentally, the architecture needs to be changed to facilitate continued growth and proper operation.

# Solution

1. Migrate the back end away from WordPress into a CMS solution that will meet the present state and future state needs of the client
   1. This reduces the continued need for programming resources to modify the site, which in turn will continue to propagate the problem
2. Consider using existing Office365.com resources to manage the back-end content
3. Create scalable (both in cost and function) user accounts on Office365.com to control access and user rights

# Benefits to the Customer

1. An environment that is upgraded, updated and managed by Microsoft, resulting in no end-user costs to the Healthcare Accreditation Colloquium unless specific customization is desired
2. Scalable growth that not only manages content but controls costs. User logins are managed through the customer.
3. Centralized access on the internet using fast backbone servers and uptime manageability.
4. Alignment and integration with existing modification projects already underway.
5. Divorce from the existing process that required heavy customization and resulted in the customer being invested in the existing solution that cannot handle growth.

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