



# Website Redesign Proposal for Florida Energy Systems Consortium



## **Objective / Purpose**

As a team that strongly supports & understands the importance of energy research and renewable energy, this project is of vital importance to our group. We take great interest in providing our expertise and time to further your goals and objectives. As a result we are providing this proposal to redesign your web presence. Below are some results from our initial site review, as well as preliminary recommendations for how we may provide an improved site.

## **Current Site**

As a part of this proposal process, below is a review of the state of your current site.

### **Performance/Function**

The performance test indicated from request start to first byte received for your home page, clocked in at 825ms. When compared to similar sites (Oregon Energy Consortium), this response time is over twice as long, 825ms to 344ms. This indicates an inefficient design.

### **Mobile Friendliness**

Using industry tools to check mobile “friendliness”, the results indicate that the site is not mobile friendly. Mobile friendliness is a measure of how well your site responds to the screen sizes of the many devices used to access the web today. High use of mobile phones among Internet users today makes creating a mobile friendly site almost mandatory.

### **Accessibility**

After performing an accessibility audit, it was determined that your site lacks in certain areas the requirements to meet an accessible website. The most common culprit being the lack of use of alt properties for your image elements. This makes your site less accessible to visitors who use screen readers to gather information from your website. It is imperative that entities that involve public/government money lead the way in accessibility, setting an example of inclusion.

### **Ease of use**

We found this site very difficult to use. Navigation was overwhelming, making it, not only difficult to find what you are looking for, but also frustrating. Providing too many navigation options can make your site look daunting and unfriendly. According to the Nielson Norman Group, users will spend less than a minute looking for information before moving on from your site. We believe with

the current design, you may be losing a large number of visitors due to not being able to find the information they seek.

The current navigation design also causes the site to lose any visual consistency.

## **User Research**

After review of your current site and purpose, we anticipate your targeted users to include:

- 1) University Faculty
- 2) University Students
- 3) Government Officials
- 4) Energy Engineering professionals

Some common characteristics of these anticipated users, would include:

- 1) Well educated
- 2) Driven/motivated
- 3) Passion for community improvement
- 4) Natural leaders

While the anticipated users share certain characteristics, a new website design would have to address distinct differences as well. Some of these differences would include:

- 1) Age
- 2) Technological awareness
- 3) Internet device usage

User research indicates that mobile friendliness and responsive design will be important for the University Student demographic. Smart phone and Tablet usage are extremely high among this group. With the average age of University professors being approximately 39 and the average age of state legislators being 56, support for desktops & laptops must still be a priority.

## **Recommendations**

Our recommendation is for a complete overhaul to the web site. We will start with a responsive design to address the growth of mobile devices accessing the web

today. We suggest condensing the navigation to 5 or fewer links with a drop down menu for displaying more links. We anticipate the 5 navigation links to include:

- 1) Home (navigation to main page)
- 2) Education/Industry Links
- 3) Current/Past Projects
- 4) Blog/Forum
- 5) About/Contact

This will keep your pages less cluttered, easier to navigate, and visitors will be able to find the information they are looking for quicker. Import sub-menus to each category will be discussed during site development.

Close attention will be paid to making the site meet current accessibility trends. We will look to keep the current logo, as well as the participating institution logos apart of the new design.

Finally, attention must be paid to responsive design. With the variety of devices used to access the Internet today, this is should be a priority.

## **Conclusion**

To maximize the effectiveness of your site, a complete redesign is required. A redesign will not only address accessibility & performance of your website, but also have a positive impact on your very important mission as well.