

P.I.E USer manual

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# Introduction

Personal Interactive Environment (PIE) is a social networking website aimed to help potentially socially-isolated individuals connect with others in their community, as well as family and friends across the country. PIE keeps in mind those who may not have a great deal of experience using the internet by prioritizing ease-of-use and simplicity of design.

The site was created at the request of Dr. Yvonne Chueh. Dr. Chueh is a professor and director of the Actuarial Science Program at Central Washington University. She was inspired to create a site that proactively reached out to a sometimes forgotten group of individuals. This idea was actualized by connecting with the university’s department of computer science and proposing the site as a potential senior project.

The purpose of this document is to provide a detailed guide to using PIE and give insight to its inner workings. A tutorial on basic operations will be included along with screen shots detailing several of the steps to be taken. Given the complexity and plethora of possible actions a user can take, the illustrated tutorial will not be all-inclusive, but rather show the most necessary tasks such as; registering to the site, logging in, creating an event, manipulating user profile, searching and adding contacts, etc.

The target demographic of the site includes socially isolated individuals, people with disabilities, and friends/family of the previously mentioned groups. There will be a varying degree of technical expertise among these groups. While some may be well versed in technology, it is important that those who have little to no experience are able to use PIE effectively and with minimal frustrations. Those with the latter amount of experience were considered more carefully than the former.

At the time of writing this manual, there is only one user type, the basic user. An administrative user type should be added in the future for site maintenance. Currently, the site is lacking in community boards, and as those are implemented, it will become increasingly important to have some type of moderation which further presses the need for an administrative account type. Basic accounts can only edit and change their profile and create/modify events.

# Installation

There is no installation required to use PIE. The user need only to have a browser capable of accessing the internet. There may be compatibility issues with exceptionally old browsers, but this should only degenerate some of the styling features of the site, not the functionality.

## System Requirements

The site will function probably with all major browsers including mobile browsers. There is some degeneration on mobile, but this only effects small styling features such as button layout. PIE is still fully functional. The hardware requirements are trivial. PIE does not contain video or any content that would stress a computer. However, the browser must allow for JavaScript to run, otherwise PIE will be unusable.

## Special Cases and Error Handling

Due to the focus on simplicity of design, there are not many special cases or errors that should occur. Some of the most common ones will be listed below, but the list is not all-inclusive. If errors are encountered, please email the team at [caketeamcwu@gmail.com](mailto:caketeamcwu@gmail.com)

### Quotation Marks in Text Fields

During the early stages of PIE the insertion of user-entered text into the database was done in a manner that produced errors when quotation marks were used. This issue was caught during testing and has been fixed in most places. It is possible that an insertion statement has been overlooked and the error may still occur in a rarely used area. If this problem is encountered, please email the team and it will be resolved.

### Unsuccessful Queries

The database queries are checked for success with Boolean logic. In most instances, the error will be handled and the user redirected. In some cases, upon failure, a user will be dropped on a page with an error displayed. The user can click on the back button of their browser and resubmit their request. An error message and redirection will be implemented as development continues.

### Redirection to Database Connection Error Page

If the database is experiencing an outage or some other technical problem, the user will be redirected to an error page informing them of such. The site will be inaccessible as most pages depend on the database connection for retrieving information.

### Attempting to Access File Directories

File directories cannot be accessed during normal use of PIE. A user would have to manually type the address of the directory in the address bar. If the user tries to access the directory, nothing will be displayed except an empty file directory page or a Forbidden message. No files will be listed and the user will not be redirected.

### Accessing User Images through Address Bar

Currently, individual images the user has uploaded are visible to any user that knows the full file path to the image. It is not recommended that user’s upload photographs they do not want everyone to see at this time. The issue is being addressed and restriction to these files will be implemented in the near future.

Accessing site images displayed throughout our site is allowed through the file path. There are no plans to hide these or prevent access through the file path as they are Public Domain Images.