

From: [Lee, Jennifer Y.](#)
To: [DiMartino, John P. VBAVACO](#); [Bournes, Tanekwa S., VBAVACO](#)
Subject: RE: Advance questions: Informational interview request RE web governance
Date: Monday, June 21, 2021 1:24:00 PM

Hi John and Tanekwa – thank you both for your time last week. I’m sending along the notes (in red) that I took during our informational interview, to give you a chance to make sure I understood our conversation similarly. If you see anything you’d like to clarify or correct, you can do so in-line below with a reply email. Thank you again for your collaboration!

P.S. I’ve been sharing SEMRush site scans (reports of broken links, redirect chains, etc.) to the shared inbox WEBADMIN.VBACO@va.gov, thinking this is still the best shared inbox for your team. Is this email the right one to use or would you like me to use a different email address for your team?

From: Lee, Jennifer Y.
Sent: Monday, June 14, 2021 9:23 AM
To: DiMartino, John P. VBAVACO <John.DiMartino@va.gov>; Bournes, Tanekwa S., VBAVACO <Tanekwa.Bournes@va.gov>
Subject: Advance questions: Informational interview request RE web governance

Good morning John and Tanekwa,
I just sent a cal invite to you for this Wednesday. Per the invitation, I’m sending a list of questions in advance. You do not need to answer these beforehand; just wanted to provide the list of Qs I’ve asked others in case that might be helpful to you.

Not all of the questions may apply to your team and that’s okay; we’ll capture that as well. I’d like to spend the last 15 minutes for you to freeform discuss anything you’d like to share regarding current web governance activities by your team – what works/doesn’t, what’s painful, and your general observations.

Web requests

This is comprised of information from both Josh Tuscher on the Web Governance Board and Brad Smelley on the TeamSite Admin team, and they had slightly different understanding.

Could you validate the behind the scenes steps here?

1. A user submits a web request to Web Ops.
2. The Web Governance Board reviews the request. (WGB assumption by this step that business web comms has reviewed and approved the request details: site folder, URL, internet vs. intranet, etc.)
3. WGB approves/rejects the request. [T: during my time, web requests always approved so far; most requests consist of program office changes and redirects – e.g., page text, office name, URLs.

Process from the VBA side prior to a web request ticket:

1/ Business reaches out to VBA web comms team first usually, and VBA web comms has the business submits a VBA digital intake form;

2/ VBA web comms reviews the intake, makes corrections or works with the business to complete form;

3/ then business fills out the WebOps web request form.]

[JDP: Current process w/intake form: business submits the intake forms; web comms team checks daily – new website or redirect – someone can help fill out the intake form; web comms reviews the ticket, then assess and/or approve; if approved, then business sent to fill out the WebOps web request form.)

Approved requests are then sent to TeamSite Admin, who implements the request according to the approved web request specs.

4. Approved requests automatically generates a record in the Web Registry, and an auto-generated email is sent to the business POC to verify the information.

What happens to requests that are not approved? [JDP – didn't really happen or very rarely. JPD: when denied, typically already a duplicate page on the site; previously: from business then web comms send to Dep COS office with web comms recommendation/assessment.]

TeamSite publishing – when Web Ops review is triggered

Web Ops review is automatically triggered and final publishing step (on server) is paused in these scenarios:

- If there are changes to 80 files or more at once
- If there's an invalid file type

What are the steps that happen to resolve this trigger?

T: haven't encountered this yet.

JDP: Usually handle this previously/before submitting for publish – or even earlier in the process: ex ABR annual benefits reports (kind of like the budget/finance stuff) – the VBA web comms person will ask businesses to condense the file if needed; businesses can't upload themselves, only VBA web comms does this for them.

508 Compliance

- What steps, reviews, or support take place to ensure that web content and uploaded documents are 508-compliant before publication? [JDP: The web comms team has been requested by 508 office to send 508 questions and issues to the 508 office. So now, if they find 508 issues like a non-compliant PDF, VBA web comms will tell the business to contact the 508 office. (However, it's up to the business to actually make the reach out.)
- Goal: to get to the point where businesses work first with the 508 Office, so that all content and files are compliant *before* publishing stage. Ex: Image file or a PDF 508 issue → today, connect the business to 508 office.

Based on priority/importance/visibility (like a hearing coming up), VBA web comms may be pressured to upload or publish non-compliant asset or page. When that's the case, they will ask the business to make it compliant in parallel, so they can resolve the issue after publication.]

- What happens when non-508 compliant web pages or uploaded documents are discovered after publication? [has happened in the past; contacts the business to get them to make compliant. Now, would connect them to 508 office – ex: give the business 508 office contact info.]
- How do teams find out about non-compliant web pages/documents on the website? [many sources: like scans – from DEPO – and other ad hoc means. JDP example: Blind Veterans of America example – prep for a conference – VBA worked with them about a year ago, and BVA identified several documents and requested VBA to address.]

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Other web standards

Are there any activities or processes that enforce various web standards set by the Web Governance Board?

- For instance, regarding URL standards – like not using underscores – is that manually enforced or automatically prevented (via error message or whatever if someone tries to publish a page with non-standard URL)?
[JDP: time when things were published – i.e., in the past. Today: VBA team is the one creating the net new teamsite pages, so web comms makes sure the URLs are not using underscores, all caps, and other things. Is there a checklist or anything to go by? T: we just do the basics – but no from a list or checkbox per se.]
- Are there other types of technical operations that help support or enforce compliance of web standards?

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General observations:

- With depo – overall experience positive. Would like more advance communication from depo about content work coming up.
- With TeamSite content – more maintenance but not really new web governance activities... T: for example, for web governance checks on the legacy pages, a page-by-page audit would be needed and the team is not staffed for that.
- Example: Currently not in use but SiteImprove scans URLs, alt text, broken links would help with governance.

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404s, Redirect chains, URLs, meta properties [Did not have time to cover these questions, though some aspects touched upon with answered questions.]

- How are broken links and 404 pages identified? Is there a manual or automated process (tests/scans)? On what schedule does it occur, and what happens when broken links/404s are discovered?

- How is it determined that a redirect is needed? How are redirects requested? How are redirects implemented? How is it ensured that loops and excessive chains are prevented?
- How are standardized URL patterns and unique meta titles/meta descriptions enforced? (Is it baked into the frontend templates, in the Web Request form?)
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Intranet vs. Public (external) content [Did not have time to cover these questions, though some aspects touched upon with answered questions.]

- Is there a team or a process that is responsible for ensuring that internal content (like internal meeting PPT decks, minutes, meeting videos, etc.) doesn't get published on the public website?
- What happens when teams publish content that belongs on the intranet on the public VA.gov Internet? Do people report that to Web Ops or to another group? What group is responsible for removing that content from the public site?

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Are the Web Ops activities different for SharePoint vs. WordPress vs. TeamSite vs. custom-built sites? [Did not have time to cover these questions, though some aspects touched upon with answered questions.]

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Jennifer Lee

Jennifer.lee27@va.gov | 202-664-6532

Digital Experience Product Office

Office of the CTO