

Using Wikis to Easily and Collaboratively maintain public web sites

Edwin Rudolph and Adel Abunawass

Department of Computer Science

University of West Georgia

{erudolph,adel}@westga.edu

WhatIsWiki

a.k.a. “WikiWikiWeb”

“wiki” = Hawaiian for “quick” or fast

“... a piece of server software that allows users to freely create and edit Web page content using any Web browser. Wiki supports hyperlinks and has a simple text syntax for creating new pages and crosslinks between internal pages on the fly.”

<http://www.wiki.org/wiki.cgi?WhatIsWiki>

The need for “good” sites...

University websites increasingly important as primary source of information

Perception of the organization

Usability (organization, consistency)

Aesthetics (style, layout)

Current information

Out of date content creates perception of site as an unreliable information resource

Wiki text vs. HTML

Lists:

```
* item 1
* item 2
```

Links:

```
[[text -> url]]
```

Bold text:

```
'''text'''
```

Simple table:

```
||Col 1 ||Col 2||
||abc   ||def   ||
```

List:

```
<ul>
<li>item 1</li>
<li>item 2</li>
</ul>
```

Link:

```
<a href="url">text</a>
```

Bold text:

```
<b>text</b>
```

Table:

```
<table>
<tr><td>col 1</td>
    <td>col 2</td></tr>
```

```
</table>
```

Implementing “good” sites

Traditional web maintenance tends to assume content-provider is also a “webmaster”

Even GUI tools are a barrier

Content providers create & edit

Webmasters maintain style, organization, and ensure standards

Wikis can help

Content Provider:

- Familiar tool: the web browser

- Edit directly using simple Wiki syntax

- Make changes/additions immediately

Webmaster:

- Maintain the wiki system

- Implement design, style, organization using templates

- Create/support functional extensions

- Ensure standards-compliant

PmWiki

Simple (limited base “feature” set)

Written in PHP, no database required

Active user community provides several functional extensions for specific needs

Example: Include RSS in your site

Templates and CSS for layout

“WikiFarms” to apply consistent styles and design across logically distinct web sites

Web Resources

Background

www.wiki.org

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wiki

Software: PmWiki

www.pmwiki.org

Examples from our Department

www.cs.westga.edu

lab.cs.westga.edu

Thank you!

Questions?