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DISA

DISA WEB HANDBOOK

For more information please contact webteam@disa.mil

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DISA Web Handbook

This handbook is intended to provide DISA Web Site Coordinators, Web developers, and content managers with standards, procedures, and best practices for developing, reviewing, and publishing DISA sponsored Web pages. Although this handbook focuses on publishing content to DISA.MIL, it also provides design, content, and publishing standards for Web sites hosted on other servers.

Why Should I Use It?

- Guidelines are consistent with best practices for Web design and content.

- Guidelines ensure compliance with Federal, DoD, and DISA policy

- Guidelines ensure appropriate channeling of information prior to release to the public.

- Guidelines promote a unified DISA, in both message and design, to the public and our customers.

- ...files that do not conform to these standards will not be posted or will be removed from DISA sponsored Web sites.

DISA.MIL Overview

The DISA public Web site is a vital tool for communicating with the public, our customers, the media, and other important communities. With an average of 13,000+ visitors per week, the DISA Public Web site offers an excellent opportunity for DISA to share information, success stories, and strategic messages. While the site represents our "public face", more than half of the weekly visitors come from military domains. It is important to recognize that www.disa.mil represents a critical entry point into the agency. It can represent a first impression by a customer, a resource for congressional staff, or a resource for prospective employees. It is critical that this experience be a positive one.

DISA.MIL Mission

- Deliver timely and accurate content on DISA programs, systems, services, and solutions.

- Communicate the agency's brand and strategic messages.

- Highlight and publicize agency achievements.

- Provide a unified entry point to all of DISA's unclassified Web resources.

Other Agency Web Resources

In addition to the DISA public server, the Agency Web Team manages the following web resources:

- **DISA Controlled Access Server (DISA-CA)**
  - Limits access to military and/or government domains.
  - Offers capability to post non-sensitive content, not of general interest to the public although approved and authorized for public release, and intended for DoD or other specifically targeted audience.

- **Intranet Static Web Sites**
  - Limits access to DISA staff (government and contractor)
  - Alternate hosting option for content that can not be effectively presented via Workspaces.

- **SIPRNet Server (DISA.SMIL.MIL)**
  - Limits access to those organizations with a SIPRNet connection.
  - Offers capability to post classified content, up to and including information classified SECRET.

Web Management Roles and Responsibilities

Agency Web Team

Agency-wide Web management is the responsibility of the Strategic Planning and Information Directorate, Corporate Communications Division (SPI4), Agency Web Team. The team consists of the Agency Web Manager and two Web publishing specialists:

- Jason Schiavoni, Agency Web Team Lead
  - (703) 607-4705, DSN 327
  - Jason.Schiavoni@disa.mil

- Noreen Costello, Web Publishing Specialist
  - (703) 607-4704, DSN 327
  - Noreen.Costello@disa.mil

- Svetlana Lakhman, Web Publishing Specialist
  - (703) 607-6829, DSN 327
  - Svetlana.Lakhman@disa.mil

All members of the Agency Web Team can be reached via WebTeam@disa.mil.

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Agency Web Team Responsibilities

- Manages the day-to-day activities of www.disa.mil, DISA's controlled-access server (.gov/.mil restricted), Intranet static Web pages, and DISA's classified Web presence;

- Recommends, interprets, and oversees implementation of DoD and Federal Web policies;

- Reviews all content prior to posting on public Web sites;

- Establishes procedures and standards for DISA's Web products;

- Develops, designs, and organizes content for www.disa.mil and promotes a consistent look and feel on all DISA Web products;

- Maintains agency-level content and coordinates the maintenance of directorate-level content;

- Researches and develops long-term and annual strategies, goals, and objectives for the Agency's use of its Web products; assesses and reports on performance;

- Manages the agency's Web marketing and outreach efforts;

- Provides technical assistance in design, operations, and maintenance of DISA Web pages;

- Represents DISA at Web meetings and conferences on Web issues;

- Provides direction, guidance, and training for Web Site Coordinators;

- Ensures links are operational and outages are resolved.

Web Site Coordinator

All directorates within DISA have a Web Site Coordinator (WSC) assigned to assist the workforce with the production and management of Web-based products. The WSC will serve as a consultant throughout the Web development process, providing guidance through required processes, and maintaining communication between their directorate and the Agency Web Team.

Web Site Coordinator Responsibilities

- Provides overall management of directorate level Web sites;

- Ensures all Web sites are in compliance with federal, DoD, and DISA Web policy;

- Periodically review all posted content, including: monitoring for currency, accuracy, and policy alignment; checking for broken links or

content errors; and updating contact phone numbers and e-mail addresses.

- Assists directorate staff with development of Web products or enlists the support of the Agency Web Team;

- Keeps Agency Web Team up to date on directorate-level Web projects;

- Coordinates the review and approval of content to be placed on Web products;

- Engages in archiving and configuration management for directorate Web products;

- Represents their organization/function at DISA meetings, conferences or forums on Web issues;

- Applies best practices in writing for the Web to content published via online channels.

Approval Authorities

- Civilian or military leadership at the GS-15/O-6 level designated as authoritative source for review and approval of directorate/program content.

  - Staff below the GS-15/O-6 level can fill this position if designated by the Directorate leadership or component commanding officer.

  - Directorate leadership should complete the Web Content Approval Authority Designation Memo to delegate this responsibility.

Compliance with Web Publishing Requirements

Web Publishing Process – Critical Points

- All Web requests need to be coordinated and submitted through directorate Web Site Coordinators, unless other procedures are established between WSC and the Agency Web Team.

- The ultimate destination (i.e. disa.mil, disa-ca, Intranet, etc) for content is dependent upon the sensitivity and target audience. DISA.MIL will only be used to communicate with the public and DISA customers – content intended for the DISA workforce will not be published on the public site unless for emergency purposes.

- [Web inventory spreadsheets](#) provide a record of all directorate owned web pages and sites, including those hosted on public, controlled access, Intranet, and SIPRNet servers. These inventories will be used to assign approval authorities and to conduct bi-annual reviews. It is critical that the spreadsheets be kept up to date to reflect new and deleted pages.

Developing New Web Sites/Pages

o Requests for new Web pages and sites must originate from offices designated as authoritative sources for the information to be published. Authoritative source framework is available via the [Enterprise Content Management Policy](#).

o After the requesting office completes and submits [Web Requirements Questionnaire](#), the WSC will coordinate a meeting with the Agency Web Team, the WSC, and the requesting office (should include subject matter expert).

    The purpose of the meeting will be to determine:

    - Site objectives and target audience
    - Web publishing destination (public, controlled access, intranet, or classified server)
    - Design, content, and technical requirements
    - Roles and responsibilities
    - Schedule

o All new pages and sites must be documented in your Directorate Web site inventory spreadsheet.

Production/Development

o Use of Macromedia Dreamweaver web development software is mandatory for the production and maintenance of all pages/sites hosted on agency web resources. Dreamweaver-specific [template](#) files are used to enhance maintenance procedures and promote consistent design.

o The Agency Web Team can take the lead in developing Web pages, or the WSC/Directorate-level staff can choose to do the development.

    - If WSC or other directorate staff will be developing or editing Web pages for DISA's public, controlled access, or Intranet static sites, it is critical to ensure that Dreamweaver is properly configured. Please contact the [Web Team](#) if you intend on creating and/or revising files from your desktop.

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- o For specific development and design standards, please reference the Design and Development Standards.

- o Development servers are available for DISA's public, controlled access, and EDGE servers to assist with developing and reviewing draft pages and/or sites.

Review and Approval:

- o There are four levels of review required for publishing content on DISA.MIL:

  - First Level – Directorate Web Site Coordinator
  - Second Level - Approval Authority
  - Third Level – Agency Web Team/Public Affairs
  - Fourth Level - Operations Security (OPSEC) Manager

- o Documentation noting the review and approval by Approval Authority will be submitted with the Web Change Request form. Documentation can take the form of:

  1. Approval Authority's electronic signature on the Web Change Request Form.

  2. Email noting the Approval Authority's review and approval attached to the Web Change Request form email.

- o The Web Team will coordinate review of materials by the DISA OPSEC manager. WSCs will be notified if any modifications are required as a result of the OPSEC review.

- o Some content types may require additional review steps not included in the Web handbook. The Enterprise Content Management Policy provides specific guidance for various content types.

- o When publishing to non-public server, a general rule-of-thumb when determining what content should be submitted for review to the Agency Web Team:

  - Content published to **controlled-access** Web sites intended for **working group purposes** does not require review/approval by the Agency Web Team.

  - Content **that offers formal presentation** of an official agency position/message destined for publication on **any** Web site, whether unclassified, controlled access, or classified, must be reviewed/approved by the Agency Web Team.
    - e.g. marketing materials, factsheets, presentations.

Change Requests for Active Pages/Sites

- o All Web requests must be submitted by WSC's unless other procedures are agreed upon between the Agency Web Team and the WSC.

- o Requests will be submitted using the Web Request Form. After completing the form and obtaining the digital signature of the Approval Authority, press the "Submit Via Email" button to send it as an email attachment to the Web Team.

- o *Minor content changes* (e.g. e-mail or phone number updates) do not require approval from Approval Authorities.

Semi-Annual Reviews

- o In February and August of each year an Agency-wide Web content review will be conducted. An AIMS tasker will be assigned to the WSC with a four week deadline to complete the review.

- o Reviews will rely upon Web inventory spreadsheets, with each documented page/site requiring review. Once a review is complete, the WSC will note completion with an updated "Last Review Date" on their inventory spreadsheets.

- o Please reference the Web Review Checklist for additional procedures and guidance.

- o Although formal reviews will be conducted twice a year, it is expected that all Web content will be reviewed and updated as appropriate.

- Web Metrics

  - o A standard Web metric report is available for web pages/sites on DISA.MIL. The report includes data on the number of visitors, hits, frequently accessed pages, visitor domain stats, and other useful metrics. The reports are accessible to most individuals on the DISANet and can be viewed at the following URL: http://www.disa.mil/usage/ If you have any questions or if you are unable to access the page, please contact the Web Team.

  - o If you would like to track a specific page or site not listed in the reports, please submit your request to the Web Team.

Compliance with Federal, DoD, and DISA Policy

- ▪ **Federal Laws and Regulations**

  - o **Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act**

    - ▪ In 1998, Congress amended the Rehabilitation Act to require Federal agencies to make their electronic and information technology accessible to people with disabilities. Inaccessible technology interferes with an individual's ability to obtain and use

information quickly and easily. Section 508 was enacted to eliminate barriers in information technology, to make available new opportunities for people with disabilities, and to encourage development of technologies that will help achieve these goals. The law applies to all Federal agencies when they develop, procure, maintain, or use electronic and information technology. Under Section 508 (29 U.S.C. ' 794d), agencies must give disabled employees and members of the public access to information that is comparable to the access available to others.

- [Summary of Section 508 Standards for the Web](#)

- DISA.MIL templates are Section 508 compliant. However, if you add additional objects (tables, forms, images, applications, etc.) it is critical to ensure each is accessible.

- *COMMON ISSUE:* PDF and PowerPoint file accessibility. *(accessibility guidance to be added)*

o **Copyright Laws**

- Works by the U.S. Government are not eligible for copyright protection – do not include copyright notices for content on DISA Web sites.

- When posting content that is protected by Copyright law, please be sure to abide by [appropriate rules and regulations](#).

- If you have any questions or concerns regarding copyright law, please contact DISA General Counsel.

- *COMMON ISSUE:* Re-publishing News Stories. In general, providing a link to a story hosted on the source Web site is permissible. However, in order to republish a story on a DISA Web site requires approval from the news source. Overall, please contact the Agency Web Team prior to

o **Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)**

- Establishes required FOIA content for publicly accessible sites; including processes to submit FOIA requests, identifying agency FOIA officer, and establishing reading room for common FOIA requests.

- All DISA public pages should include a "FOIA" link that is directed to: http://www.disa.mil/gc/foia/foia.html. The link is included within the footer of the DISA.MIL template.

o **Paperwork Reduction Act**

- Provides guidance and requirements for implementation of surveys/questionnaire for which the public may be an audience.

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- All surveys conducted on publicly accessible Web sites must include an OMB control number – which is provided following submission and approval of PRA [application](#).

- If an office requires a survey to be administered on a public site, please contact the Agency Web Team. It can take up to 6 months to obtain OMB approval for survey questions.

- Open-ended questions do not require OMB approval.

o **Information Quality**

- All federal public Web sites must comply with Public Law 106-554, "Guidelines for Ensuring and Maximizing the Quality Objectivity, Utility, and Integrity of Information Disseminated by Federal Organizations."

- Requires organizations to publish guidelines for "ensuring and maximizing the quality, objectivity, utility, and integrity of information".

- Agency review process includes consideration of information quality elements.

o **No Fear Act**

- Antidiscrimination and whistleblower protections laws; requires that each agency post quarterly No Fear reports to their public Web site and to ensure ready access by both employees and the public.

- No Fear Act reports are posted to DISA.MIL on the following page: http://www.disa.mil/eeocd/index.html.

- Links to the No Fear Act reports need to be provided from all major Web gateways. Links are currently included on DISA homepage, About DISA pages, EDGE, DITCO, and JITC homepages.

o **Privacy Requirements**

- All federal Web sites must comply with existing laws and directives that address the need to protect the privacy of the American people. Some of the key requirements include:

  - Conducting privacy impact assessments

  - Posting privacy policies

  - Posting a "Privacy Act Statement" that tells visitors the organization's legal authority for collecting personal data and how the data will be used.

  - Translating privacy policies into a standardized machine-readable format.

- Web sites and applications are permitted to use session cookies; however, permanent cookies are not permitted, only exceptions are those granted by the Secretary of Defense.

- DISA's Privacy Act Specialist is Ms. Jeanette Weathers-Jenkins (jeanette.jenkins@disa.mil)

- All public Web pages must include a link to DISA's privacy statement: http://www.disa.mil/info/secpriv.html

- DISA's machine-readable privacy policy is located at: http://www.disa.mil/w3c/p3p.xml

- o **Domain Names**

  - All federal Web sites must use only .gov, .mil, or Fed.us domains unless the agency head explicitly determines another domain is necessary for the proper performance of an agency function.

- **DoD Regulations**

  - o **DoD Web Site Administration Policies and Procedures**

    - Unclassified-Sensitive/FOUO information should be placed on Web sites with security and access controls.

    - Product endorsements or preferential treatment of any private organization shall not appear on any official DoD publicly accessible site -- this includes posting Graphics or logos depicting companies/products.

    - Links to non-DoD Web resources should support organization's mission. A disclaimer is required stating that neither the DoD nor the organization endorses the product or organization at the destination.

  - o **DoD Directive 5230.9 — Clearance of DoD Information for Public Release**

    - Information intended for public release must be reviewed for clearance by public affairs prior to release.

    - Public release of information is limited only as necessary to safeguard information protection in the interest of national security.

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- **DISA Policy**

  o **Enterprise Content Management Policy** (DISA Staff Only)

Compliance with Development and Design Standards

o **HTML Templates**

- All DISA-sponsored public and controlled access Web pages must utilize established HTML templates. If stated requirements for the Web page or site conflicts with the template requirements, alternate versions can be considered.

- Three templates are available for use on DISA.MIL/DISA-CA/DISA.SMIL.MIL:

  - *About Us* – Organizational structure, office mission, vision, function content.

  - *Services and Solutions* – Service fact sheets/descriptions.

  - *Customer Support* – Customer service oriented content.

- For a copy of the templates and associated files, please contact the Agency Web Team.

o **Email Addresses**

- Only generic E-mail addresses (webmaster@disa.mil, program@disa.mil, etc) are permitted on publicly accessible Web sites. No personal E-mail addresses will be published.

o **Metadata**

- Keyword and Description metadata are required for pages hosted on disa.mil. Developers should either include the metadata when developing the page or submit keyword/description content via the Web Change Request form.

  - The *Keywords* field should convey the subject matter of the Web page or resource. Keywords should be expressed as words or phrases that describe the theme or content of the page or resource. Try to imagine the terms someone outside your area would use in a search engine to find information on

your Web pages.

- The *Description* field should contain a brief textual description of the content of the Web page or resource. This may include abstracts or summaries, or content descriptions. Use complete sentences and good grammar; some search engines will use this summary in your displayed search results.

o **Page Titles**

- Page titles are required for all pages on disa.mil.

o **Links**

- Links to non-DoD Web resources should support an organization's mission. A disclaimer is required stating that neither the DoD nor the organization endorses the product or organization at the destination. DISA's link disclaimer is included on the Security, Privacy, and Accessibility page, which is standard footer link on the DISA Web template. However, when there are several links to private organizations on one page, it is recommended to include the disclaimer in the body of the page.

- Links to internal systems and Web pages (EDGE, CMIS, etc.) are not permitted on publicly accessible Web sites.

- DISA.MIL site structure utilizes document-relative pathnames (../index.html) for links and image sources. Absolute pathnames (http://www.disa.mil) are not permitted on pages.

o **Cookies**

- Web sites and applications are permitted to use session cookies. Permanent cookies are not permitted. Only the Secretary of Defense can grant an exception to this rule.

o **Surveys**

- Surveys intended for publication on public Web sites must be coordinated and reviewed by multiple offices within DISA, DoD, and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). If you have a requirement to post a survey on DISA.MIL, please contact webteam@disa.mil for additional guidance.

o **File Naming Conventions**

- Use index.html as the primary/main page within a directory.

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- Use .html as opposed to .htm

- Do not use capital letters in file names and directories

- No spaces are permitted within file names
  - SAMPLE: http://www.disa.mil/netwars/index.html
  - SAMPLE: poc_listing.doc

Compliance with Content Standards

- **Content Restrictions**

  o Personally identifying information, particularly names, pictures, and personal e-mail addresses, may not be posted to public Web sites. Exceptions can be made for staff members who, by virtue of their positions, have frequent contact with the public. Please contact the Web Team for additional guidance.

  o Street addresses for DISA buildings are not permitted on publicly accessible Web sites. A post office box should be used instead.

  o Maps and Directions to DISA facilities are not permitted on DISA public Web sites.

- **Content Style**

  The DISA Style Guide is the primary reference for all DISA Web content. If an item is not addressed in the style guide, reference AP Style. You can also contact the Web Team with specific questions.

  Below are guidelines for some of the more frequently referenced aspects of style for Web content:

  - **Dates and times** should use the following guidelines (detailed explanations are available on page 55 of the DISA Style Guide):
    o Military form is appropriate only for dates that are not part of a sentence.
    o When writing dates, use numerals without th, st, nd, or rd. (e.g. "Nov. 23" *not* "Nov. 23rd")
    o Spell out the name of the month when using alone, or with a year alone.
    o When using a specific date, abbreviate the month.
    o Do not use the year unless it is not the current year.
    o Use lowercase for a.m. and p.m.
    o Use an en dash with no spaces if time spans or dates are inclusive. (e.g. "8-11 a.m." *not* "8 a.m. to 11 a.m.")
    o Do not use hyphens in a date. For example: The event was held May 12 to 22. (Not May 12-22).

  - **Phone and fax numbers** should be written as follows:

- o (555) 555-5555, DSN 555
- o Commercial toll-free numbers with DSN equivalents should be listed (xxx) xxx-xxxx, DSN (zzz) zzz-zzzz

- **Numbers** should use the following guidelines:
  - o Spell out a number if it is the first word in a sentence.
  - o Spell numbers below 10. Use numerals for 10 and above.
  - o Use numerals exclusively in: dimensions, ratios, proportions, military units, and dates.

- **Acronyms** should be spelled out in the first reference, and used only if they appear again in the text.
  - o DISA does not need to be spelled out on the first reference.
  - o Use DoD for Department of Defense

- **Capitalization**
  - o Only capitalize a title if it is used before a name and is not set off with quotation marks.
  - o Capitalize an item only if it is a major DoD or DISA program.
  - o *Don't* capitalize standalone words, such as agency when referring to DISA or department when referring to DoD.

- **Punctuation**
  - o Do not use a hyphen in the names of DISA field offices. For example: use DISA CONUS, *not* DISA-CONUS.
  - o In a series, commas are used before the last "and" if the phrase is on the same subject.

- **E-mail vs. e-mail**. Just use **e-mail**, with the hyphen and no capitalization, unless it begins a sentence or is in a headline.

- **WWW vs. www and Web vs. web**. Use "the Web" or WWW in text and www in URLs. If you're being formal, spell out World Wide Web using initial capital letters. If you're writing about aspects of the Web, use Web page or Web site.

- **Set Up vs. Setup and Log On vs. Logon**. These are subtle. Use set up and log on as verbs in instructions, such as: set up the printer or log on the network.

  Setup and logon are adjectives or nouns, such as: the setup program or your logon password. This rule goes for other similar pairs, like back up and backup, too.

- **Online vs. On-line**. Stick with online.

- **Writing for the Web[1]**

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[1] Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Writing Standards for the Web. [Online] Available http://www.hud.gov/library/bookshelf11/policies/wtfwm.cfm, December 4, 2006.

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When writing for the Web, ensure that your content meets the following criteria:

1. **Target audience is clear**
   - Who is the intended audience? What do they want to know? What do we need to tell them?

2. **Purpose of the page is clear and unambiguous**
   - What is the purpose of this page? State it in the first paragraph.
   - What does the audience want to know about the subject? What do you need to tell them?
   - What should the audience do after they read the page? Make sure it's obvious – what are the next steps?
   - If you anticipate that they want to know something that's beyond your scope, take them where they can find what they're looking for through links.

3. **Content is written and organized efficiently**
   - Keep it short and sweet! People don't like to read on the screen. 79% of Web users scan. Use about 50% of the words you'd use in print publishing.
   - To make keywords stand out, use highlighting (bold print).
   - Highlight only key information-carrying words. Avoid highlighting entire sentences or long phrases.
   - Bulleted and numbered lists can draw attention to important points.

4. **Content is consistent**
   - Make sure content doesn't contradict other information on the site.
   - Avoid duplication and redundancy, except where it's needed to address different audiences.
   - Create links. If information already exists on the Web site about the same subject or about subjects referenced in your document, link to them.

5. **Spelling and punctuation are accurate**

6. **Content anticipates obvious questions**
   - Be an advocate for your audience. What do they want to know? What do you need to tell them? Is it all there? Did you anticipate their questions? Did you lead them to related materials?
   - If you must use acronyms, use them only after you've spelled them out once.

7. **Links add value**
   - Do links to outside sites add value and/or relate to the site?
   - Do the words used for links describe the link (no "click here" links)?

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8. **Graphics add value**
    - No gratuitous graphics that add page weight without content value