



New Mexico Tech Gets Website Work Done Faster with the Right Tool for the Job

Case Study

Redesign Results

A disorganized, hard-to-navigate site is transformed into a cutting-edge website representative of the kind of education and creative thinking that occurs at NMT.

Departments campus-wide have ownership of their web content without the worry of compromising brand consistency.

Supported by a powerful, secure web content management system, the school no longer worries about crashing the site and losing data.

New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology (NMT) is a preeminent science and technology institution, but at the time, you wouldn't have known it by looking at their website. The original site was disorganized and hard to navigate. Page design varied from department to department, along with the quality of images and content. Brand consistency was nonexistent. To make things even more complicated, the site ran on an old version of Joomla that was no longer supported.



The New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology is a university located in Socorro, New Mexico, that offers over 30 bachelor of science degrees in technology, the sciences, engineering, management, and technical communication, as well as graduate degrees at the masters and doctoral levels.

"One of the first things I was advised of when I started working at NMT in 2017 was to be careful working in Joomla, because if I clicked a button and didn't know what it did, there could be a chance that it would crash the site and we might not be able to get it back," remembered Benson Hendrix, NMT's digital media manager and web developer.

Start with the CMS

Charged by the new president of NMT to modernize and refresh the school's website, Benson and his boss, Dave Lepre, communication and marketing director, spearheaded a redesign committee comprised of cross-campus staff and faculty from admissions to alumni relations to IT. Their first suggestion? Start with the CMS.

The NMT team appreciated that OmniUpdate's OU Campus web content management system (CMS) had the power and extensibility they needed to create a dynamic, engaging site. Knowing that OmniUpdate works only in higher education was also an attractive selling point.

OU Campus' software-as-a-service (SaaS) deployment was also a selling point. "I like the SaaS version of OU Campus because I know that our servers are being maintained by the experts at OmniUpdate, which takes the stress off of our IT team. I also like OU Campus over an open source solution because there is an extra feeling of security. I want to make sure I don't get a call at 2 am saying the website is down. I have comfort knowing that the system is solid and proprietary, and that OmniUpdate professionals who know the ins and outs of the system are there if I need them."

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Benson Hendrix, Digital Media Manager and Web Developer, New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology

"It really does help to start with the CMS," said Caroline Roberts, content strategist for iFactory, the OmniUpdate partner who helped NMT with their site redesign. "Schools who have a concept of the bigger picture will have much more success, especially when they understand how their website fits in with their overall marketing plan. Plus it's inevitable... we have customers that initially just want to change the colors and the design without changing the content, but once you change the design and information architecture, it necessitates a change in content. If you anticipate UX, design, and content changes from the start of the project, it makes the entire process smoother."

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Redesign Priorities

Based on committee recommendations, NMT prioritized their redesign needs, starting with an information architecture and website page flow that empowered students to self-select their academic journey on the site. Because of the school's education specialties, they wanted to emphasize research and the rigorous nature of their programs so that students could understand what they were getting in to upon applying. And it was important to offer a program finder filtered by department and area of interest so that students could find specific fields of study.



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Working with iFactory, the NMT committee defined the strategic goals for the new site. "We are graduating some of the smartest kids I've ever seen, and we wanted the website to reflect that," said Benson. "It needed to be cutting edge and representative of the kind of education and creative thinking that comes with a tech education."

Since NMT was open to an interesting, different design, the iFactory team turned to mathematics for inspiration, proposing a stripped down, clean design suggestive of a periodic table—something that prospective students would be familiar with. They also took care to keep the design professional and inviting.

Redesign Journey

With a plan in place, Benson set to work developing standard department templates based on the new design. "The pages needed to be a combination of form and function, keeping in mind the variety of people visiting the site at any given time, from potential students to parents to alumni to local civic leaders," Benson said. "We wanted them to find what they needed quickly."

The NMT team also liked that each department could customize their web pages. "We have our uniform, basic structure for pages, which is important for a cohesive brand consistency since we are all one university," said Benson. "However, I like that OU Campus is flexible and intuitive enough for people in various departments to add their information and make the pages meet their own needs aesthetically. And they don't have to know HTML to do it."

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Staying Ahead of an Aggressive Timeline

Simultaneously, Benson began gathering content resources. "I knew this would be a big job, and I wanted to get as much done as possible upfront while we were waiting for the design," Benson said.

Because NMT had an aggressive timeline, the team worked together to sift through content and tweak template designs. They also began training people on campus so they would be comfortable and ready to use OU Campus. "It's very easy to pick up," said Benson. "If you have experience with Word, you can use OU Campus."

Thanks to the prework of the NMT team and the efficiency of OU Campus, the migration took only 4 weeks, a much faster timeline than usual.

OU Campus = Ease of Use

Benson found that with OU Campus, he didn't have to learn coding or a complicated CMS, plus he had the OmniUpdate support team at the ready whenever he had questions. "Two years ago I could not have imagined that I would be working on a website at a university, but OU Campus has totally changed that," Benson said. "I have always had an interest in web technology, but never to the level that I felt I could dive into it confidently," Benson said. "The OU Campus team really helped me make the transition from web manager to web developer easily and got me to the point where I enjoy working on the website. If I ever run into a problem, I know that OmniUpdate customer support has the knowledge base to help me work through it quickly. I credit my success to OmniUpdate's training and support."

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A Successful Redesign

Launched in 2018, the NMT website is now a powerful engine that provides flexibility and extensibility when needed, while also maintaining brand consistency for contributors.

Benson is so pleased with the school's new site that he said he would definitely recommend OU Campus to his higher education peers. "It's easy to use and the site looks great—and not just our site. I've checked out other OU Campus websites and I'm amazed at the variety of design options used by schools. They are all so different—but we all use the same simple backend to power our sites."

"Plus, with OU Campus, I can navigate quickly and get my work done faster. There's just so much more built into OU Campus. It's the right tool for the job."

Culminating a 2-year process, NMT now has a responsive, smart-looking site that is easy to navigate and inviting to use. "Our site is amazing," said Benson. "We have one of the best college websites in the Southwest."