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UMaine Digital Communications, December 2021

Division of Marketing and Communications

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UMaine Website Owners and Managers — December 2021 update

1 message

UMaine Digital Communications <um.weboffice@maine.edu>   Tue, Dec 21, 2021 at 9:59 AM
Reply-To: UMaine Digital Communications <um.weboffice@maine.edu>
To:

View this email in your browser

UMaine website managers
Community update • December 2021

You are receiving this email because you have an account in UMaine's public
website system, WordPress. If you no longer manage web content, please contact us
at <u>um.weboffice@maine.edu</u>

In this email:

- Have a relaxing winter break
- Coming in January: VPN for website editors working remote
- Trainings and consultations via Zoom
- Upcoming training dates
- Training topics by appointment
- Accessibility and inclusion: updating Microsoft Office

<u>If you have a question you would like to see answered, let us know.</u>

Quick links:

- <u>User guide for UMaine websites</u>
- <u>Contact Digital Communications for support</u>
- <u>University of Maine System Digital Content Management guidelines</u>

Have a relaxing winter break

Winter break is upon us, and the team here at Digital Communications wish everyone well this holiday season. We will be taking time off ourselves, but will always have someone available to support your website needs. Please email us at our department address um.weboffice@maine.edu (or use our website services request form) to ensure your request is received by whomever is available while others are taking time off.

Coming in January: VPN for website editors working remote

As the most popular web content management system (WCMS), WordPress is a regular target for cyber threats. UMS IT has seen an uptick in attempts to login to our WordPress environment, and while these attempts are unsuccessful, the volume of these incidents has an impact on the overall performance of our website.

In an effort to better secure our website from malicious attacks like this, we will be restricting logins to WordPress to computers that are on the UMS network. If you are working on campus, this change will not affect you, and you will be able to access the WordPress editor as you have in the past. If you are working off campus and have not already installed the University System VPN, you will need to do so by following the instructions at https://vpn.net.maine.edu/.

When will this change occur?

Anyone who accesses the UMaine Machias website must access the website dashboard with VPN enabled as of September 2021. We expect this change to be implemented during winter break, and will send a separate email to all WordPress users as the date approaches.

If you need assistance setting up the VPN, you can contact the IT Help Desk at:

Email: help@maine.edu
Phone: 1-800-696-4357
Live chat: itsupport.maine.edu

Training and consultations via Zoom

Trainings and consultations are conducted via Zoom videoconferencing. If you are unfamiliar with using Zoom and plan to attend an upcoming training session, please ensure your computer is set up to work with this technology. If you are unfamiliar with Zoom to conduct team/committee/group meetings, their online tutorials are

helpful. For faculty who need help with adopting this technology for classroom instruction, training in using Zoom tailored for classwork is available from UMaine's Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning, as is a helpful quick start guide for students.

Upcoming training dates

Training is currently conducted via Zoom videoconferencing. More information about Zoom is available.

UMaine WordPress Basics: Alternating Thursdays, 10:30 a.m.–noon
January 6 and 20
This 90-minute session covers the basics of using WordPress at UMaine — how to log in, create pages, and edit header, footer, menus, and content blocks. We welcome anyone and everyone to join us for an orientation or refresher. Email um.weboffice@maine.edu to join one of the upcoming sessions.

UMaine WordPress Beyond the Basics: Alternating Thursdays, 10:30 a.m.–noon
January 13 and 27
If you need to create web forms, event calendars, or side bar features on your website, this training is for you. In this 90-minute session we go beyond the basics of creating pages and posts, and focus on additional features you may find useful. The WordPress Basics training is a prerequisite. Please email um.weboffice@maine.edu to register for one of the upcoming dates.

Friday consultations: Every Friday, 1:30–2:30 p.m., 2:30–3:30 p.m. (two 1-hour sessions)
January 7, 14, 21 and 28
Two 1-hour time slots are available every Friday afternoon at 1:30 and 2:30 if you are interested in a website consultation on any of our training topics, or simply want to review your website and brainstorm improvements. Email us at um.weboffice@maine.edu and we will work together to find a convenient available date. Zoom videoconferencing is available for these sessions.

Training topics by appointment

These training topics are available for our Friday consultations on request, and are held via Zoom videoconferencing.

Google Analytics Workshop

Do you know how much traffic your website receives? Have you looked at Google Analytics for your website and don't know where to start? Digital Communications can create interactive data reports or dashboards with your website's data using Google Data Studio. During the workshop we will work with your website to create filterable dashboards to represent your website data in a way that is useful and meaningful. Email um.weboffice@maine.edu to schedule this workshop for an upcoming Friday consultation slot.

UMaine Map Training

If you need to depict points of interest on campus, across the state, or around the globe, our UMaine map feature is worth exploring. In this training you will learn how to create individual map points, categorize map points together in a single map, and customize the map points by adding icons for easy visual identification. Please email um.weboffice@maine.edu to schedule.

SEO Workshop

What is SEO? This jargon is an abbreviation for "search engine optimization," and our SEO workshops will explain what you should focus on to improve how your webpages are found by users of Google, Bing and our own UMaine site search. Please email um.weboffice@maine.edu to schedule.

Using Monsido to Improve Your Website

The University of Maine System has provided a website tool to aid in the important task of managing the quality and accessibility of web content. Monsido scans UMaine websites, and interactive reports are available. If you want to learn more about Monsido's reports and how you may use its information to fix broken links, find misspellings, and discover where content updates are most needed, email mike.kirby@maine.edu to get started, and review your site's scan results.

Creating Accessible Content for the Web

Are you new to web accessibility and want to understand best practices for your website? Do you want to better understand how to write alt text, check color contrast ratios and provide an accessible PDF for download? Digital Communications is now offering a two-hour crash course in how to ensure your digital materials for the web and website are accessible. During the workshop we will go over accessibility tenants and have an opportunity to review some of the content on your website for accessibility. Please email um.weboffice@maine.edu to schedule.

Website consultations

Is your website helping you meet your goals? Do you want to make improvements, but do not know where to begin? We now offer "office hours" style website

consultation workshops, where we can meet to focus on your content and brainstorm improvements that can be made. Please email um.weboffice@maine.edu to schedule.

Accessibility and inclusion: updating Microsoft Office

Web accessibility has always been a requirement for UMaine websites, and has been a regular feature in our monthly newsletter. Ensuring your content is accessible is part of an inclusive communication strategy.

All university-provided computers have a license for Microsoft Office— is your copy of this software up to date? To find out, open one of your Microsoft Office applications such as Word, Excel or Powerpoint and select the "About Microsoft" menu item from the top drop-down menus.

Your software license should indicate that you are using a "Microsoft 365 Subscription." If you are using an older version of this software, we recommend you contact University of Maine System IT in order to update your machine. Older versions of this software will not have the latest accessibility features and updates.

For example, Microsoft Word 365 now includes an audio transcript feature—you can upload an audio file or record audio directly to Word, and the software will provide a transcript that identifies different voices in the recording (you will need to update to indicate who is speaking, but search-and-replace can make quick work of that task).

Information about Microsoft Word 365 Audio Transcriptions

Microsoft Office 365 at the University of Maine System

If you have any questions about web accessibility, or want to see us cover an accessibility topic in a future newsletter, please get in touch with us at um.weboffice@maine.edu.

We hope you have found this update from Digital Communications helpful.
Feel free to forward this newsletter to a colleague:

✉ Forward this newsletter

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