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UMaine Website Owners and Managers, January 2022 update

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UMaine Website Owners and Managers — January 2022 update

1 message

UMaine Digital Communications <um.weboffice@maine.edu>
Reply-To: UMaine Digital Communications <um.weboffice@maine.edu>
To:

Wed, Jan 19, 2022 at 9:59 AM



[View this email in your browser](#)

UMaine website managers

Community update • January 2022

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 um.weboffice@maine.edu

In this email:

- Welcome back for spring semester
- Update: Delay in VPN requirement for website editors working remote
- Web forms and notifications
- Trainings and consultations via Zoom
- Upcoming training dates
- Training topics by appointment
- Accessibility and inclusion: Accessible document checklist

[If you have a question you would like to see answered, let us know.](#)

Quick links:

- [User guide for UMaine websites](#)
- [Contact Digital Communications for support](#)
- [University of Maine System Digital Content Management guidelines](#)

Welcome back for spring semester

Winter break flew right by for us, and this week we welcome new students in for the spring semester. This is a good time to review the list of user who have access to edit your website and remove anyone who may have retired or graduated at the end of 2021.

To see the list of accounts with access to your site, select the "Users" link in the left column of your website dashboard. You may click "remove" on any user you want to remove, or email us at um.weboffice@maine.edu with a list of who you want to remove and we can remove them.

Update: Delay in VPN requirement for website editors working remote

The plan to require VPN connection for website editors working remotely on the website has been delayed after a brief test January 12-14. We will announce the new date for this change in a future newsletter.

We do recommend installing and using the campus VPN when working on your website, to ensure your work will not be disrupted when we do make this change again.

If you are working off campus and have not already installed the University System VPN, you may do so by following [these instructions from UMS IT](#).

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

Web forms and notifications

By default, any web form created on the UMaine and UMaine Machias websites have an email notification that will send a copy of each submission to a predefined address. These notifications can be useful for handling incoming requests. In order to make the most of your email notifications, we recommend the following:

Decide who should get email notifications

In some cases, no one needs to be immediately alerted when a web form is

submitted (for example, if the form is collecting feedback that is only reviewed at the end of a semester). If this is the case, you can turn off the notification altogether.

Most of the time you do want someone to be alerted when a form is filled out. There are three options you may use to specify the recipient of the "Send to Email" option: Enter Email, Select a Field, and Configure Routing.

Enter Email

You can specify an email address to receive the notification by updating the "Send to Email" field with an email address. **Please remove the {admin_email} placeholder when updating the notification to reduce unneeded email traffic.**

Select a Field

This option is appropriate to use when the notification should go to the person filling out the form, also known as an automatic response. **Your form must have an email field to use this option**, and we strongly recommend you require an email address for form submissions when setting up an auto-response.

Configure Routing

This allows a notification to be sent to different email addresses depending on values selected in the form. This is useful if your form collects information that may need follow up by different people.

Customize the "From" name and email in the notification

By default, a notification will be seen as coming from an email address associated with web form submissions. We recommend setting specific "from" information for your notifications:

- **Option 1: Use your name and email address** (or name and address of your department/group). This will ensure that anyone who clicks "reply" will have their message sent to you and not our web server's default address.
- **Option 2: Use the name and email address entered into the form.** This option is useful in that it allows you to click "reply" on an incoming email to respond to the person who submitted the form. If you use option 2, you must use the "Reply To" option to pick an email address from the form.

With either option, the "From Email" field must be an @maine.edu email address, as the emails are being sent from UMS servers.

Customize the "Subject" of the notification

By default, a notification has this as its subject line:

```
New submission from {form_title}
```

If left as-is, every email notification received will have the same subject line, which

may not be helpful for your inbox.

To improve this, we recommend adding a unique identifier (form variable) to the subject line. You may find a list of form variables by clicking the drop-down icon to the right of the subject line. In that list you will find your form's fields as you set them up. Adding the submitter's last name or company name may be helpful (as one example). If you are unsure of what to choose, the "Entry ID" option will add a number that is specific to that form submission.

For help in configuring your email notifications, consider our "**Beyond the basics**" website training where web forms are discussed, or email us at um.weboffice@maine.edu if you would like us to review your web form notifications with you.

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 20, February 3 and 17

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 27, February 10 and 24

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 21 and 28, February 4, 11, and 18

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](mailto: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: Accessible document checklist

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.

If your website has documents such as PDF, Word, Excel or Powerpoint files for download and viewing, those files must also abide by web accessibility standards. Adobe Acrobat DC offers an accessibility checker, and through the University of Maine System you can subscribe to this software at a cost of \$123 per year. If you subscribe to Adobe Creative Cloud, Adobe Acrobat DC is already included in that license.

The most straightforward way to ensure a PDF you create is accessible is to start with a document that has been created with accessibility in mind. For this reason we offer the following checklist that should help reduce problems with the documents

you create.

Accessible document checklist

- Use headings in descending order
- Add descriptive text to images unless purely decorative
- Check [color contrast guidelines](#)
- Numbered lists for when content is in order
- Bullet point list for unordered content
- Tables and graphs are clearly labeled and all data is represented in writing as represented in-image
- Links are clearly labeled
- Add page numbers
- Use sans serif fonts whenever possible (Calibri, Ariel, Helvetica, Verdana); be consistent with font
- Ensure the font-weight is heavy enough so that someone with low vision can read it
- Name files clearly to indicate the purpose
- Only use underline for links, not for emphasis
- Tables: Table headers must be used/turned on. Tables can only be used for tabular data. Do not use it for formatting. Break up complex tables into separate simpler ones if needed, with a header row for each
- Small text is at least in 14 pt font
- Large text is at least in 18 pt font

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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