

Colorado Water Conservation Board

IBCC Website Evaluation Document

11 September, 2009

Prepared By:

Access Data Consulting Corporation

Table of Contents

Evaluation of the IBCC Website	3
Overview:	3
Existing Website Log Analytics	3
First Impression	5
The Website and Data	6
Home Page	6
Home Page Focus.....	6
Home Page Body.....	6
Applications.....	6
Fonts and Text.....	6
Colors	6
Navigation	7
Links.....	7
Accountability	7
Dates of Updates.....	7
Recommendations.....	7
Additional Comments	8

Evaluation of the IBCC Website

Overview:

The current Interbasin Compact Committee (IBCC) website provides information primarily for the IBCC's Basin Roundtable members and those interested in decisions of the roundtables. This information is organized in a basin by basin structure. The home page contains the following: links to the events calendar, a "Website Updates" area, a basin map with hotlinks and a generic text area, with the main navigation including the Interbasin Compact Process and Choose your Basin. Clicking on each link takes the user to a landing page that provides overview information with a few links. Most links on the site open new pages that link back to the CWCB website.

The Choose your Basin links, on the home page, have a number of sub-menu items that are the same for each basin: Needs Assessment, Water Activities & the Water Supply Reserve Account, Subcommittees and Calendar. Each link has a landing page, which is mostly generic text and links to other pages. These links are consistent with the navigation links provided under each basin.

Existing Website Log Analytics

Review of the log files for the site (<http://ibcc.state.co.us>) over the past year reveals the following statistics:

PAGE VIEWING 8/10/2008 – 8/10/2009	
Unique Users:	4923
Visits:	8935
Page views:	32,243
Daily average visits:	24.41
Daily average page views:	88.1

BROWSER USAGE		
Internet Explorer:	68%	IE7.0 accounts for 63%
Firefox	23%	
Safari:	5%	

SCREEN RESOLUTION	
96% of the screens are 1024 x 768 or greater	
1024 x 768	29%
1280 x 1024	22%
1280 x 800	14%
1680 x 1050	7%
1440 x 900	8%

COLOR RESOLUTION	
32 bit color	86%
24 bit color	10%

CONNECTION SPEEDS	
Unknown	42%
T1	20%
Cable	18%
DSL	15%
Dialup	3%

First Impression

The organization, by basin, seems to fit the structure of the IBCC data and website well. The integration of the IBCC website into the CWCB site seems natural and appropriate. Utilizing Basins as a header for the integration initially made sense (Figure 1), however, further discussion with the individual sections of the CWCB and examination of the sites' content, the Basin header does not seem to fit.

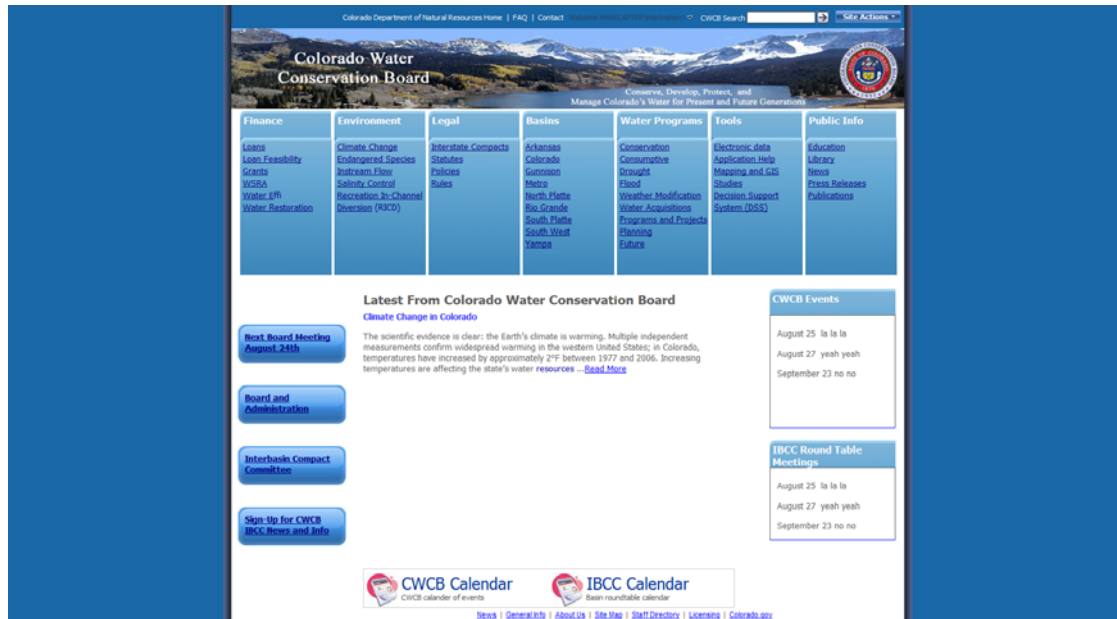


Figure 1: Sample home page

All menu headers that have been discussed serve as data holders or buckets that contain unique information; Basins would primarily be an area which would serve as an index to other data holders. The consensus from the CWCB sections suggests that menu headers would hold the basin specific information, and the Basin header would fit better under the IBCC-specific area of the website. In order to create a consistent interface, the Basin header should be moved under the IBCC area, which will be accessed from the IBCC button on the home page.

The Website and Data

Home Page

Home Page Focus

On the home page, the eye initially focuses on the image of the hand on the right side of the banner. The first menu that the eye focuses on seems to be the top menu with Home, News, Calendar, Water Education Links and Contact Us. The Interbasin Compact Process and Choose your Basin menus are focused on after the page is scanned.

Home Page Body

The text Colorado Water for the 21st Century is repeated three times on the first page and yet is not one of the top ten search engine queries. The only reason to repeat text is to achieve better search rankings.

The content on the home page is static text and creates little interest for return users.

Applications

The only application that has been identified for conversion is the Calendar. This application is currently a Visual Studio 2003 application (.NET 1.1) and will need to be converted to Visual Studio 2008 (.NET 3.5). This will be very similar to, or the same as, the conversion needed for CWCB website. The data entry portion of the application will remain the same, with only the user controls being converted and modified.

Fonts and Text

Text contrast and size is good for readability; however the left side menus, which have a reddish brown text (#810C1F), could be hard to read for some users. Overall, the 11 point font size is adequate for readability. The fonts are fixed size, which does not allow the user to resize the fonts. This is preferred, as the layouts will stay the same even if the user changes the font size. The font family is Verdana, which is provided by both PC and Mac and is available to all major browsers.

Colors

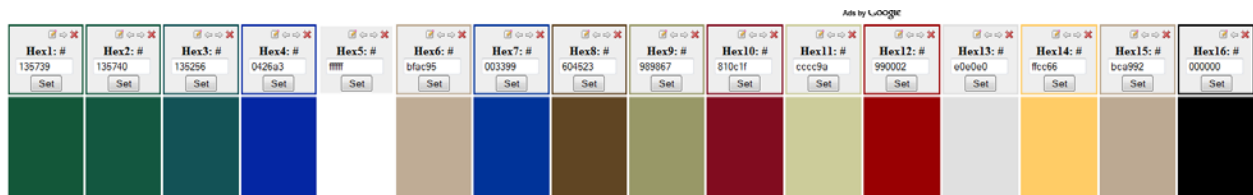


Figure 2: Colors used in the IBCC site

Figure 2 displays the colors currently used in the website. The colors are complimentary, but a many of the colors are very similar and should be consolidated. Overall the colors are neutral and calming.

Navigation

Navigation is consistent throughout the site, which helps make the site easy to navigate. The internal page menus have an overlap by the search button, which makes the menu header hard to read. Breadcrumbs are used throughout the site, which also helps the users navigate. The home menu item is available on all pages and is easy to locate.

Links

The links throughout the site seem well maintained; broken links are not an issue.

Accountability

Contact Us links are available on all pages, on the top header links menu and the footer links menu.

Dates of Updates

There are a few pages that track the date they were created or updated, such as meetings-related pages. Website best practices suggest dating any factual information maintained on the website.

Recommendations

1. Combine the IBCC and CWCB Sites:

There are a number of beneficial reasons to combine the sites.

- The IBCC site currently has less than one tenth of the visitors of the CWCB site, so additional exposure will be built in.
- Users of IBCC information will get the added benefit of being exposed to all the information provided by the CWCB.
- Almost all the data links in the current IBCC site open pages in the CWCB site; combining the sites will keep the user in a single site, which will ease the user navigation.
- Maintenance will be decreased with a single site.

2. CWCB Navigation for the IBCC:

- Navigation should be provided from a number of sources.
- IBCC events will be displayed on the home page, with links to the calendar.
- The IBCC calendar should be easily accessible from the home page.
- A button should be provided to get to the IBCC-specific area quickly. (The button should have a facsimile of the IBCC logo.)
- Data provided by the IBCC should be integrated into the menu areas of the home page and linked to from IBCC-specific pages.

- The CWCB/IBCC Insider subscription link should be available on the home page.
 - A Board & Staff menu category should be added to the CWCB home page, which will include links to IBCC members, Roundtables and staff.
3. Contact Us links should be maintained throughout the site and conform to the Contact Us standard that will be used for CWCB.
 4. Redundant, boiler plate page text should be removed as much as possible. Each page should have value and give the user pertinent information. Static information should be shortened to a paragraph and use a "Read More" link.
 5. Internal pages, available through the IBCC-specific area, should still be divided by basins.
 6. Fonts and graphics should follow the standards used by the rest of the CWCB site.
 7. Calendar application or control needs to be converted to the current .NET version 3.5.

Additional Comments

As this project progresses, additions and/or revisions to this document are expected.