



UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTHERN MAINE
Division of Information
and Technology

Request for Proposals

Web Information Architect

Libraries and Technology

Issue Date:

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Proposals Must Be Submitted By:

June 6th, 2011 12:00pm EST/EDT

Deliver Proposals To:

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Introduction

The University of Southern Maine is one of the largest of the seven campuses of the University of Maine System, as well as one of the oldest, with its founding in Gorham in 1878. USM is a major force in the overall growth and improvement of the economic, civic, social, and cultural fabric of southern Maine. From its hubs in Portland and Gorham, USM offers its 10,000 plus students more than 115 areas of undergraduate and graduate study.

Overview

While the USM Web Group has oversight over a small portion of “official” Web pages that make up the University of Southern Maine’s Web presence, the management of the content for the majority of the site is handled by Web site maintainers from departments and units across the University. This distributed system has presented a number of challenges in large part due to the fact that many of these Web site maintainers lack the training and technical skills necessary to effectively maintain their sites.

The University has recently completed a large-scale overhaul, in the form of a new information architecture for the University’s web presence. This architecture is very task oriented and user centric compared to its older hierarchical organization. The website, <http://usm.maine.edu/webcms>, details the process and new architecture as well as visual design being applied to all aspects of the University presence.

The University has selected Drupal as a base of its Web CMS platform and is currently implementing the new information architecture, design, and web authoring technology.

General Statement

The Libraries and Computing Services units of the University are now seeking a qualified Web Information Architect or Content Specialist (simply information architect henceforth) to extend its information architecture into the areas of Libraries and Technology. The information architect would assist in the University’s inventory of existing content, within Libraries and Technology. They would also work with the project team to identify the content categories and assist in the development of the sub-architecture. The information architect would bring past experience with educational Web sites, content management systems, and usability to the project.

Scope of Work

The information architect will help the University organize the Libraries and Technology sub-architecture so that users the best online experience possible. The scope of the project is to:

1. Survey, label, and organize existing content, as well as gain an understanding of why the content exists.
2. Develop the navigation system, menus, sitemaps, etc.
3. Map content to the appropriate section.
4. Create access points to content from different in-coming pages.
5. Capture the sub-site's design goals.
6. Recommend a sub-site architecture that helps the Libraries ad Technology areas meet the University's educational and business objectives in cooperation with the University's team.

Project Details

Portions of the content management system will begin to be implemented in the summer of 2011. The majority of the information architect's job is expected to be complete by July 31, 2011.

The Information Architect is expected to:

1. Meet library and technology web editors and publishers to collect inventory of existing content in concert with the project team.
2. Digest the content inventory and identify content categories or analyze, assess, and itemize the key categories of content by division and department.
3. Work with the project team to design sub-architecture for Libraries and Technology areas.
4. Have working knowledge of Web CMS'; specifically Drupal.
5. Outline concerns of any content migrated to CMS that is not accessible under Section 508 guidelines.

The information architect will report regularly to the project leader over the duration of the project.

The information architect is expected to produce:

1. Template for content inventory
2. Report of content inventory, regularly during the process
3. Final report of content inventory
4. Recommendations for information architecture that will improve usability, accessibility, and enhance the user's overall experience
5. Provide site maps of the content areas

Individuals or firms desiring to bid on this project should submit a proposal start work immediately.

Consultants have an obligation to disclose any situational of actual or potential conflict that affects their capacity to serve the best interest of the University of Southern Maine, or that may reasonably be perceived as having this effect. Failure to disclose said situations may lead to disqualification or termination of the Contract. The University of Southern Maine reserves the right to consider potential conflict in the selection process to include potential relationships that may affect the implementation solutions.

Firms must include the following with their proposals:

1. A fixed price or time and materials bid for the work specified;
2. Additional work recommendations as an addendum to the bid (optional)
3. Any scheduling, time, or location constraints.

All materials submitted should be in electronic form (PDF, Microsoft Word, or Microsoft PowerPoint).