

8 September 1997

Information Management: Automation

HOMEPAGES AND WEBSITES

Summary. This pamphlet addresses procedures for creating, posting, updating, and maintaining TRADOC organizational homepages and websites. It is intended to promote standardization of elements for websites, yet allow flexibility and creativity to display the unique missions, functions, organizations, and desires of commanders. Homepages are a perfect forum for commanders to fulfill their obligation to the American public and establish conditions to promote public confidence in the Army's readiness to conduct operations in peacetime, conflict, and war. This opportunity also carries the responsibility for ensuring that information posted to websites on the World Wide Web (WWW) meets the Army's public disclosure policies. This pamphlet was written in conjunction with TRADOC Reg 25-70, Network Services.

Applicability. This pamphlet applies to HQ TRADOC, and TRADOC installations, schools, and

activities that create and maintain homepages and websites on the WWW. It is provided as a guide to commanders, supervisors, webmasters and webauthors.

Suggested improvements. The proponent of this pamphlet is the Deputy Chief of Staff for Information Management (DCSIM). Users should send comments and suggested improvements, by electronic mail, in the format of DA Form 2028 (Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms), through channels to Commander, TRADOC, ATTN: ATIM-I, 102 McNair Drive, Fort Monroe, VA 23651-1047. Suggested improvements may also be submitted using DA Form 1045 (Army Ideas for Excellence Program (AIEP) Proposal). Electronic mail address: atimi@monroe.army.mil.

Availability. This publication will be distributed solely through the TRADOC Homepage (<http://www-tradoc.army.mil>).

Contents

	Paragraph	Page		Paragraph	Page
Chapter 1			Chapter 4		
Introduction			Maintenance of the Website		
Purpose	1-1	2	Posting	4-1	4
References	1-2	2	Updating	4-2	4
Explanation of abbreviations and terms ...	1-3	2	In-house or contract maintenance	4-3	4
Chapter 2			Chapter 5		
Creating Homepages and Websites			Restrictions on Posting Information		
General	2-1	2	Public disclosure	5-1	4
Content	2-2	2	Privacy	5-2	5
Layout	2-3	2	Copyrights	5-3	5
Hyperlinks	2-4	2	Endorsements	5-4	5
Use of images and graphics	2-5	2	Chapter 6		
Organization charts	2-6	3	Security		
Telephone directories	2-7	3	Passwords	6-1	5
Privacy/security notice and disclaimers ...	2-8	3	Firewalls	6-2	5
Sponsorship information	2-9	3	Routers	6-3	5
Registration	2-10	3	Encryption	6-4	5
Authoring tools	2-11	4	System accreditation	6-5	5
Search engines	2-12	4	Appendix		
Chapter 3			A. References		5
Website Personnel			Glossary		6
Webmaster	3-1	4			
Webauthor	3-2	4			
Systems Administrator	3-3	4			

Chapter 1 Introduction

1-1. Purpose. This pamphlet supports TRADOC Commander's Strategic Plan by describing a process to capitalize on today's information technology. As TRADOC transitions from the Air Land Battle doctrine to FORCE XXI, the WWW presents a new framework for creating, sharing, accessing, and managing information throughout the command. Used correctly, homepages enhance the Army's image, build public confidence, and provide a means for commanders to publish information for public access. Moreover, with the right security devices, the WWW offers a new vehicle in which the command can conduct official business.

1-2. References. Required and related publications are listed in appendix A.

1-3. Explanation of abbreviations and terms. Abbreviations and special terms used in this pamphlet are explained in the glossary.

Chapter 2 Creating Homepages and Websites

2-1. General. Creating a homepage is very similar to developing a publication. Determine the audience, consider what the audience needs to know, conduct research, develop the content, coordinate and get approval to publish, and post. It is important to remember, however, that the overriding consideration for posting information to a website is the audience. Another important factor is to keep the page fresh. Assigning a "deletion date" to new items posted to the website will ensure the information is removed when it is no longer current. Also, include the date the page was last updated. (See TRADOC Reg 25-70, paras 7 and 8, for guidance on establishing homepages and websites).

2-2. Content.

a. Websites should focus on providing value-added information services and products to the organization's users, customers, the Army, and the public through the sharing of accurate, timely, and relevant information. The content of the website reflects the mission and functions of the activity or installation. It should include the name of the organization, diagram, tenant activities, releasable policies and publications, postings of interest to other military activities, and points of contact with e-mail addresses for direct queries to the appropriate source of information. Point of contact information for the webmaster should also be provided.

b. The organization's leadership is responsible for the release of all information on the organization's

website. Draft publications and documents are unofficial, and should only be placed on the web after carefully addressing the intelligence and national security, public affairs, legal, and contractual issues pertinent to the public release of the draft information. If there is any doubt about the releasability of information, the public affairs officer should be consulted.

2-3. Layout. Consistency is the key to good website design. The homepage (first page) will set the stage for the scope and structure of the website.

a. Use the same basic layout (text and graphics) for the entire site, to reduce user confusion and improve site cohesion.

b. Provide logical navigation to related pages. Hyperlinks should be provided to minimize use of browser navigation buttons (i.e., back, forward).

c. Graphics, if used, should be an accent to text. The exception is when the graphic is the main focal point of the page, such as a map or slide presentation.

d. Organize information in a logical manner with emphasis on ease of navigation and importance of information. Keep pages short, be brief, and write clearly.

2-4. Hyperlinks. Hyperlinks allow users to click on highlighted text, images, or icons, and jump from one location to another. A well organized website offers easy navigation throughout, without the user getting lost. Links can be made internally within the same Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) document, externally to another document within the same homepage, or externally to another document outside of the homepage. Each page should provide an escape route to return the user to the top of the document, or back to the homepage, to minimize the user's reliance on navigational buttons on the browser (i.e., back and forward).

2-5. Use of images and graphics.

a. Images and graphics can be used to complement the text and enhance the appearance of your website. Banner graphics, logos, signature icons, or other graphic elements can help establish your identity and provide continuity between the various sections of the site. Standard graphic formats are the Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG), and the Graphic Interchange Format (GIF). There are many clipart libraries available and use of graphics from these is acceptable, but before using any graphic not created by the government, make sure that it is not copyright protected (trademark), or obtain permission to use it.

b. When using graphics on your website, include alternate text that identifies the graphic along with the image source file name. Should a visitor choose to view your site with images turned off, or their web browser does not load the image, the alternate text displayed will let them know what they are missing.

c. Image file size should only exceed 50k if the image is the main focus of the page (i.e., maps and slide presentations). If a large image is used, provide a thumbnail representation linked to the larger image or text link that indicates the size of the download. Users then have a choice whether or not to download the larger image.

2-6. Organization charts. Organization charts can be set up as separate items or in combination with telephone directories. Any hyperlinks embedded within the directory should be kept up-to-date with changes in the organization. A search feature that can search by name, function, and sub-elements within the organization could also be included.

2-7. Telephone directories. As a minimum, telephone directories should list the name of the commander/chief of the organization and at least one additional layer, including position. This information should be updated to reflect any changes in the organization (i.e., new arrivals, departures, reorganizations, telephone number changes, etc.). To ensure information is kept current, the webmaster or maintainer of the website should coordinate with their administrative office to ensure they are kept abreast of all changes. Procedures may vary with each organization, but one course of action could be to add the webmaster to the in- and out-processing checklist.

2-8. Privacy/security notice and disclaimers.

a. The approved DOD notice for use on websites open to the public is always included on Army websites. Refer to “Policy for Establishing and Maintaining a Publicly Accessible Department of Defense Web Information Service,” para 4.4, published by the Office of the Secretary of Defense, 18 Jul 97 (<http://www.dtic.mil/defense/defenselink/policy97.html>).

NOTE: Privacy/security notices can be distracting. An option could be to link the notice to an icon, button, or highlighted text (i.e., “Please read this privacy and security notice”) for viewing on a separate page. Avoid flashy graphics, “warning” signs, or other logos that create a misperception of danger.

b. A disclaimer used when items are posted that may not reflect the official position of the Army (such as posting a contributed article from Military Review, or Soldiers Magazine) could be:

“the views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army.”

c. Commercial advertising on official U.S. Army websites is prohibited. Corporate logos and trademarks (other than text or hyperlinked text) are considered commercial advertisements, and may not be served from official U.S. Army websites. When brand names are used, or linking to a vendor is needed, the homepage carries a disclaimer similar to the following:

“All links to non-U.S. Government sites or services are provided solely for your convenience. Use of such links on this website are not an endorsement of or warranty of the services provided by such sites, nor does the DOD exercise any responsibility over the content at such sites.”

d. Subscription to some links can subject you to receipt of advertising, the content of which the U.S. Army does not control. A disclaimer similar to the following could be used in this instance:

“(Insert name of your organization) and the U.S. Army do not endorse any products used in this website. Further, we have no control over the content or performance of such products.”

2-9. Sponsorship information. Each TRADOC installation website offers an on-line “welcome packet” which includes information about their local community and the installation. This information could include: housing, schools, medical facilities, child care, libraries, recreation, entertainment, shopping, employment, churches, etc. Since DOD activities and employees are prohibited from endorsing commercial products, services, and entities, linking to a commercial site may imply endorsement. As an example, linking to a local real estate firm could lead one to think the installation is recommending it as a source for housing. On the other hand, linking to all real estate firms would not. A better choice would be to link to a site that represents the local area and offers newcomers valuable information, without implying a recommendation of any specific entity (i.e., chamber of commerce or office of tourism). A general disclaimer should be included in such links (see para 2-8c).

2-10. Registration. TRADOC installation and major subordinate command homepages should be registered with the Army website (<http://www.army.mil/regist1.htm>), the TRADOC website (webmaster@emh10.monroe.army.mil), and Government Information Locator Service (GILS). GILS on-line submission forms are available at <http://www.dtic.mil/defense/defenselink> (look under “Search”).

2-11. Authoring tools. Software applications that tell the computer how to develop documents for a website are called authoring tools. The current language used is HTML. There are numerous products on the market that create the HTML tags for page design. For HTML documents, official U.S. Army websites support HTML 3.2 Reference Specification (World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Recommendation, 14 Jan 97) found online at <http://www.w3.org/pub/WWW/TR/REC-html32.html>. Selection of software to produce HTML is a personal preference provided the software meets the HTML 3.2 standards.

2-12. Search engines. Search engines can be loaded on your local server to index your site and provide the user a search capability. These search engines index from your links, so it is very important to annotate your links with clear, descriptive, and accurate labels.

Chapter 3 Website Personnel

3-1. Webmaster. The webmaster is one of three key individuals that contribute to the success of a website. Webmasters typically design, create, register, post, and update the website. This includes HTML tagging, graphics design, and search and download techniques for freeware. Some webmasters evaluate and recommend software, and develop and comment on policy pertaining to their website. The webmaster is not a subject matter expert on the content of the information posted to the web, and therefore is not the proper release authority. (See para 2-2 above).

3-2. Webauthor. The webauthor is the “document specialist” that converts raw data into HTML format. Using various HTML editor software, they structure documents applying the latest standards. Working along with the webmaster, webauthors may also post finished documents to the website, maintain HTML files, test links on active documents on the website, and ensure all files are current.

3-3. Systems Administrator (SA). A third key position, systems administrator, manages the file server on which the website resides. This technical person can put a PC into operation, load software, and connect PCs to a local area network (LAN). The SA is the chief trouble shooter and problem solver of a computer system, and usually has a thorough knowledge of operating systems, PCs, communications components, and the software applications that allow the system to work. The SAs may assign directory rights, permissions and passwords, configure

networks, detect intruders, purge files, eliminate viruses, instruct users, and generally any other function associated with the computer system and its security.

NOTE: Depending upon the scope and complexity of the website and available resources, the functions described above may be assigned to many individuals, or to just one.

Chapter 4 Maintenance of the Website

4-1. Posting. Posting is normally done by the webmaster or webauthor. New items posted or added to a website, whether a text document, graphic, or new link, should include a “new” icon, and the date of the homepage changed to reflect the latest modification or addition. Some software applications do this automatically. Webmasters must establish the procedures to remove the “new” icon from items which have been posted for an established period of time.

4-2. Updating. Each website requires regular updating. Attaching expiration dates to each item posted will assist in this effort. Each webmaster should request an expiration date from the provider of the information to be posted. Each page should also include the latest date the page was updated.

4-3. In-house or contract maintenance. Homepages and websites can be developed, designed, and maintained in-house or by contract. In those instances when resources, expertise, and training are not available, the services of a commercial website designer and/or maintainer may be desirable. There are numerous companies who currently provide automation services to TRADOC and the Army that also design and maintain websites. In these cases, a contract modification may be all that is needed and the cost may be less than a new statement of work and bid solicitation. TRADOC activities can request homepage demonstrations to determine a company’s ability to satisfy a requirement. Then, with the assistance of the installation contracting office, modify an existing contract or develop criteria for a separate contract.

Chapter 5 Restrictions on Posting Information

5-1. Public disclosure. The WWW is a public forum, and all information posted is considered Federal records. It is not the proper place for coordinating draft documents that contain raw data or sensitive information, e.g., “hot wash observations,”

“initial lessons learned,” or concept papers, unless security safeguards are in place. The following types of information are not placed on the homepage:

- a. Classified information.
- b. Privacy Act information.
- c. For Official Use Only (FOUO) information.

d. Unclassified information that requires special handling; i.e., Encrypt for Transmission Only (EFTO), limited distribution (LIMDIS), scientific and technical information protected under the technology transfer laws. The installation security manager can advise on the release of EFTO and LIMDIS information.

- e. Freedom of Information Act exempt information.

5-2. Privacy. Personal information subject to the Privacy Act of 1974 should be safeguarded to prevent unauthorized use, access, or disclosure.

5-3. Copyrights. A writing prepared by an Army soldier or civilian employee as part of that person’s official duties is not entitled to copyright protection. This official work is in the public domain. It may be copied or distributed by anyone. When a government employee uses copyrighted material as part of an official work, the copyrighted material must be identified and that portion is not in the public domain. Information on the Internet should be considered copyrighted unless there is a notice indicating the work is free from copyright restrictions.

5-4. Endorsements. DOD activities and employees are prohibited from endorsing commercial products, services, and entities. (See DOD 5500.7-R, para 3-209). Coordinate links to commercial or non-profit websites through the Staff Judge Advocate to avoid conflict with legal restrictions.

Chapter 6 Security

6-1. Passwords. The simplest and least effective means of protecting information on the Internet is through the use of passwords. Passwords must be randomly generated and changed at least annually for unclassified systems. To increase password effectiveness, it is recommended they be changed at least semi-annually. Password generators for unclassified systems must use the 36 alphabetic-numeric characters and be at least 6 characters in length. Passwords may not be distributed via e-mail or other electronic means unless encrypted. Use of password protection on Internet websites is ineffective given the global nature of Internet access. Therefore, use of passwords alone is not recommended.

6-2. Firewalls. The main purpose of a firewall system is to control access to or from a network or site. It implements an access process by forcing requested connections to pass through the firewall, where they can be examined and evaluated. Traffic to the website can be filtered by Internet Protocol (IP) address, protocol type, or user ID. A firewall system can be a router, a personal computer, a host, or a collection of hosts, set up specifically to shield a site or subnet from protocols and services that can be abused from hosts outside the subnet. A firewall system is usually located at a higher-level gateway, such as a site’s connection to the Internet; however, firewall systems can be located at lower-level gateways to provide protection for some smaller collection of hosts or subnets.

6-3. Routers. Routers are devices that select the path an electronic signal takes from the sender to the receiver. For the purpose of this pamphlet, routers can be used as a firewall to provide increased security for networks.

6-4. Encryption. Use encryption to secure the transmission of data listed in para 5-1 above. Software based encryption is recommended as this ensures the privacy of the information during transmission and still allows for broader connectivity to publicly accessible sites. However, if deemed necessary, hardware based encryption may be used.

6-5. System accreditation. The installation Directorate of Information Management (DOIM) can advise on the best network security device, and assist website/system administrators in developing a system accreditation package in conjunction with the Information Systems Security Manager (ISSM). The DOIM also ensures web servers it maintains are operated in accordance with the requirements outlined in the system accreditation. The ISSM is the primary advisor on Information System Security issues, and assists in determining acceptable risk by recommending appropriate security measures to be imposed on the system. The owner of the system provides oversight of daily operations to ensure compliance with the system accreditation.

Appendix A References

Section I Required Publications

DOD 5500.7-R
Standards of Conduct

DOD Web Policy “Establishing and Maintaining a Publicly Accessible Department of Defense Web Information Service”

AR 25-1
The Army Information Resources Management Program

AR 25-30
The Army Integrated Publishing and Printing Program

AR 25-55
The Department of the Army Freedom of Information Act Program

AR 340-21
The Army Privacy Program

AR 360-5
Army Public Affairs, Public Information

AR 380-5
Department of the Army Information Security Program

AR 380-19
Information Systems Security

TRADOC Reg 25-70
Network Services (Establishing and Registering Homepages and Websites: paras 7-8)

HTML 3.2 Reference Specification, WWW Consortium (W3C) Recommendation, 14 Jan 97

Section II

Related Publications

Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction CJCSI 6211.02A

TRADOC Strategic Plan

Glossary

Terms

Copyright

Exclusive legal right to publish, exhibit, record, project, or otherwise circulate literary material, information, sounds, images, or artwork.

Firewall

Any one of several methods of controlling access to a network usually achieved through two mechanisms: one which blocks traffic, and one which lets traffic through.

Freeware

Any application program software that is available at no cost.

Homepage

The entry page for access to a website.

Hyperlink

An electronic connection between one hypertext document and another.

Hypertext Markup Language (HTML)

Coding language used to create documents capable of being transmitted on the World Wide Web.

Internet

A global digital infrastructure connecting individual computers and many computer networks for the purpose of communicating and exchanging information.

Search engine

A software program capable of scanning databases and finding any item pertaining to key words or phrases entered in a query.

Systems Administrator (SA)

A person with technical expertise who manages a web server and the computer components of a website.

Uniform Resource Locator (URL)

The address for a particular website on the World Wide Web.

Webauthor

A person who creates hypertext documents to be posted to a website.

Webmaster

The person who administrates, oversees development, and maintains a website.

Webpage

An HTML document that is accessible through the World Wide Web.

Website

Location, in terms of a URL, for a collection of hypertext documents.

World Wide Web (WWW)

A wide-area hypermedia information-retrieval system providing hypertext access and viewing of information on the Internet.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

OFFICIAL: JAMES J. CRAVENS, JR.
Major General, GS
Chief of Staff



GARY E. BUSHOVER
Colonel, GS
Deputy Chief of Staff
for Information Management