To: All Heads of School/Institute/Section

Cc: Vice-Chancellor, Pro Vice-Chancellors, Executive Directors, Deans

From: David Rich, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) & Provost

Date: 15 March 2010

Subject: Web Management Improvements

Colleagues

I am writing to advise of the recent approval of a new University Web Policy and Web Publishing Guidelines. I encourage you and your staff to become familiar with the documents as they do affect ongoing operations.

Key elements of the Web Policy (http://www.utas.edu.au/policy/policies/ictp1.1.pdf) are:
- Identification of who must comply with the policy and guidelines
- Establishing a standard for publishing under the UTAS web domain.
- Explicitly identifying responsibilities for site authorising and approvals.
- Identification of mandated requirements.
- Reference to the Web Visual Standard.
- Reference to quality assurance.
- Explicit reference to legislative requirements and University requirements.

Key elements of the Web Publishing Guidelines (http://www.utas.edu.au/policy/guidelines/ictg1.1.pdf) are:
- Mandatory requirements for all UTAS websites including site ownership and authorisation and web addressing.
- Mandatory requirements for UTAS branding, the Web Visual Standards and associated design categorisation.
- Mandatory content standards including accessibility, legal and policy requirements.
- Recommended standards for best practice.

These documents form part of the University’s ongoing agenda of activity to further improve our management of, and approach to, the web as a primary service delivery environment. The agenda of activity is articulated through the University’s Web Services Strategic Action Plan (WSSAP) and oversighted by the Web Services Steering Committee (WSSC).

As a result of the above policy and guidelines, approvals and the undertaking of a more structured approach to management of the web, two operational imperatives are now being mandated:

1. Centralisation of domain name registration - All domain name registrations will be managed through University Web Services group and funded centrally.
2. **Central coordination of web development** - All web developments and modifications will be coordinated through University Web Services.

**Centralisation of Domain Name Registrations**

Domain name registrations are essentially web addresses ‘owned’ or ‘leased’ by the University. Examples include www.utas.edu.au, www.utas.org.au, or www.amc.edu.au.

Central management of these web addresses is necessary to address the following issues:

- Maintenance of a central register of web addresses as a crucial University asset.
- Maintenance of web address standards, i.e. a consistent approach to the construction of web addresses.
- Minimisation of duplication, i.e. addresses of the same meaning.
- Maintaining efficiency and cost effectiveness in the case of less reputable companies who may issue invoices against the University for existing web addresses, or bogus addresses. These may be inadvertently paid by departments or schools.
- Loss of details for domains due to staff turnover e.g. where an individual registers and tracks these addresses, then leaves the University.

**Central Coordination of Web Development**

Some web developments have been identified that do not comply with existing web publishing standards, and in some instances have been undertaken by companies which simply do not have the technical skill to deliver a product meeting those standards.

This has resulted in the presence of websites that effectively undermine UTAS’ reputation and/or pose an undesirable risk to the organisation (e.g. financial, legal) and the need for remedial work in some instances essentially doubling the development cost to the University.

A range of operational improvements are foreshadowed that will improve the overall approach to web development activities. These are:

- An enterprise web content management system (CMS) is under implementation that will continue across 2010. The introduction of a Web CMS will provide a robust web content management environment that will ensure improved management of web content particularly in the areas of presentation, relevance, currency and accessibility.
- Overall institutional outsourced web development is significant. Centrally coordinated procurement of these services will ensure optimal leverage of University purchasing power. This can be achieved through RFP processes and the establishment of a preferred supplier list.
- The establishment of a preferred supplier list enables communication and advice to these suppliers so that any development or modifications are compliant with University web publishing guidelines, visual standards and search engine optimisation strategies.
- University Web Services will maintain a list of preferred suppliers capable of meeting University standards.

The University recognizes the value of the web as a service delivery platform. This approach to coordination and registration of domain names will ensure that the University is best positioned for overall benefit with a recognisable, consistently branded and well designed web presence.

The primary contacts for the above activities are Melanie Pittard, Manager, University Web Services, and John Parry, Director, IT Resources.

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