

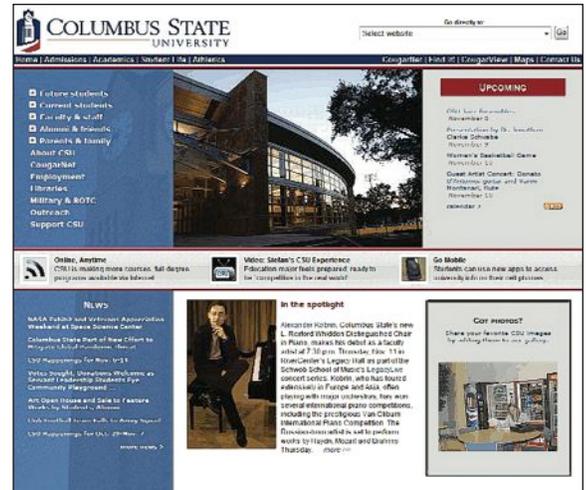
Case Study

Columbus State University Masters Multi-Site Management

Key Takeaways:

- Higher education institutions can setup and manage multiple sites with unique requirements using OmniUpdate's web content management system, OU Campus™
- OU Campus allows institutions to work with templates across multiple sites to provide design consistency
- Institutions can manage users, groups, and permissions for effective workflow in OU Campus

With nationally distinctive programs in the arts, education, business, nursing, and more, Columbus State University (CSU) provides a creative, deeply personal and relevant college experience. Serving the Southeast while attracting students from around the world, CSU thrives on community partnerships to deliver excellence for students who want to achieve personal and professional success in an increasingly global environment. Just 100 miles southwest of Atlanta, CSU was founded in 1958 and is a member of the University System of Georgia, enrolling more than 8,200 students in a wide variety of degree programs, from online degrees to a doctorate in education.



Multi-Site Madness

For CSU, the multitude of degree offerings brought about a plethora of university websites — 155 to be exact. Jay Knappe, Manager of Web Development at CSU, was looking to unify these sites to create consistency, share content, and enhance university branding. According to Jay, "The ability to effectively manage all of these separate sites can positively or negatively affect the institution's image and its ability to recruit students and influence parents, so it was important that CSU get this right." Columbus State successfully undertook this task, effectively bringing under management more than 125 separate websites using OmniUpdate's web content management system (CMS), OU Campus™.

Before implementing OU Campus, the CSU institutional website was a patchwork of separate college, department, and location sites. The small University Information and Technology Services Department, with only three staff members and three student assistants, could not keep up with the demand for service. Individual websites were easily corrupted. Anyone who tried to edit the content of a page had access to the entire page's HTML. And those who had little knowledge of HTML could accidentally modify a small piece of code, which would then translate into a major site inconsistency.

Gaining Control through CMS Implementation

When OU Campus was implemented, six basic templates were created using CSS to control the color and graphics. The CMS users were given an account and then assigned to a group. Groups were then assigned to the sites they were allowed to manage and maintain. The organizational structure used to keep the sites orderly consisted of a series of folders, with all basic templates being stored in a master folder. The easy-to-use templates provided CSU's sites with a cohesive look. The folder set-up allowed for easy management of various sites related to the university, while only letting select people have site permissions. Finally, a customized CMS WYSIWYG toolbar to control editing options was provided to the groups and users. Thus, site inconsistencies were reduced and effective workflows were enhanced.

Today, CSU has more than 250 content contributors using OU Campus. Overall, the CMS has allowed the university to improve site appeal to prospective students and parents, make navigation around the site easier, and create a more effective workflow management system for CSU staff.

OU Campus implementation led to reduced site inconsistencies and enhanced workflows.