re.web at the College of William and Mary
Transcript of: "It's got a good beat, but I don't think I can dance to it."

Thanks for tuning into the 10th episode of the re.web podcast. I'm Susan Evans and this is Thursday, January 10, 2008.

Long, long ago, in a galaxy far, far away – there was a TV show called *American Bandstand*. And instead of showing a web design, Dick Clark played a song. Back in the day, feedback went something like this: "It's got a good beat, but I don't think I can dance to it."

We've had some fun since our last podcast – about a week ago, we went public with the three designs we're considering for the W&M home page. It was exciting and a little scary. But we knew the time was right - we were very anxious to show off the designs, so we gulped and posted the link on our blog.

The response to the three designs couldn't have been better. And I say that not because you loved all three designs but because I am encouraged by your thoughtful and sincere reactions. 52 comments later and we know that almost without exception, you think we're moving in the right direction.

One of you who commented on the blog wrote, "Could we shop these out to a random sample of applicants for review?" The answer is yes, we can. And, if fact, yes we have. With some help from Joel Pattison in IT, and Henry Broaddus and Robin Davis in Admission, we sent a survey to 1,600 current high school juniors and to all of the current high school seniors who were admitted to W&M under early decision in December.

Using the survey, we followed Dick Clark's model – we played the songs and interviewed the teenagers to find out what they thought. So I guess you want to know what the 17 and 18 year old prospective students had to say – did they like the beat? - do they think you can dance to them?

Well, the survey responses showed that early decision students liked concept one and concept three. In fact, they liked 1 and 3 almost equally. So that leaves us wondering … is concept two one you can't dance to? During the time the survey for prospective students was in the field, we were also showing the designs to about 100 individuals on campus. A lot of you liked the beat of concept two, but we've heard from many of you that the colors are too dark and that the design is a little drab.

Soon, we'll post more info on our blog about what prospective students thought of the designs. For now, we're thinking that concepts one and three are the frontrunners. But for you concept two fans out there, we're thinking of using its device of student headshots and profiles in other parts of the W&M site, even if we don't use it on the home page.

Maybe some of you are wondering - whatever happened to Dick Clark? According to my friend and colleague Joe McClain, he's still on TV. Thanks for listening. Until next week.