

re.web at the College of William and Mary
Transcript of: “Good Choices Are Made from Good Options”

Hi again on Thursday, January 24, 2008. This is the weekly re.web podcast hosted by me, Susan Evans.

The re.web project team needs your help to select the right web content management system for W&M. After almost a year of reviewing and evaluating dozens of different products, we're asking W&M web editors to consider two options – Hannon Hill's Cascade Server and RedDot CMS. Yes, I said a year – nobody can ever say we rushed into this purchase.

If you're still not sure exactly what a CMS is, I recommend the re.web blog – it includes a series of posts by Andrew Bauserman about the features and benefits of using this specialized software to maintain web sites. Andrew puts his W&M education to good use and has created six entertaining and informative blog entries about the inner workings of CMS products. I think we're the only blog in the blogosphere that references "Weird Al" Yankovic or Rowan Atkinson in posts about web content management systems.

But then again, maybe you have to see one to understand it. We're convinced that the demonstrations we have planned for today will give you a clearer picture of how you'd use a CMS for maintaining your own departmental web site.

But back to the CMS choice. Even if you have been following our blog discussion about CMSs, and even if you plan to come to one of the product demonstrations we have scheduled, I'm thinking you won't envy us having to make the final choice between Cascade Server and RedDot.

Making a choice of this magnitude can be a little scary. After all, there are nearly 400 faculty, staff, and students at W&M who have the permissions to edit pages on the W&M web server. That means a few hundred folks who'll use this new system, and to be frank, we want most of them to like what we end up with.

As you see Cascade Server and RedDot CMS in action today, we think you'll agree that both have pluses and both have minuses. And both could be used to help us launch a fantastic new web site. Even so, we're going to ask you to fill out a scorecard after the two demonstrations.

Maybe after you attend the demonstration, the choice will seem easy. In the days that follow, the re.web project team will review your comments and we'll have to make a decision. Most people hate to decide, they avoid making a choice. Luckily for us, “good choices are made from good options.” I use this cliché - “good choices are made from good options” - because I think it describes our current circumstance. We're deciding between two alternatives, and both are of the highest quality. I'm going to take comfort in that.

Thanks for listening. Until next week.