

HPC-SIG Website design notes

The current HPC-SIG Website (<https://hpc-sig.org.uk>) is built and developed in Wordpress. There has been a significant upgrade to the structure and format of the site with a number of new categories developed in the past two years, but there is still relatively little content.

It's not just the responsibility of the SIG executive to create and develop content; we would hope that a relaunch would encourage members of the community to contribute content in a way that we have a pipeline of relevant and engaging content of both a technical and non-technical nature.

There is some degree of 'competition' here- some similar content is found on both the UK-HPC <https://www.hpc-uk.ac.uk> Website and the SSI <https://www.software.ac.uk> already. We'd need to carefully consider where the new resource is positioned relative to these (and other) resources.

Backend and infrastructure

Although developed in Wordpress, more and more 'modern' sites of this nature are now developed through an 'agile' toolchain. Github pages and Jekyll, building a responsive flat HTML site is one way of accomplishing this.

This will have the benefit of being able to rapidly develop and integrate new content and easily allow community contributions.

Potential contributors could, for example, develop a blog post in Markdown via a Github pull request allowing rapid integration into the site.

Allowing an easier way to make contributions is one thing, but developing a culture of collaboration and contribution is another.

Design

To a point, website look-and-feel ('User Experience') is quite personal and we could easily get distracted with what 'looks right'. We could, for example, have some professional input to design a new logo and a simple, responsive Jekyll template.

In terms of categories (or top level menu items) we could simplify this down to the following:

- About us (including member institutions)
- Blog/ Technical Articles/ Publications
- Research Software Engineering
- Training/ Outreach/Meetings
- Contact

Recommendations/Actions:

Community action- there are a few people who have expressed an interest in working on this. Having a defined plan and starting point might make it easier to engage with people.

Work plan

1. Determine whether we want to stick with Wordpress or move to an agile development model
2. Engage with design consultancy re. logo design and new template (whether Wordpress or Jekyll)
3. Determine menu categories (the fewer the better)
4. Migrate existing content where still relevant
5. Develop plan for new content and for the first year, aim to develop one new technical article/ blog post per month.