

National Aeronautics and
Space Administration
Office of the Administrator
Washington, DC 20546-0001



May 15, 2019

TO: NASA Workforce
FROM: Administrator
SUBJECT: Web Site Modernization and Enhanced Security Protocols

Every day we communicate NASA's life-changing accomplishments in science, exploration, and discovery. As an Agency, we have much to be proud of – our content is compelling, visually appealing, and reaches millions of viewers around the globe, making us one of the most popular brands on the planet. Yet, our online and strategic communications efforts have not evolved at a speed that appropriately protects our Agency's assets or best represents our brand.

Currently there are an estimated 3,000 public-facing NASA Web sites, yet the top 10 sites receive 80 percent of all Web traffic. Additionally, some NASA partners operate Web sites on our behalf outside of the Agency, creating redundancy and accumulating unnecessary costs. Not only does this duplication of information cause confusion, each Web site provides potential access for a cyber-attack on NASA's assets.

The shutdown earlier this year gave us a clear view of the cyber vulnerabilities inherent in operating thousands of Web sites. We need to take steps to protect our resources in a hostile cyber landscape, examine our digital footprint, reduce costs, and maximize the effectiveness of communications efforts. In addition to security risk, multiple sites dilute our effectiveness in communicating key messages about our missions.

This effort to reduce the number of public-facing Web sites will also enable NASA to move toward full compliance with the 21st Century Integrated Digital Experience Act (IDEA). Signed into law on Dec. 20, 2018, the Act requires agencies to exercise governance over their Web sites and ensure legacy Web sites are regularly reviewed, eliminated, and consolidated.

ACTION:

I am calling for a full modernization of NASA's digital presence to best reflect the priorities and activities of the Agency in this new era of science, discovery, and exploration. To accomplish that we will:

1) Create a team to evaluate and consolidate Web sites

I have asked the Associate Administrator for Communications (OCOM), Bettina Inclán, and the Chief Information Officer (OCIO), Renee Wynn, to do a full review of NASA's Web

footprint and digital presence. They are tasked with improving these resources for the entire Agency, making communications more effective, strengthening our technological and cyber security capabilities, while reducing costs for the Agency. Their top objective is to create a process to consolidate NASA Web sites and help lead a redesign of NASA.gov. I expect this effort to result in an enhanced cyber posture and an improved focus for communicating our messages.

Bettina and Renee will assemble a team to evaluate all of NASA's Web sites and provide a plan for consolidation across the Agency. The team will immediately review the entire Agency's digital footprint that will include universities and other affiliated Web sites. They will follow up with more specific plans to address the ongoing cyber threats and how OCOM and OCIO can best work together to counter these issues, maximize resources, and provide a better platform to communicate NASA's story.

2) Comply with the IDEA Act

The deadline for all newly created Web sites and digital services to comply with the IDEA Act is **June 18, 2019**. Going forward, all Government Web sites must have a consistent appearance and not overlap or duplicate existing sites and services. The law also calls for an increase in analytics and metrics.

3) Enact a moratorium on new Web sites

In order to meet these goals, effective immediately, there is an indefinite freeze on creating any and all new NASA Web sites. This includes programs, projects, Centers, Mission Directorates and institutions creating Web sites in the nasa.gov domain, and contractors creating sites in the *.edu, *.org or any and all other domains.

4) Web site redesign

NASA.gov needs a refresh. For many of our NASA storytellers and creative communicators, the resources on this aging design limit their possibilities and ingenuity. Because of this, and more, NASA.gov will undergo a major redesign in 2019. A new NASA.gov will allow for more compelling content, better design, and additional innovative opportunities and stronger cyber security features.

In collaboration with current site owners, the redesign of NASA.gov will result in the development of a new and expanded suite of site templates, tools, and features that will integrate content from other NASA sites into the Agency's enterprise Web site as part of this consolidation process. The redesign will include important existing infrastructure and include Google Analytics metrics (a requirement for all Federal Web sites), an approved security plan, scalable bandwidth, a content management system, 508 compliance, and a responsive design for mobile devices.

Moving forward, resources should focus on content and protecting NASA from cyber incidents. Visitors to the NASA home page should easily understand and see the breadth of NASA's mission and benefits to society. The goal is to consolidate all NASA content intended for the public under one Web site, www.nasa.gov. As always, this enterprise site is a service provided to the entire Agency.

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The new NASA.gov will be the primary site for Agency news, in-depth reference information on missions, and other topics intended for external audiences. Moving compelling content from separate subdomain Web sites to NASA.gov will be encouraged, and for some content, required.

BUILDING THE TEAM:

If you or any members of your team want to provide feedback or would like to participate in this process, please reach out to Bettina and Renee.

We look forward to working with you to protect NASA assets and help modernize the digital experience for the public and our partners. This is an exciting opportunity to refresh and modernize NASA's digital presence and ensure we have the tools that best represent the NASA brand. With your support, this effort can have a positive and powerful impact in expanding NASA's reach, highlighting the good work being done by our NASA team and improve our cyber security.

Thank you in advance for working together to keep NASA's assets secure and ensuring continued success in communicating NASA's story.



James F. Bridenstine