Information Technology

Managing information technology at NA World Services is no small task. The transitions from the paper-based information management and communications of our earlier days to greater utilization of electronic systems have been steady and gradual over the past ten years. We have a number of differing types of information and communications, often with various types of populations—our members and trusted servants, groups and service committees, and nonfellowship-customers, both professionals and the general public. Working with the various preferred methods of communication and information management used in different places throughout our fellowship, and striving at all times to be extremely cautious with information about our members, requires ever-increasing levels of flexibility, constant attention to security, and a generous amount of attention to detail. A few years ago we realized that we would have to institute major upgrades in three vital areas: accounting software and our shopping cart; the database that holds all of the information we have about our membership, meetings, service structure, and fellowship events; and our website, which has been in need of revamping for some time. We started major work in all three areas this past year. These various projects are so interdependent that they require work to take place in stages, each step forward on one front depending on adequate preparation on other fronts. We have high hopes that together, these steps will result not just in a more streamlined process of managing world services' information, but also in greater responsiveness to the growing needs of our fellowship.

For a number of reasons, the database transitions have not been as smooth as we had hoped. This has resulted in delays not only to the implementation of the website redesign, but also to testing and bringing online some new programs using the new database model. Still, while the overall website

redesign is not yet live, we have added new sections to the existing website throughout the year in an effort to make certain types of information more accessible. These all come as part of our continued efforts to make more use of the website for ongoing communication with the fellowship at large. For example, we have used the website to share conference preparation materials, notes from the literature distribution and convention workshop, and session profiles, and we have collected information with the membership survey and the medallion survey. We plan to continue using the website for two-way communications like these whenever possible. Be sure to check back often to see what is new.

Literature

We have continued to see success with the electronic publication of NA literature on the na.org website. As reported in the last annual report, the Basic Text went online during the 2006–2007 fiscal year. In December 2007 we went live with an electronic subscription service for *Just for Today* daily meditations. At the time this report is being written, these meditations are being sent to over 14,000 addresses each day. We have followed on those successes with the posting of literature in an additional four languages on the website, including Afrikaans, Indonesian, Nepali, and Thai. That brings the count of languages for which we have online literature to thirty-six. Additionally, not long after the end of the 2007–2008 fiscal year, we went forward with publishing the complete *It Works: How and Why* online, and shortly after the Sixth Edition Basic Text went into distribution, we put that online as well.

Local committees often express interest in making NA literature available through their websites, which for some time could not be accomplished while adhering to the *Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust*. With so much literature now online at na.org, many communities have begun to link directly to the files for various pieces of literature, or even to embed the files directly into their pages through the use of inline frames. We heartily support these approaches, which help local communities make our literature more widely available while honoring the guidance offered in the *FIPT*.

Public Relations, Service Materials, and Issue Discussion Topics Pages

A couple of relatively new additions to the na.org website include the Public Relations page and the Service Materials page. These pages provide centralized locations for convenient navigation to a variety of commonly used resources. The Public Relations page, for example, offers direct links to both selected chapters from the *PR Handbook* and the handbook in its entirety, as well as the resource materials developed for each chapter and a number of other items that are typically used in PR efforts. Similarly, the Service Materials page provides a single place to go for service pamphlets, bulletins, handbooks, locally-developed resources, and many other useful resources to assist in various service endeavors. Additionally, we opened a new service-based discussion board area and created a main entrance page for all of the discussion areas: issue discussion topics, service discussions, and conference participant boards.

Finally, we also implemented a similar type of page for the Issue Discussion Topics. Since the inception of the process of issue discussion topics, we have regularly published articles on the various topics as the discussions have taken place. This page provides easy access to the existing materials for each of these topics, as well as some of the general materials to help with holding local workshops. All of these pages represent a glimpse ahead at the types of changes that will come with the implementation of the website redesign.

More Will Be Revealed...

Because the rollout of the database hasn't happened exactly as we had hoped, the rollout of the website redesign will happen in stages, the first of which we expect to take place in early 2009. Full integration with the new database will occur shortly after the database transition is complete. In addition to all of these other changes, this year saw increased investment in our hardware infrastructure, including six new servers. Some of these replaced aging servers, while others were necessary for testing and implementation of the new database. Additionally, in anticipation of greater website traffic—we already exceed 5,000,000 hits per month—the redesigned website will be hosted entirely from the Chatsworth office, running on a T3 connection. We are looking forward with excitement to the implementation of the much-anticipated website redesign, which we are sure will be greeted with great enthusiasm.

Some helpful web locations to remember:

Issue Discussion Boards

http://www.na.org/discussion_boards.htm

Upcoming Events

Locally hosted: http://www.na.org/comingup-toc.htm or
NAWS events: http://www.na.org/nawsevents/event-reg.htm

Local Service Committee Resources

http://www.na.org/local_resource_area.htm

Service Material

http://www.na.org/servicemat/service_material.htm

Sign-up for E-subs

http://portaltools.na.org/PortalTools/subscriptions

At the time of this printing our new website was in beta-testing stage.
If any links in this report do not work for you, please refer to the "How to use the site"
page on the new website to help you find your way around.

...As our commonly held sense
of the highest aspirations that
set our course, our vision is our
touchstone, our reference point,
inspiring all that we do.
Honesty, trust, and goodwill are
the foundation of these ideals.
In all our service efforts, we rely
upon the guidance of a loving
Higher Power.