

WEBSITE PROPOSAL FOR

OFFICE OF EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY



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OUR PROPOSAL

1. EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

Thank you for the opportunity to propose a state of the art suite of e-business solutions aimed at improving brand recognition, enhancing your site's usability, administration options, scalability and functionality. The solutions and architectures presented in this proposal are web based thereby allowing you to quickly respond to change as these systems evolve.

In this report we are proposing transferring the existing content and design from <http://web.mit.edu/oeit/> onto a new Drupal based platform. CommonPlaces will then reproduce the current website so that it looks like the old website. The content, design and navigation will be the same as the old site to have a consistent look and feel. The new website will allow staff members to create a profile which will list any contact info, projects, links etc. Site administrators will be able to easily create and set permission levels, privacy settings for different types of content, approve and authenticate users while setting their users permissions levels, and add or remove content at will.

This new Drupal platform will serve as a Content Management System that will be easy to manage. The Drupal CMS has an excellent ability to integrate blogs, forums and discussion groups into one, easy to use platform. This is in part why Drupal is the number one software choice among many Social Networking platforms. Administering the site and even adding new modules is easy for someone who might not have a programming or technical background. The expansion of additional features and functionality within the Drupal CMS is much easier due to Drupal's large community which provides large amounts of documentation for the thousands of existing modules.

This software solution utilizes a Search Engine architecture based on SEO-friendly Cascading Style Sheets (CSS). CSS based websites load incredibly fast, provide accessibility to visually impaired people, and provide for site wide color and font changes from a single access point. Our layout will utilize cascading menus for simple navigation throughout the site. The design will be essentially tableless insuring optimal SEO. Our layout will utilize cascading menus for simple navigation throughout the site.

All of the content that exists on the current OEIT website will be migrated to the new platform. This content includes the content from the blogs as well as the website, which will all be transferred into the new Drupal platform so that it looks and acts similar to the current system. This will be done in a manner that ensures that the content is not disorganized or lost. When this project is completed it will be on a superior platform that is easier for end users and administrators to use. The new platform will also be faster, more scalable, extremely expandable and will be built on a state of the art platform that is supported by one of the largest communities of developers in the world.



2. ABOUT YOUR PARTNER, COMMONPLACES

CommonPlaces e-Solutions, LLC (CommonPlaces) offers businesses a dependable, high-quality alternative to in-house resources for implementation of e-business solutions that support and enhance their business objectives. We offer a very high level of practical experience, know-how and creativity. Our customers have come to realize that working with CommonPlaces is a more professional, cost-efficient, and less risky way to develop new e-business solutions.

Our mission is to become our clients' e-business *partner*, enabling them to stay ahead and take full advantage of the vast but ever-changing business opportunities spawned by the Web. **We specialize in moving companies to the next level of business efficiency and profitability.** We do this by forming a strong, strategic partnership with you so that we can better understand your business, your customers, and the industry that you serve.

Your e-business initiative can be an enormously powerful weapon in your corporate arsenal. It can also be ineffective and a huge waste of money if it is not implemented in a manner consistent with your business objectives. At CommonPlaces, we work closely with you to develop and implement the proper e-business strategies. No matter how simple or complex, we have the capability and creativity to deliver an e-business infrastructure that's right for your company. CommonPlaces provides a unique and valuable approach to the Web because we are able to combine strategic, creative, and technological expertise in one convenient package. In a world of Web designers who provide creative designs, developers who build technology solutions, and marketing consultants who provide business strategy, CommonPlaces is able to deliver you all three. The result is a Web solution that is stable, attractive, and poised for success.



CommonPlaces was originally founded in 1998 to provide web solutions in the young adult market. In 2000, CommonPlaces and Network Event Theater merged to form YouthStream Media Networks, Inc. then made Ben Bassi its President. The CommonPlaces division developed 250 online communities and websites for the Young Adult Market. The CommonPlaces platform included secure instant messaging, publishing, syndicated content, auctions, e-commerce, and user registration. CommonPlaces operated and published www.sixdegrees.com, www.teen.com, and www.mybytes.com, with over 2 million registered users. Alloy, Inc. acquired the assets of YouthStream in 2002 and Bassi acquired CommonPlaces in 2003.

Our goal is to combine superior design with leading-edge technology and user-driven functionality – quickly and at an affordable price! We provide a complete solution and take care of all of the details.

CommonPlaces boosts your e-business by providing . . .

- Interactive Marketing to **deliver** targeted qualified traffic.
- A Professional Website to **build** creditably and trust.
- e-Business Solutions to **solve** the buyer's problems.
- e-Commerce to **convert** prospects to customers.
- e-Fulfillment to **deliver** products.



- Back Office Integration to **optimize** your business.

We continue to enhance our offerings as we identify new technology. Our services include, but are not limited to:

Marketing	Website Development	e-Business Solutions
Search Engine Optimization	Premium Web Site Design	e-Commerce
Affiliate Marketing	Logo Design	Content Management (CMS)
Directory Submission	Flash Design	e-Customer Support
Electronic Newsletters	Streaming Audio & Video	e-Product Support
Internet Advertising (PPC)	Image Optimization	e-Fulfillment
Direct Marketing	Statistics / Reports	Inventory Management
Brochures / Sales Sheets	Hosting	Calendar / Scheduling
Referral Marketing	Domain Registration	Blogs / RSS
Competitive Analysis	Website Maintenance	Back Office Integration

2.1 ABOUT BEN BASSI

Ben Bassi, founder and CEO of CommonPlaces, is a seasoned Internet veteran and marketing executive. As the Chief Operating Officer of the Firefly Network, the Web's first personalized community, he led the company's efforts in developing e-business and privacy solutions for companies like Barnes & Noble, Cendant, MasterCard, Marriott, Proctor & Gamble, and Yahoo! During this time, Bassi also helped to pioneer Internet privacy standards while working with the Federal Trade Commission, Microsoft, and Netscape.



As one of the first business executives of Lycos, Bassi was responsible for creating many of the first portal traffic agreements in the industry, and licensing the Lycos portal technology to over 35 companies internationally, including GTE, Microsoft, Netscape, Time Warner and Viacom. Bassi also directed Lycos' joint venture with Bertelsmann, publishing over 50 Internet books. Prior to Lycos, Bassi was VP of North America at Object Design, ranked number one on 1994's "INC. 500" List.

2.1.1 BEN BASSI'S WEB DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE

Ben Bassi has a proven track record on the Web. Here are just some of the companies to which Bassi has delivered marketing and e-business solutions over the course of his career:



Ben Bassi's Internet experience dates back to the early '90s, when as VP of Sales for Object Design he directed several projects for IBM and the federal government. His first project was developing a command and control center used by the Armed Services in Desert Storm. Below are some examples of early Web development projects he directed as COO of the Firefly Network and VP of Business Development at Lycos, Inc:

- Provided hosted Web services for: MSN 1.0, Prodigy, CompuServe, AT&T WorldNet, Sprint, GTE Super Pages, Blockbuster Video, and MTV Music Guide.
- Built the Firefly Network, one of the Internet's first personalized communities.
- Launched My Yahoo!, the Internet's first personalized webpage.
- Created online business-to-business directory for Dunn & Bradstreet.
- Provided off-line Web search catalog for Corel Software.
- Organized a joint venture with Bertelsmann and AOL to deliver online service.
- Partnered with Macmillan Computer Publishing to published 50 Internet guides.
- Provided the infrastructure for Barnes & Noble's initial e-commerce website.

2.2 COMMONPLACES PROJECTS/CLIENTS

As diversified as our clients are, they all have one thing in common (in addition to choosing to partner with CommonPlaces!). They were each looking to take their e-business to the next level of success. After partnering with CommonPlaces, they are all on their way to increased traffic and conversions. Some examples of our work include:



NSCS – The National Society of Collegiate Scholars – <http://www.nscs.org>



The National Society of Collegiate Scholars (NSCS) is an honor society inviting high-achieving freshmen and sophomores. They sought out CommonPlaces to create a fresh new look for their website, teamed with the powerful, easy to use content management Drupal provides. Alongside the stylish design, a major amount of integration with partnered technologies was necessary, providing a single sign-on service, up to date scholar and chapter information, and connections to the NSCS storefront.

MIT – <http://www.vpf.mit.edu/>



This site allows the VP for Finance Office to post policies, procedures, forms, resources, and publications for access by the MIT community. It includes a sophisticated content architecture, sleek design, and uses HTTPS to protect sensitive content. The system includes a robust intranet to support the content maintainers and system administrators, as well as a strong dual-layered backup. CommonPlaces also designed the MIT server center to provide the ability to quickly troubleshoot by taking a quick snapshot of the production environment simulating actual situations.

Greenopolis – <http://www.greenopolis.com/>





Greenopolis.com is a 100% Drupal site utilizing over 200 contributed modules, including customized modules for points, rewards, badges, and more. Greenopolis.com is a "green," educational community that brings together individuals, communities, organizations, and corporations to make positive environmental changes in their daily lives and communities. Through Greenopolis.com, people can make informed, sustainable changes in their behavior and the environment.

Staples Internal Fulfillment – www.staples.worldfulfillment.com



Our solution for Staples included a familiar, friendly order processing web site/shopping cart and real-time inventory access. The site was used by the Staples sales team to order and deliver marketing materials to 53 different field offices. The solution included a customizable address book for 100 sales individuals and the ability to ship to multiple addresses.



FundTech – http://www.fundtech.com/	
	Fundtech Ltd is a leading provider of software solutions and services to financial institutions around the world. The project tasks were outsourced to three different organizations, a design firm, a content entry team, and CommonPlaces, who handled the CMS development. CommonPlaces created the content structures and architecture, described them for the content entry team, and integrated the design, on time and within budget
Rasmussen Reports – http://www.rasmussen.com/	
	Rasmussen Reports is an electronic publishing firm specializing in the collection, publication, and distribution of public opinion polling information. CommonPlaces took the design from RasmussenReports.com, integrated it into a CMS, developed supporting training materials, and trained the client team. The training encompassed the full development cycle of content class identification, the template architecture, template language, and key considerations when building a site.
UMASS Toxics Use Reduction Institute – http://www.turi.org	
	The Toxics Use Reduction Institute (TURI) at the University of Massachusetts Lowell hired CommonPlaces to upgrade and re-architect its website. The website provides tools, events, databases, and research focused on finding safer alternatives to toxic chemicals. CommonPlaces is currently integrating the University's payment system through a custom e-commerce module and gateway.

2.3 COMMONPLACES AS A DRUPAL DEVELOPER

CommonPlaces is one of the largest Drupal development firms in North America. Our team has the ability to deliver you a quality Web solution, to customize it to meet your specific needs, and to integrate it into a beautiful, unique design. Our development team has evaluated over 300 Drupal modules for capability, quality and security so that we can help you select the best modules for your application needs. Our design team specializes in creating designs that work well with Drupal, so your finished product will be polished and cost-effective to maintain.

CommonPlaces specializes in making Drupal secure, possessing a strong grasp of what can happen when security is not made a priority. For example, did you know that 90% of security breaches occur at the application level, not the server level? We know the vulnerabilities that can arise, and the best coding practices needed to avoid them. Our VP of Engineering even presented at Drupalcon in Szeged, Hungary on the subject of Drupal Security.

CommonPlaces is currently developing Waste Management's Greenopolis.com (www.greenopolis.com), an environmentally-focused social networking site built entirely in



Drupal. This site has over 200 Drupal modules, and is currently one of the most sophisticated Drupal implementations on the Web.

2.4 AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Our great work at CommonPlaces has not gone unnoticed. We have been honored with several awards, including:

Ten Most Dependable Web Designers of the Northeast



Entrepreneur Magazine, June 2008

CommonPlaces was named one of the Ten Most Dependable Web Designers of the Northeast, as selected by Goldline Research, and featured in the June 2008 issue of Entrepreneur Magazine.

2008 WebAward - Outstanding Achievement in Website Development



The Web Marketing Association

CommonPlaces received a 2008 WebAward for Outstanding Achievement in Website Development for their work on Greenopolis.com

Drupal Design of the Year, First Runner-Up



DrupalCon Boston 2008

CommonPlaces was recognized for our work on Greenopolis.com as the First Runner-Up for the 2008 Drupal Design of the Year Award at DrupalCon Boston in March of 2008. DrupalCon is a twice yearly gathering of the Drupal community.

2.5 ABOUT OUR NAME

Our original office was located in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Our name, and the gazebo in our logo, was inspired by our proximity to Boston Common and its famous gazebo. But there is a bit more to our name than that. The Common is Boston's central, public park, and like all urban parks, it is intended to be a space that everyone can use and to which everyone has an equal right. It is a space for performers, public speakers, and picnickers. We wanted to make spaces





like that on the Web—places that would be a common gathering point and encourage the free exchange of ideas.

Since then, we've moved a few miles north to our current location in Hampstead, NH, but much of the meaning of our original name remains. Realizing that the Web is an active rather than a passive medium, we want our Web solutions to engage, inspire, and start a following. Our location may have changed, but our goal remains—to build Common Places on the web.

2.6 IMPLEMENTATION AND ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT

The first step in the development process will be a Technical Specification document that accurately and thoroughly maps out exactly what your project will entail, and provides you with an accurate timeline and cost analysis. Invaluable to the success of your project, a Technical Specification clearly defines what your web application is expected to do. Unlike informal requirements gathering processes, CommonPlaces' Technical Specification service ensures that all user scenarios have been discussed, usability has been optimized, goals of the site are well thought out and achieved, and all business issues are resolved before any coding is started. This reduces scope creep (unexpected extra costs), and provides your team with a true successful strategic, creative, and technology vision for your application or site. Clients who participate in this process save money, reduce go-to-market time, and are more satisfied with the ROI/results of their project.

Each project at CommonPlaces is assigned a dedicated team comprised of an Account Manager, Project Manager, Engineering Lead and Creative Lead. This core team remains in place for the duration of the project and the agreed-upon term of maintenance. The Account Manager will remain involved in the project as a Client Advocate and will partner with the Project Manager to ensure Client satisfaction through every phase of the project. Your Project Manager will manage all Client communications, meeting schedules, drive planning timelines, allocate resources, and monitor budgets to ensure that the project is delivered on time and within budget. Your project will be managed from kick-off to launch and maintenance by adhering to a well-defined series of phases and deliverables. Client approvals are an integral part of this process and ensure that the finished work is of the highest quality.



3. SOLUTION COMPONENTS

3.1 WEB DESIGN SERVICES

CommonPlaces will recreate the design of the current Office of Educational Innovation and Technology website. First our designers will recreate the design in the appropriate graphic design program. Once this step is completed the designers will then slice up the design and put it into the appropriate Drupal theme files so that it looks like the current OEIT website. The design of the theme will look the same to an administrator as it will look to an anonymous user.

We believe that it is important to have a consistent image and look between the website, marketing materials, product packaging and corporate documents. Along with having an appealing and attractive look and feel to the site, the content of the site must be precisely what the user is looking for. Our design will utilize a simple easy to use layout, with lots of white space. Website look and colors will match your logo and any brochures to create consistency.

Our design is optimized utilizing a Search Engine architecture based on Cascading Style Sheets (CSS). CSS separates content from design. This comes in really handy when you'd like to change the look of your site without touching your HTML web pages. Just change one CSS file and your whole web site has a new look.

All of your design code is in your CSS file, so the only thing left in your web pages is content. That's not all, with CSS, you can even put your navigation text and other 'non-content' content at the bottom of your HTML file but make it 'appear' at the top using CSS. This way, search engines will find the more important content first. Search engines also grade sites on how fast they load, and since loading time is much faster with CSS because of reduced table use and reduced image use, search engines give more authority to sites using CSS.

One of the primary issues of accessibility—and one in which CSS use can really make a difference—is in how an assistive technology such as a screen reader "reads" a page. In the traditional table-based world, a screen reader faces an incredible challenge in deciding how to read a page. A visually impaired person doesn't have this luxury.

3.2 CONTENT MIGRATION

CommonPlaces will migrate all current content on the OEIT website, as well as all of the content from the blogs, including comments profiles and articles. Content Migration is an integral part in web development, due to the fact that if it is not done properly, content such as images, text and links can be lost. CommonPlaces has a very organized and careful process for migrating data, so that nothing will be out of order or lost.

CommonPlaces also offers professional website content development from our staff's copywriter and layout expert. Our staff copywriter specializes in creating online copy for targeted



audiences and will perform the appropriate industry research and competitive analysis to determine your company's differentiators. We provide both B2B and B2C copywriting services and truly understand the differences between the two. All copy will be optimized and coordinated with the page structures to support SEO best practices. Website content development services can include writing for websites and any combination of newsletters, sales emails, press releases, online articles and more.



4. PROJECT COSTS - ESTIMATED

1. One Time Project Fees

a. Convert existing OEIT site to CMS using Drupal

- Website development as specified within this proposal including:
 - Recreate the Current OEIT website design and transferring the design into a Drupal theme
 - Reproduce the physical site layout, placing images, and logo
 - Drupal Core Installation, Configuration of base modules, Theme, Navigation
 - Migrating all current website's content and blogs to new platform
- Consultation and Project Management -15% of Total One-Time Project Fees
- Testing and Quality Assurance- 15% of Total One-Time Project Fees
- Estimated 135.8 hours billed at an hourly rate of \$125 an hour

Subtotal **\$16,975**

b. Advanced Project Gallery Feature – Optional Phase 1 or Phase 2

- Development of feature request for advanced project gallery feature
 - Include advanced search feature able to search: Date, Category – Learning Modality, Description, Links to Project, People - Principle architect of project, Image
- Estimated 22.4 hours billed at an hourly rate of \$125 an hour

Subtotal **\$2,800**

One-Time Project Fees Subtotal **\$19,775***

*Note: *Website Design and Development Services Project Hours Estimated – Actual Hours May Vary*

2. Recurring Annual Fees

Application Maintenance Annual Package:

- Application Software Upgrades
- Estimated 10% of all One Time Project Fees

Recurring Fees Subtotal **\$1,977.50**

3. Hourly Rates.

- a. Copywriting & Graphics Design, Web Development \$125 /hr
- b. Marketing Services & Consulting \$150 /hr.

Total \$21,752.50

**Initial deposit of \$3,955. Billing is done monthly based on actual hours
at a discounted hourly rate of \$125. Initial deposit is applied to final billing.**

This agreement does not include CommonPlaces providing content or images for the website, which is available as a service to be quoted separately. Third Party expenses such as Merchant Account Gateway (\$100) and Security Certificate (\$299) are the responsibility of the client.



5. CONCLUSION

In summary, this proposal is a reflection of the commitment and flexibility CommonPlaces e-Solutions, LLC has for its clients. We have the knowledge and experience to ensure trouble-free and effective management of your project from conception to ongoing operation. From expert designers to interactive marketers to skilled engineers, we have the team to ensure the highest quality site, delivered on time and at a very competitive rate. We know the pitfalls; we know the shortcuts. Use our team to cut through years of frustrating trial and error. We have identified your requirements and developed an appropriate strategy to ensure these needs are met. We look forward to moving ahead on this proposal and partnering with you on this project.

If you have any questions, or require additional information, please contact David Dubrino 603-329.6760, x105 or david@commonplaces.com.