The characteristics, content, performance, and impact of the WPA website (<u>www.wpanet.org</u>)

LEVENT KÜEY

WPA Secretary General and Website Editor

The WPA has been improving its organizational image and identity in line with its Action Plan of 2008–2011 and that of 2011–2014. The official website of the WPA, along with its other media channels (WPA News, the official WPA newsletter, and the WPA E-Bulletin) has played an important role in this process.

Since 2008, WPA media channels were reconstructed and improved to be in concert both in their contents and aesthetics. The general perspective has been to reach elegancy in simplicity. WPA media channels were enriched to raise their efficiency, both at inter-organizational and intra-organizational levels, and to mirror the voice of all WPA components. Requests for contributions were sent out regularly and any submitted item was published after an edition and approval process. The WPA Secretary General, as the editor of these media channels, monitored this route with the collaboration of the WPA Executive Committee members and the WPA Secretariat staff. This article focuses on the main characteristics, content, performance and impact of the WPA website.

The renewal of the website and the transfer of the webmaster and the server, aiming to improve the global impact of the WPA website by revising its content, infrastructure, visual design, and process of maintenance, started by early 2009 and were finalized in a year. A totally reconstructed new website was published on April 12, 2010, after comprehensive discussions in the WPA Executive Committee (2008–2011), and with the IT staff responsible for the technical administration of the website, aiming to enhance its readability, usability, and impact.

CHARACTERISTICS

The WPA website was reconstructed and redesigned, aiming to be easy to browse for the users, easy to manage for the webmasters and editor, and with a higher quality content and aesthetics based on a well-developed infrastructure.

This website is open to all visitors without any password filtering area, which contributes to the organizational transparency and accessibility of the work of the WPA in general. This also gives the opportunity both to mental health professionals and nonprofessionals to reach the educational material in various languages.

The home page has been shortened and packed, hence made suitable for a user's eye to track. The content of the home page is now more systematic and categorized. All of these changes make it easier for the user to follow the content and give priority according to his/her own needs.

A lateral navigation and menu system was developed, so that users can browse easier. For navigation aid, a "breadcrumb trail system", which gives users a way to keep track of their locations within programs or documents, was designed and applied, so that users can know how they get there while browsing.

The infrastructure was categorized and the database was dynamically coded to manage articles, meetings, files, or any item used in the site. All of the pages were coded systematically and are processed in hyper text markup language (HTML) format automatically.

A web content management system which supports categorization and management of the content and makes it possible to create a sitemap, was built. All of the pages and contents are dynamically shown in their own templates. All the visuals and templates are relatively easy to modify. A text editor, "WYSIWYG" (What You See is What You Get), was used on the administration area to decrease the amount of typos and similar mistakes and make it easier to add images, links, .pdf, and/or.doc files to a page.

The interactive materials on the website were renamed and uploaded according to their locations in the main navigation. This new system of documents provides content usability in the website and also in the administration area. Uploading process of new materials was systematically designed, also giving the opportunity of hosting interactive applications, such as video recordings, password-protected areas (if needed), registration for applications, and so forth. Accordingly, a module that supports videos and presentations for the section of "WPA E-Learning" was designed and added.

CONTENT

The content of the website reflects and reconstructs the activities of all the WPA components. It currently hosts more than 3500 items, covering news on all areas of activities of the WPA and its components. All issues of the WPA official journal, *World Psychiatry*, continuing educational material for psychiatrists, educational material for the general public on mental health issues, material describing successful experiences in the mental health field, and information on WPA Secretariat activities, meetings, publications, and scientific sections are published. Furthermore, information on the structure and work of the WPA Committees and the WPA normative instruments are posted.

A highly visited section of the website hosts *World Psychiatry*. Psychiatrists across the world can read and freely download the journal not only in English but also in various languages; either full issues or individual papers or abstracts are available in Spanish, Chinese, Russian, French, Arabic, Turkish, Japanese, Polish, Romanian, and Italian.

A WPA E-Learning Programme was developed and implemented in 2010. This program covers videos and slide sets of prominent scientific lectures and presentations from the WPA Congresses, starting with a selection from the WPA International Congress 2009, Florence. Currently, 33 lectures in

video and synchronized .ppt format are up-loaded. Furthermore, an online public education program, aiming to provide high-quality and reliable scientific information on mental health and psychiatry to nonprofessionals, is also hosted in the website.

Other WPA educational products that are available on and freely downloadable from the website include three sets of slides based on a series of WPA books dealing with the recognition, epidemiology, pathogenesis, cultural aspects, medical costs, and management of the comorbidity of depression with diabetes, heart disease, and cancer (1-3). In addition to their English versions, these slide sets are available in up to 17 languages (English, French, Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, Estonian, Croatian, German, Swedish, Azeri, Bosnian, Romanian, Czech, Russian, Indonesian, Bangla, and Japanese). An educational module and two sets of slides on physical illness in patients with severe mental disorders, developed by the WPA (4,5), are also posted on the website.

Moreover, the WPA website hosts some essential documents for the benefit of improving the ethical and scientific quality standards of our profession: the Madrid Declaration on Ethical Standards (as amended by the General Assembly of the WPA in Buenos Aires on September 21, 2011); the WPA template for undergraduate and postgraduate education in psychiatry and mental health; recommendations for relationships of psychiatrists, health care organizations working in the psychiatric field, and psychiatric associations with the pharmaceutical industry (6); recommendations on best practices in working with service users and family carers (7); and WPA guidance papers on implementation of community mental health care (8), how to combat stigmatization of psychiatry and psychiatrists (9), mental health care in migrants (10), and promotion of mental health in children of persons with severe mental disorders (11) are examples of such documents.

PERFORMANCE

The performance of the website, which shows a wide acceptance across the world, is followed closely with periodic analysis. Here, we review the performance of the website since its publication, covering the period between April 12, 2010 and October 12, 2012.

As shown in Table 1, during these 2.5 years, more than 200,000 people have visited the WPA website, making more than 300,000 visits. These visits came from 209 countries/territories, practically covering all parts of the world. If we note that the number of countries in which WPA has national member societies is 117, this means that the WPA is even reaching over its organizational limits by its website.

The website is continuously visited by new people, with the proportion of new visitors being 69%. This is also reflected in the fact that 68% of the visitors of the website reach it via "search engines", while 17% via "referring sites", and 15% using "direct traffic".

IMPACT

One of the widely used criteria to measure the impact of a website is "page rank check", a free service provided by Google. The page rank value indicates the importance of a particular website/page. Being an objective measure of its citation importance, it also corresponds well with people's subjective idea of importance. Currently, the page rank of the WPA website is 7/10 (that is, the page rank value is 7 from 10 possible points), which reflects a high impact compared to many other similar websites.

As the editor and the WPA Secretary General, I have been facilitating this process with the cooperation of the WPA Executive Committee members of 2008–2011 and of 2011–2014 and our past and current secretariat staff, Anna Engström, Francesca Sotgiu, and Pamela Atiase, and our IT staff at the Istanbul-based agency Saglik Bahcesi. Their enthusiasm, support, and skillful efforts are highly appreciated.

In fact, a website is a highly flexible living platform, a work in progress where we can explore further improvements continuously. I hope the users of the WPA website will continue to help us in improving its quality by sending their contributions and comments.

Table 1 WPA website statistics (April 12, 2010 to October 12, 2012)

Visitors	215,836
Visits	313,916
Countries/territories	209
Visits per day (average)	348
Pages per visit (average)	3.36
Page titles visited (at least once)	3134
Page titles viewed	1,054,151

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