

**School of Computer Science
Course 15-391**

Spring 2007

Final Consulting Report

Sixth Mount Zion Baptist Church

Wendy Shutt

Sixth Mount Zion Baptist Church

Student Consultant, Wendy Shutt
Community Partner, Pastor Downing

Executive Summary:

The consultant, Wendy Shutt, worked with community partner, Pastor Downing, at Sixth Mount Zion Baptist Church (SMZBC). His email is smzchurch@aol.com and the church's phone number is (412)441-7839. For more contact information, please see their website, www.sixthmountzion.org.

The mission of SMZBC is to

- *Execute ministry that will reach every generation for Christ*
- *Celebrate belonging to Christ with all*
- *Partner with our neighbor for community transformation*
- *Serve to grow every disciple to the maturity of Christ*

During the consultant's time at SMZBC, a website was created in order to increase communication between SMZBC, its members, and the surrounding community. Prior to the consultant's time, events would only be mentioned at church services on Sunday mornings, or in a quarterly mailing, which left many unaware of the opportunities provided by SMZBC. In order to ensure that the website would meet its desired goals, information about each of the five core ministries was included, in addition to each of their respective sub-ministries; as well, a worship schedule, general church schedule, contact page, and information about the pastor was included. The site was created using Microsoft FrontPage 2002 and a template from www.i3dthemes.com. The site is currently being hosted by www.godaddy.com. Each member of the group working on the website had a hand in creating it, and thus they all gained experience changing the information on the pages in FrontPage, and are now fairly comfortable with this task necessary for managing their website.

While the members of the web group have all had some exposure to updating and creating a webpage, they will still face some risks to sustainability. One main risk, is not keeping the site up-to-date. It is imperative that timely information be made available, and be kept current, otherwise the website will lose its audience, and not be as useful of a communication tool as it could be. Another important risk to consider is the turnover and other time constraints that the group faces. Currently there are five members of the group, two of whom have experience designing websites. One of them has recently graduated high school though, and will be leaving the group next year in the pursuit of a Computer Engineering degree from Clark Atlanta University. As well, the other members of the team do not have any prior experience in creating web pages, and all have very demanding schedules.

The consultant recommends posting sermons to the website, either in text or video form, in order to meet the future goals of SMZBC. There are different levels to which this can be implemented. For example, www.YouTube.com presents a free, basic, option, while simply adding the current sermon to www.sixthmountzion.org and increasing the current hosting plan offers a middle option. A final option is another website, like www.streamingfaith.com, which presents a more professional look

and feel than is available from YouTube. As well, it provides more technical services than are available from YouTube, but also costs more than either of the previous options.

Another recommendation is to make implement a maintenance plan for the computer lab. Included in this recommendation, is ensuring that the computers' software and other computer security measures are kept up to date through a schedule. There are different levels of security that can be employed for these computers, including virus scanning software, spyware removal tools, and firewalls.

More information and details are included in the full report.

Community Partner

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About the Consultant

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Wendy is a sophomore in Electrical and Computer Engineering, with a concentration in Computer Software.



Final Consulting Report

Student Consultant, Wendy Shutt
Community Partner, Pastor Downing

I. The Consulting Situation

Organization

The Sixth Mount Zion Baptist Church's (SMZBC) overall mission is to

- *Execute ministry that will reach every generation for Christ*
- *Celebrate belonging to Christ with all*
- *Partner with our neighbor for community transformation*
- *Serve to grow every disciple to the maturity of Christ*

About:

SMZBC is broken up into five core ministries including (taken from community partner):

- Community life- "eliminate the racial disparities in student achievements, housing ownership, and employment and entrepreneurship."
- Discipleship- "see that all persons become aware of G-d and respond in faith and love."
- Evangelism- "bring others to Christ."
- Stewardship and operations- "to encourage members to strengthen their personal relationship with G-d. The stewardship of giving is a celebration of the blessings bestowed upon us. The question we must answer is shall I be a good steward or a poor steward or an irresponsible steward, a faithful steward or an unfaithful steward."
- Worship and fellowship- "help us witness G-d's glorious grace, with gratitude, reverence, humility, faith, and love as we worship in service to the Triune G-d."

Facilities

The first floor is home to the secretary's office, a small meeting room, and a large sanctuary, including a balcony and a sound room. There is currently some work being done to repair areas of

the sanctuary. In the basement there are a few storage closets, an office, and a large room, which is used for group events, as well as choir practice rooms, and many smaller rooms, which are primarily used for Sunday school. There is also a computer room located in the basement. The building is armed with a security system, which is used daily. As well, there are locks on nearly all of the doors inside the building.

Programs

While the church offers many programs to its members and surrounding community, my work will mainly affect their Web Page ministry, which falls under their core ministry of Evangelism. This program will

provide internet access to seniors, youth and others who've fallen through the digital divide in the Lincoln-Larimer community. Also the program will teach web site maintenance to church volunteers.

There are also over 70 other ministries offered by the church. One ministry concerns housing and offers about 30 homes to church members. They are low-cost rentals located within the closest two blocks of the church. They provide a tight knit community of families that are just starting out, transitioning to other phases of life, etc. As well, the church participates in many health screening fairs (offering them to members and some community members). As well they have employment and youth fairs, and a number of ministries which branch out into many different areas. The church also runs a food bank, many health screening fairs, and employment and youth fairs. These programs will all be affected by the website, as members of the community will now be able to get detailed information about each program and what other major programs or activities are being planned in any one particular ministry.

Staff

There are three full-time employees including the pastor, secretary, and custodian. As well there are four part-time employees: custodian, administrative assistant to the pastor, minister of music, and minister of worship. The church also has over 300 volunteers. The following descriptions are based on the actual posted job descriptions for each position.

Church Secretary:

- Complete the weekly church bulletin
- Receive and direct visitors and telephone calls to church employees
- Maintain a yearly church calendar
- Maintain and update the church's membership database weekly
- Prepare information of Baptism and Marriage for the Church Clerk monthly
- Distribute contribution envelopes annually and maintain contribution records weekly
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office software (attends yearly Microsoft training courses)

Administrative Assistant to the Pastor:

- Maintain Pastor's daily schedule
- Schedule meetings for the pastor

- Handle correspondence as directed by the Pastor
- Place and return all phone calls as directed by the Pastor
- Schedule accommodations for meetings and events of Pastor
- Respond to items pertaining to Pastor's schedule
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office software

Minister of Music:

- Organize rehearsal and preparation for all choirs and musicians for Sunday worship
- Lead rehearsals and preparations where necessary
- Identify and assign musicians in his absence from any service of worship
- Lead growth of instrumental presence in worship to include the organ
- Supervise musical growth of church musicians
- Prepare annual budget for music ministry

Technical Environment

The church has two sets of computers. The first set is four Dell computers which are about three years old. Two of them run Windows 2000 and the other two run Windows XP. As well, there is a set of 10 HP computers which were recently donated, but they do not have operating systems on them. They are three years old, and have 2.4Ghz Pentium 4 processors, 1Gigabyte of RAM, and once ran Windows XP. As far as software is concerned, they have Microsoft Office software including Word, PowerPoint, Excel, and Access on the four Dell computers. They also have QuickBooks. The church is looking into getting internet access in the next month and has just gotten a network completely installed. As well, there is a fax and copy machine in the Secretary's office, and printers in the offices. There is also a room which houses some older printers and a scanner, whose conditions are unknown at the current time.

We will be getting 10 copies of Microsoft Windows XP donated to us, and will be purchasing the necessary graphics software for one of the computers.

Technical Management

If a problem occurs, the church calls one of its members to come and fix it. The member who they most often call works with computers for a living; he is a systems analyst for a local corporation. There is no log of past problems, or how they were fixed. I believe that this happens due to lack of awareness.

Technology Planning

There is no real technology planning. Most problems are managed reactively, as they have had few computer problems in the past, and thus have had no prior need to create a technology plan. But, the secretary has attended a 3-day Microsoft training courses in the past, and does so about once per year. As well, there are lines in the budget for technology related issues, such as a new computer, and the Web Page ministry.

Internal and External Communication

Hard copies of information are printed and handed to the correct person, or just left on their desk if they are not in at the time. Many of the staff members have personal e-mail addresses, but it is selectively used for internal communication since there is no internet access at the church. E-mail is checked from home computers, and the Pastor sometimes uses a phone line for dial-up service. Phones are also a major communication tool. External communication consists of quarterly mailings and announcements at church services about upcoming events.

Information Management

Membership information comes to the church in paper form and is given to the Secretary, who enters the information into an Access database, which she created. She is pretty much the only person who uses this database. The database is updated once or twice a week and is used to keep track of members and donations to the church. The database is used to create nametags and address labels for church mailings, which are sent out quarterly.

Business Systems

Accounting and general finances are currently managed by Lydia Carter. QuickBooks has just been purchased for this purpose.

II. Scope of Work

Task 1. Increase Communication

Members of the church and surrounding community need to find out about what current activities and services are being offered. Events are only mentioned at church on Sunday morning, so if someone misses church one week, they may never find out about an event, as word of mouth may or may not spread to them. Church mailings used to be sent out fairly frequently, but are now only sent out quarterly or around major holidays because members did not read the mailings, as they were so frequent. The lack of communication has a huge impact on the mission, because the church is not able to reach its target audience, and thus its five core ministries are not able to be as effective or successful as they would like. We will be creating a website in order to combat this lack of communication.

Additional Impacts

This has positively impacted the organization because it has helped them to increase their outside communication and has allowed more people to hear about events going on at the church. On the other hand, people who do not have access to the internet, or do not know how to use a computer, are still not being reached, so perhaps another form of communication should be implemented for those groups. One idea is to keep a list of those members wishing to receive mail and send mailings to these people on a regular basis, perhaps monthly, to keep them up to date. As well, I think that this will help with technology planning, at least informally, as keeping up a website will require more technology upkeep than just maintaining computers which are not connected to the internet. At the same time, there could be consequences associated with the aforementioned if the necessary security steps are not taken, as viruses and trojan horses can severely disrupt computing capabilities.

III. Outcomes and Recommendations

Task 1. Increased Communication

Before the consulting began, church events would be announced at services on Sunday mornings, or in a mailing, which would only be sent out quarterly or if there was a major holiday coming up. This meant that everything was essentially marketed only through word of mouth.

A web host and domain name, *www.sixthmountzion.org*, has been obtained through *www.godaddy.com*. Currently, the website has 13 pages:

Home Page: includes logo, a flash section with graphics, calendar and information about upcoming events, and navigation to other sections of the site.

About Us: church's history and anniversary, as well as a few pictures of the church.

Our Pastor: background information about the pastor

Services: schedule of services, bible study, and Sunday school opportunities

Ministries: information about the five core ministries of SMZBC and links to the other ministry pages

Community life, discipleship, evangelism, fellowship, and worship: each page contains information about the ministries in each of these areas. The ministry's mission, contact information, and a brief description of what they do is included.

Youth: opportunities for the youth to get involved and the five purposes of the ministry

Calendar: upcoming events at SMZBC (not completed yet)

Contact Us: church contact information, including e-mail address, an online form which allows for prayer requests; membership questions; suggestions, and inquiries about worship tapes and CDs.

After searching the internet for Microsoft FrontPage 2002 templates, one was chosen from *www.i3dthemes.com*, which offered a religious-based template.

But, before the website came to fruition, there were many weeks of planning and organizing. A committee was formed, which included five members of the church, each representing a different area of the church. Each member of the group researched exemplar sites, and noted desired aspects of the website. The site was then storyboarded via a group process.

The community partner now knows how to update and manipulate each individual page using FrontPage 2002, as well as change major aspects of the site, such as navigation, adding and removing pages, and changing pictures in all areas of the site. Backups are also made of the entire

website each time a change is made to it. All of these actions have been completed multiple times by each member of the group, without the help of the consultant.

The web group is currently well funded, and it appears that it will continue to be well funded. But, there are still some risks to sustainability. Currently the web group, consisting of five members, is meeting twice per week, but there are availability demands on everyone's schedule. Each member of the group is very involved in the church, as well as other outside activities, as well as raising families. As well, one member of the group will be leaving next year in pursuit of a computer engineering degree from Clark Atlanta University. As well, a leader of the group has not been assigned, and they are looking to recruit additional members of the church who may have prior website experience. All of these aspects, taken together, could create huge risks.

Some expected outcomes that have yet to be achieved include the calendar page not being quite finished. The original file we were working with became corrupted, and as of the current time, a new file has yet to be created. This has also impacted the home page, since the same calendar file will also be used on this page. As well, the site, where many of the pages have been completed, has yet to be uploaded to the site host. There are also some fine details that still need to be finished, like formalizing the placement of graphics on each page. As well, since the site has yet to be published, some of the functionality of the site has not been tested. There are forms available on the website for people to request information about tapes and CD's, submit prayer requests, offer suggestions, and the like, but the forms have not yet been tested to ensure that they work. The expected roll-out date for the site is on or before May 27, 2007, the anniversary of the church.

Task 2. Create a Useful Computer Lab for the Church

SMZBC was recently the recipient of ten donated desktop computers, but they were lacking in operating systems. I was able to make contact with a representative of Microsoft, who donated ten copies of Windows XP Home Edition. The operating systems were installed by Malcolm and another member of the church who is a systems analyst for a local corporation. As well, some further upgrades have been installed on the computers that will be used for website maintenance, including Microsoft FrontPage 2002. These computers have been set up in a room in the basement of the church, which will serve as their computer lab. The computers will also be connected to the recently installed network.

Recommendation 1. Post Sermons on the Website

While we were brainstorming ideas for the website, it came up that the group may be interested in making the weekly sermon available on the site, at some point in the future. In light of this, I will provide a few different resources that are available specifically for this purpose.

YouTube is a free option to post the videos on the internet. In order to post videos to www.youtube.com, a free account must be created. Then, you are able to upload .wmv, .avi, .mov, or .mpg files to their site, which can be done by clicking on a link from their homepage. These are standard file types, which your videos can be converted to, if necessary, with basic video editing software (see below). They offer step-by-step instructions on how to make videos (www.youtube.com/howto_makevideo), as well as information about other important topics, like how to contact them if your questions have yet to be answered, error messages, and the like. In order to get the most out of your post though, you will want to add tags to your videos. These, along with categories, become the keywords that people will use to search for your video. It is important to list each sermon with intuitive tags and categories. When people search for the sermon, they are

likely to search for words like prayer, worship, the name of the church, the name of the preacher, Baptist, Jesus, sermon, etc. The more clearly the tags indicate what each video is about, the more likely they will be found by the prospective audience. And, as for the categories, I would suggest "People & Blogs," since it seems to be the closest match currently offered. YouTube will also provide a link for you to use on your own website, so that visitors can easily access your video posts. This link could be posted on the home and services pages. To insert a hyperlink in FrontPage, click on the "insert" menu, and then choose "hyperlink." From here you can browse the web, as well as your computer, to choose the destination of the link given to you from YouTube. One possible option, before taping of the services really gets under way, would be to just post the text as a start.

Another alternative to YouTube is to get a low cost program, which will allow you to edit your video and export it to the web. One program that will provide this functionality for you is QuickTime Pro. The cost for this program is \$30. QuickTime allows for the importing of over 50 different file types, and can export in over 25 file types. At www.quicktime.com you can find many different tutorials, including one specifically for embedding video in a web site. This will make adding the video to FrontPage a very simple task. As well, the "help" included with the program is very useful, and includes step by step instructions for many commonly desired tasks (ex. how to change the settings for different file exports, adding special effects to a movie, customizing export settings, etc.). A 30 minute video will probably be about 300 megabytes, depending on the quality of the video. With www.godaddy.com, the base hosting plan offers 5GB of disk space and 250GB of bandwidth, per month. This will probably still offer enough bandwidth in order to stay with the lowest plan, although the next plan is only about \$3 more per month and offers 100GB of disk space and 1,000GB of bandwidth. For example, if 20 people watched the sermon each week, then about 24GB of bandwidth would be used in the course of a month. While this could wind up being more a little bit more expensive than YouTube, the first would only cost \$66, including the software and the increased hosting plan, which may or not be necessary for the kick-off of the postings. As well, in subsequent years, the cost would drop to only \$36. By posting the actual video on your site, rather than directing people to YouTube, you will have the benefit of a more professional looking site, and a higher quality video.

Another option here would be to use a website such as www.streamingfaith.com, which manages video content for you. They offer many different options pricing options to suit your needs. One particular option includes encoding of four thirty minute videos, storage of about 10 videos (1 GB) and 50GB of bandwidth (they approximate as 1000 viewer hours). You can always increase your plan, but this base plan is \$515. Streaming Faith also has internet radio options for \$500 per month, which includes unlimited viewers. While these options may seem a bit pricy, Streaming Faith offers many services all in one place, which the community partner has mentioned interest in-- such as selling CDs and the like. They also take care of the processing of video in order to get it ready for the internet. This, in itself can be a very time-consuming task, as volume leveling, and filters will need to be used in order to get the audio to meet a high quality standard. There are many programs which can do this; one in particular is Microsoft Windows Movie Maker.

This would allow people who were unable to get to church to still either read, or watch, a portion of the service. As well, by using www.streamingfaith.com, bandwidth capacity from www.godaddy.com would not be eaten up.

Recommendation 2. Implement a Maintenance Plan for the Computer Lab

A complete maintenance plan for the computer lab can save countless hours in the future, should there be a large scale loss of data. In many situations, the data that is lost is irreplaceable. It is important to create a written plan which will include what is to be backed up, where it will be backed up to, how often it is to occur, who performs the backups, and who oversees the process to ensure that these backups are successful (Backing Up Your Data, www.techsoup.org). It is advisable to backup the most used folders and files, perhaps on a weekly basis, and keep those backups both on and offsite. By keeping a copy offsite, you will be ensuring that if there were a fire or flood at the church, then you would still have a current backup of information. As well, you want to make sure that you test your backups to ensure that, in the case that they are needed, that they will be fully functional. Since the church is also implementing a network, it is important to make sure that files in the shared folders are backed up as well. In order to backup files in Microsoft Windows XP you want to go to the control panel, choose "performance and maintenance," and then choose "backup your data." From here a backup wizard will appear, offering you options of exactly what you want to backup. There are different types of backups that can be created, including normal, full, incremental, copy, or daily. A description of each type of backup can be found in the help section of Microsoft's website or in the help section of the backup utility (Description of Full, Incremental, and Differential Backups, www.support.microsoft.com). The two generally accepted "best" ways to back up are full and incremental. With a full, or normal, backup all files are backed up, and each file has a flag that is set by Microsoft telling the system that that particular file has been backed up, as of a certain time. With this type of file, you only need the most recent copy of the backup in order to restore everything, which is helpful, but this type of backup also takes the greatest amount of time to complete. An incremental backup will only backup those files which have been either created or changed since the last backup was performed. The first time that this type of backup is created, a normal backup is created. As well, this method updates the timestamp for the last backup date, so that the next time the backup is created, only new and updated files will need to be saved. While this method will take the least amount of storage space, the amount of time necessary to restore files in the case of a disaster will be the highest, as you will need the first normal backup, as well as all of the other backups in order to restore the data to its most current state, as only the new or edited files are saved each time the backup was created. So, you are saving space and time at the cost of much more time being required to restore the files (see Microsoft help and Backing Up Your Data, www.techsoup.org).

By keeping the computer lab software up to date, you can help to prevent computer problems from arising. Since there will be many people accessing the internet from these computers, it is imperative that spyware tools, such as Spybot Search and Destroy, be run once per week, in addition to a virus scanning software tool. Spybot Search and Destroy is a free program. Two top virus scanning tools are Norton Anti Virus and McAfee. Their costs are comparable, for one year McAfee is about \$60 per license, but they do offer multiple license solutions at a discounted rate. As well, your internet service provider, Verizon, offers licenses for a small fee, per computer, per month. All of these options end up costing about the same amount per year though. Since there have been issues in the past with data security and safety, I strongly recommend implementing the aforementioned on each computer in the lab. While this may seem like a big investment for something which is not guaranteed to really "give anything back to you," it will save a lot of time and frustration if a virus or other malware would attack a computer in the lab. In the case that you do not choose to make the investment to install virus scanning software on each computer, I strongly recommend minimally installing this software on the computer that is going to be used mainly for the website as well as the main computer for the church. As an additional measure, I

would recommend using a firewall, which is available from McAfee or Norton as part of some of their plans. As well, ZoneAlarm offers a good firewall, which is free. Spybot, your virus scanning option, and firewall will need to be updated on a regular basis (once per week should be adequate) as well as ensuring that Windows updates are downloaded and installed. An easy way to ensure that these updates happen is to put one person in charge of installing the updates, and have another person oversee the operation to make sure that backups and upgrades are successful. This can take as little as an hour or so per week.

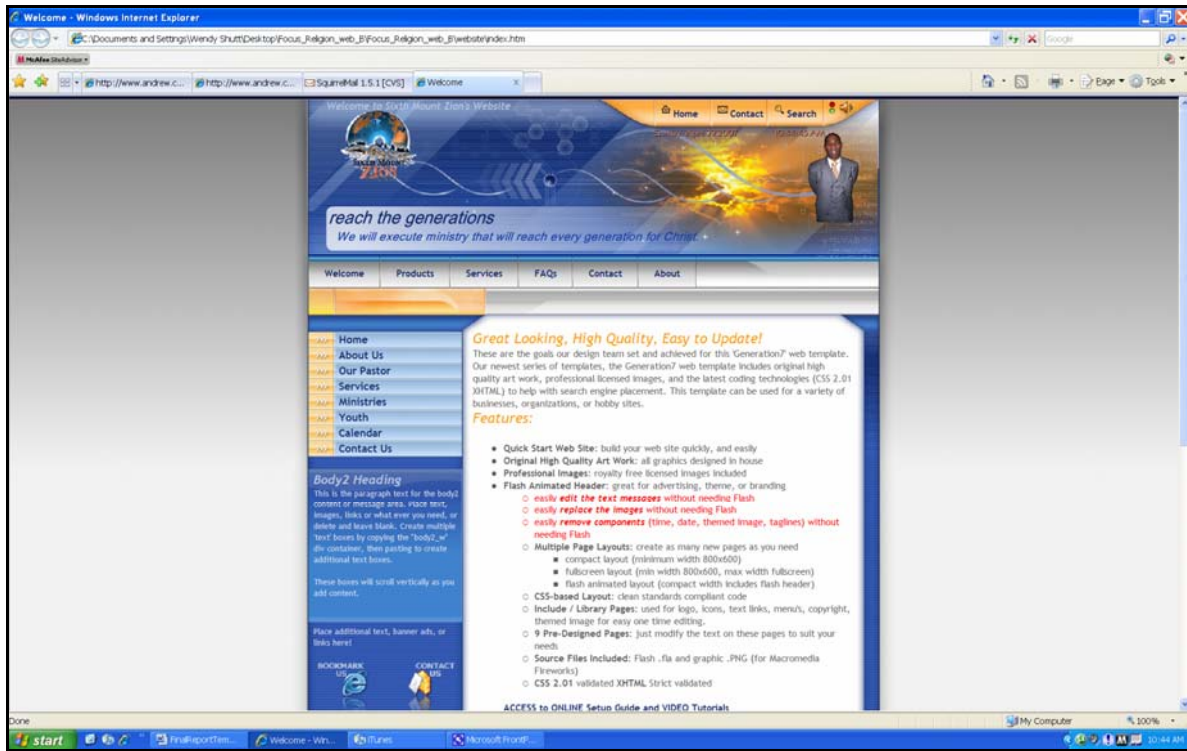
While these options may help to keep you secure from outside attacks, you may also want to consider desktop security and internet access. Since there will be many people using these computers, you may want to make a particular login called “guest,” perhaps, and one “administrator” account. In doing this, you can set access rights to certain folders, as well as limit settings that individual users will be able to change. This will help to ensure that someone does not accidentally delete an important application, file, or perhaps the website files, by mistake. As well, internet filters can be placed on the machines in order to ensure that only appropriate sites are being visited. There are many companies which offer solutions to this, and a good comparison of some of them is made in “Securing Your Computers and Protecting Your Children” on www.techsoup.org.

When this is implemented, it is important to choose a secure password which cannot be guessed easily. Names or the church’s name are generally bad choices, as they can be guessed by almost anyone who belongs to the church. Generally accepted practices for choosing passwords are to make them at least six characters long, alphanumeric, and include at least one special symbol (ex. \$, %, &, etc.). As well, you should change passwords every month or so to keep them secure. There should be more than one person who knows the administrator password in the organization. There becomes a risk to the organization if the “administrator” is replaced, or quits, etc., and no one else can access the computers.

About the Consultant

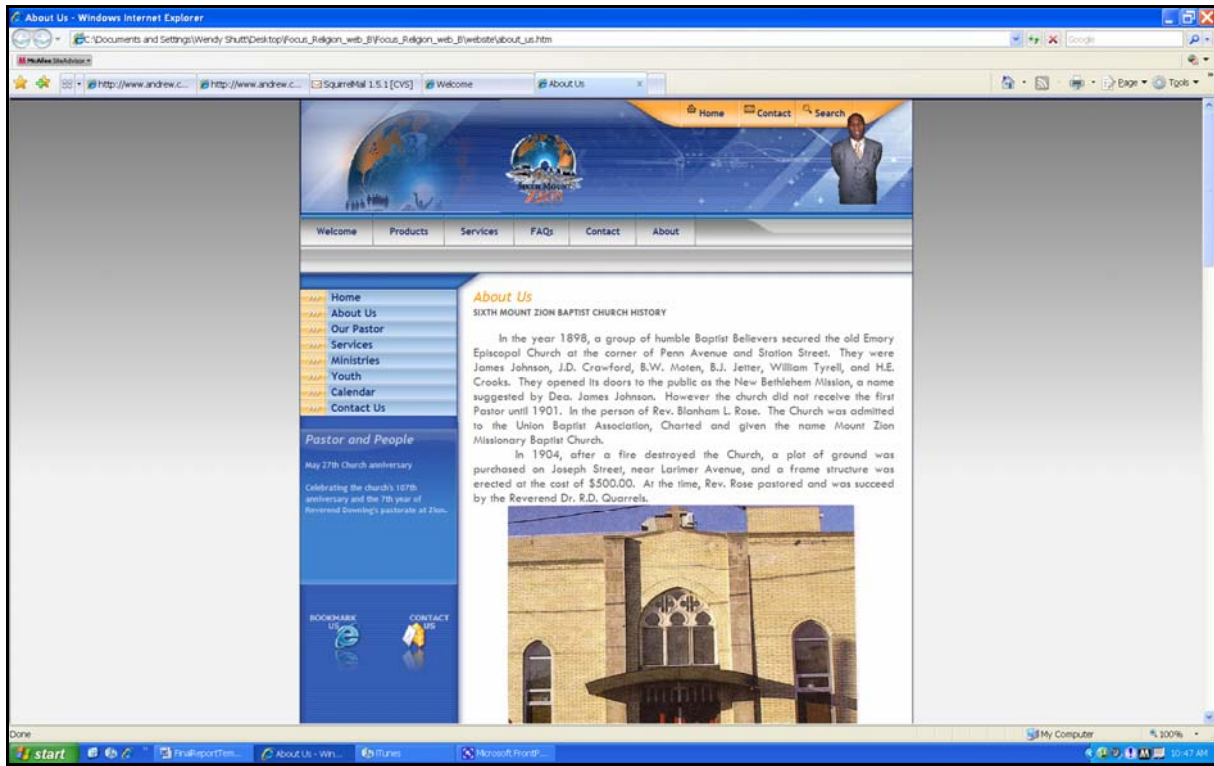
Wendy Shutt is a sophomore in Electrical and Computer Engineering, with a concentration in Computer Software, at Carnegie Mellon University.

Appendix A.



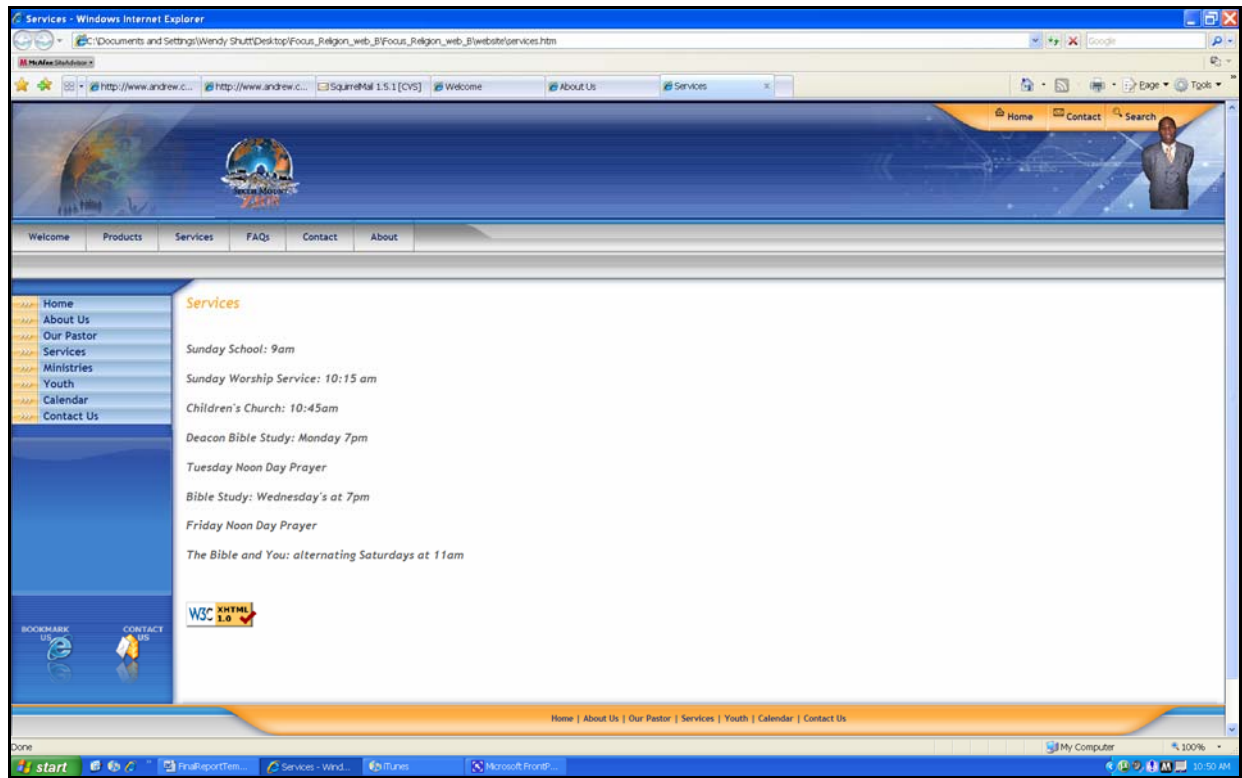
Home Page

Appendix B.



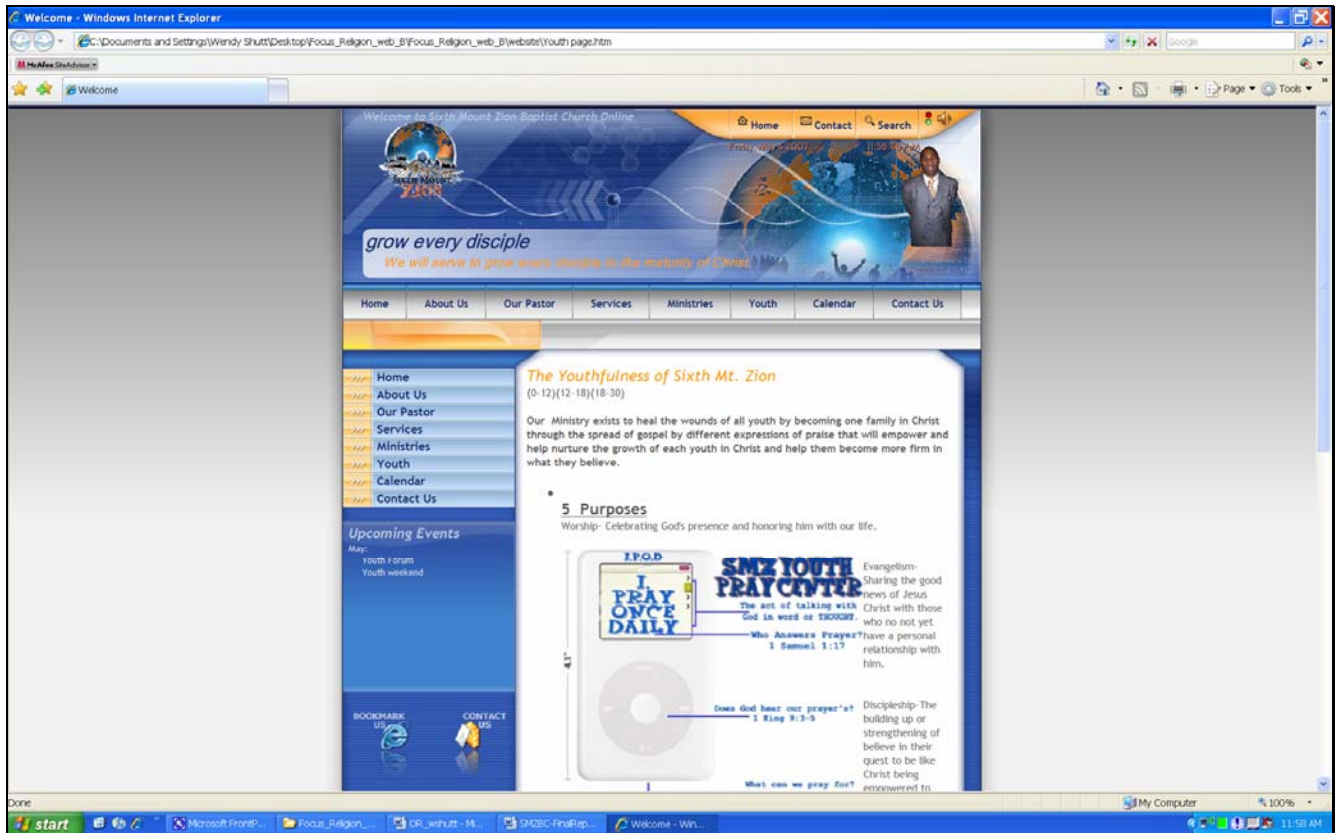
About Us

Appendix C.



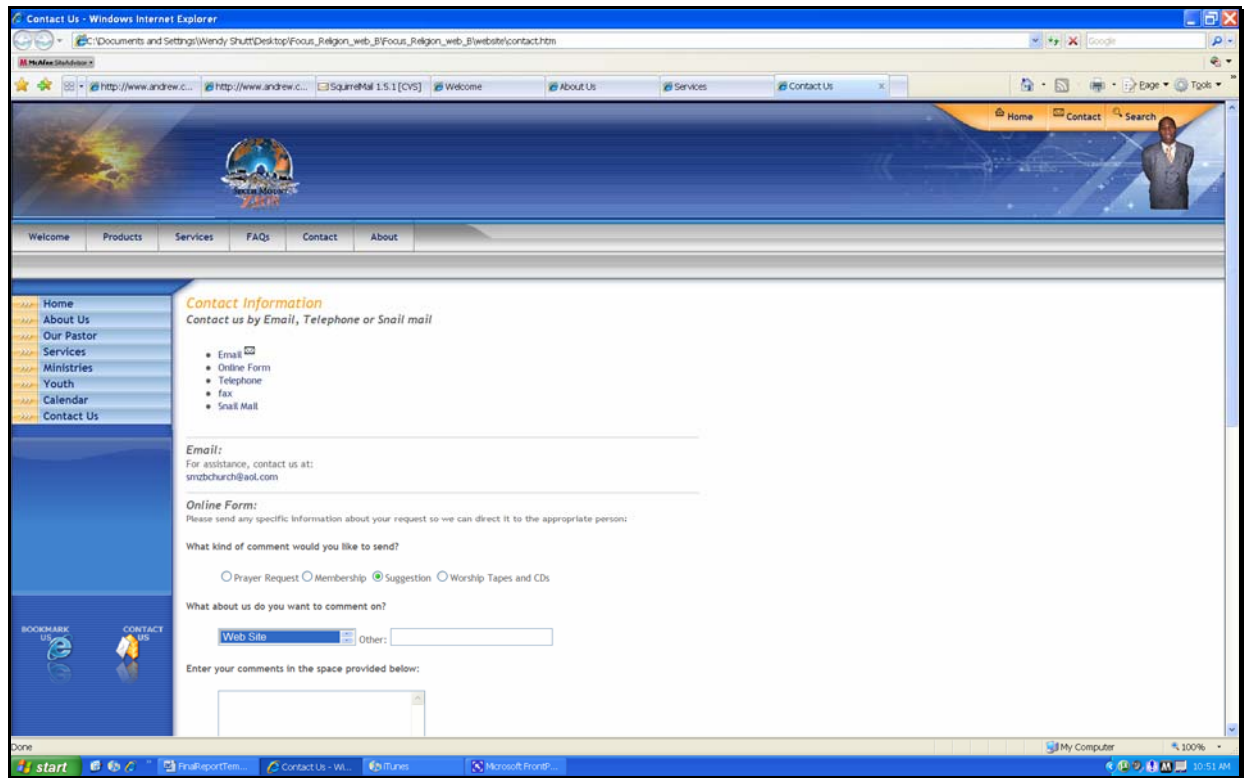
Services

Appendix D.



Youth Page

Appendix E.



Contact Page

Appendix F.



Our Pastor

Past Community Partners

4 Kids Early Learning Centers
Addison Behavioral Care, Inc.
Alafia Cultural Services
Alcoa Collaborative
Allegheny County Housing Authority
Allegheny General Hospital Pastoral Staff
American Association of University Women
Animal Friends, Inc.
Animal Rescue League
ASSET, Inc.
ASTEP-Grace Memorial Presbyterian Church
Auberle
Bedford Hope Center
Bedford Initiatives
Bethany House Ministry
Bethlehem Haven
Bishop Boyle Center
Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation
Borough of Crafton
Boys & Girls Club of Duquesne-West Mifflin
Boys & Girls of Wilkensburg
Braddock Carnegie Library & Community Center
Braddock Redux
Brashear Association, Inc.
Breachmenders
BTC Center
Calliope: The Folk Music Society
Career and Workforce Development Center East
Carnegie Library of Homestead
Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh
Carnegie Science Center
Center Avenue YMCA
Center for Creative Play
Center for Hearing and Deaf Services, Inc.
Center of Life
Central Academy
Central New Development Corporation
Child Watch of Pittsburgh
Children Youth Ministry
Children's Museum
Christian Life Skills
Citizens to Abolish Domestic Apartheid
Community Day School
Community House
Community Human Services Corporation
Community Technical Assistance Center
Competitive Employment Opportunities
Conflict Resolution Center International
Consumer Action Response Team
CONTACT Pittsburgh
Creative Nonfiction Foundation
Dance Alloy
East End Cooperative Ministries
East End Neighborhood Employment Center
East End Neighborhood Forum
East Liberty Development
East Liberty Presbyterian Church
East Side Community Collaborative
Eastminster Child Care Center
Eastside Neighborhood Employment Center
Education Center
Every Child, Inc.
Fair Housing Partnership
Faison Development & Opportunities Center
FAME
Family Services of Western PA
Family Tyes
First Charities/First United Methodist Church
Friendship Development Association
Garfield Jubilee Association, Inc.
Gateway to the Arts
Girl Scouts - Trillium Council
Glen Hazel Family Reading Center
Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank
Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council
Greenfield Senior Center
Guide Runners
Gwen's Girls
Hazelwood Senior Center
Hazelwood YMCA
Heritage Health Foundation
Hill House Association
Hill/Oakland Workforce Collaborative
Himalayan Institute of Pittsburgh
Hope Academy of Music and the Arts
Hosanna House
Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania
HUB Downtown Street Outreach Center
Hunger Services Network
Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers
Jane Holmes Residence
Jewish Family & Children's Service
Jewish Residential Services
Joy-Full-Gospel Fellowship After School Program
Just Harvest
KidsVoice
Kingsley Association
Lawrenceville Development Corporation
League of Young Voters
Light of Life Family Assistance Program
Madison Elementary School
Manchester Academic Charter School
McKees Rocks Terrace
McKeesport Collaborative
McKelvy Elementary School
Mental Health Association of Allegheny County
Message Carriers
Methodist Union of Social Agencies
Miller Elementary School, Principal's Office
Mon Valley Initiative
Mon Valley Providers Council
Mon Valley Resources Unlimited
Mon Valley Unemployment Committee
Mon Yough Community Services
Mount Ararat Community Activities Center
NAACP National Voter Fund
National Alliance of the Mentally Ill
National Association of Minority Contractors /
Black Contractors Association
Negro Educational Emergency Drive
New Beginnings Learning Center
New Penley Place

Past Community Partners (continued)

Northside Coalition for Fair Housing
Northside Institutional Children Youth Ministry
Northside Leadership Conference
OASIS Senior Center
Opera Theater of Pittsburgh
Operation Better Block
Orr Compassionate Care Center
Outreach Teen & Family Services
Parental Stress Center
Pennsylvania Biodiversity Partnership
Pennsylvania Low Income Housing Coalition
Peoples Oakland
Phase 4 Learning Centers, Inc.
Pittsburgh Action Against Rape
Pittsburgh Citizens' Police Review Board
Pittsburgh Foundation
Pittsburgh Health Corps
Pittsburgh Interfaith Impact Network
Pittsburgh Mediation Center
Pittsburgh Social Venture Partners
Pittsburgh Toy Lending Library
Pittsburgh Vision Services
Pittsburgh Voyager
Pittsburgh Youth Symphony Orchestra
POISE Foundation
Program for Health Care to Underserved
Populations
Project Educate
Providence Family Support Center
Radio Information Service
Reading Is Fundamental Pittsburgh
Regional Coalition of Community Builders
River Valley School
Rodef Shalom
Rodman Street Missionary Baptist Church
Ronald McDonald House Charities of Pittsburgh
Rosedale Block Cluster
Sacred Heart Elementary School
Rx Council of Western PA
Salvation Army Family Crisis Center
Sarah Heinz House
Schenley Heights Community Development
Center
Second East Hills Social Services Center
Sharry Everett Scholarship Fund
Sixth Mount Zion Baptist Church
Southwest Pennsylvania Area Health
St. James School
St. Stephen Elementary School
Sustainable Pittsburgh
Thomas Merton Center
Three Rivers Center for Independent Living
Three Rivers Youth
TLC-USA
Turtle Creek Valley Council of Governments
Tzu Chi Wen Chinese School
Union Project
United Cerebral Palsy
Univ. of Pittsburgh - Division of Applied Research
and Evaluation
Urban League of Pittsburgh
Urban Youth Action
Ursuline Services
Vintage Senior Center
Weed & Seed Program, Mayor's Office
Wesley Center
West Pittsburgh Partnership
Wireless Neighborhoods
Women's Enterprise Center
Working Order
YMCA McKeesport
YMCA Senior AIDE Center
Youth Fair Chance
YouthBuild
YWCA Bridge Housing
YWCA of McKeesport

Community Partner Information FAQ

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7. What does it cost to be a Community Partner?

The cost for participating in this experience is your time and your commitment to follow through as agreed. As leaders of community organizations, we know your time is of premium value. Those who have made this investment of time have reaped returns many times over.

8. What does the Community Partner have to offer Carnegie Mellon students?

- Students learn to structure unstructured problems. Community organizations are complex environments with complex problems. Your organization provides excellent environments in which to practice the art of structuring problems.
- Students come from different cultural backgrounds and most have never been in a nonprofit organization. They are practicing how to communicate across cultural differences and across technical knowledge differences. They need to be able to make mistakes and learn from them. Community partners provide a supportive relationship in which students can take risks and learn about how to communicate, how to relate, and how to maintain professionalism.
- Students get the opportunity to practice process consulting. They are learning that expertise is only as valuable as the ability to help others solve authentic problems. You provide a context in which students can practice these skills.
- We've found that Community Partners are very appreciative for the students' assistance. There is nothing more rewarding than to experience your efforts as valuable and rewarding for others. You provide that experience for students.
- Finally, you offer a glimpse into career opportunities in the nonprofit arena. Students learn to appreciate those who work in the nonprofit sector, and they grow to appreciate the role and function of community organizations. We hope this appreciation not only informs the choices they make in life, but also encourages them to care and give back to the community throughout their professional careers.

9. How do I become a Community Partner

Contact an instructor, Joe Mertz or Scott McElfresh. Send your contact information: name, title, name of organization, address, phone, fax, location of organization and your interest in being a Community Partner. You will have a telephone conversation and possibly an on-site visit. All organizations are considered, though preference is given to organizations providing services to a low-income community or a community at risk for falling into the "digital divide."

**Send email to
instructors@tcinc.org
(email preferred)**

**Or call
Joe Mertz: 412.268.2540
Scott McElfresh: 412.268.4859**

10. Caveats

- We do our best to ensure that students who sign-up for the class are committed to completing the class, however, occasionally, a student ends up withdrawing from the class during the semester. Typically, this happens when a student has underestimated the time they need for this class. We do our best to advise students so this does not happen. When it does happen, there is nothing we can do except to invite the Community Partner to participate in the following semester.
- The semester is short and the student has to do a lot of work in a short amount of time. For this reason, it is critical that you keep your scheduled appointments, do the work you agree to do, and maintain communication with the student. The student will need your feedback on reports quickly, often the next day. When we get to the final consulting reports, we will need fast turnaround time from Community Partners because we also need to get the reports published in time for the Community Technology Forum.
- If there is any chance that you think you will not be able to follow through with the requirements of this partnership, please wait until such time as when you are able to do it. Since the Community Partner is the focus for the student's learning, it is essential that the partnership be sustained for the semester.

Community Partner Information FAQ

1. What is the goal of the partnership in this course?

The goal of this class is to expand the capacity of the Community Partner to use, plan for, and manage technology, administratively and programmatically. The student is learning process consulting, project management, communication, relationship management, problem identification, and analysis.

2. As a Community Partner, what can I expect to happen?

Once you match with a student consultant, you will set a meeting schedule that you and the student will keep for the remainder of the semester. The student comes to your location for 3 hours a week. During this time you and the student work together. This is not an internship in which the student merely works on site. Rather, it is a consulting partnership in which you must work together to achieve your technology goals. The student facilitates a process that moves from assessment, to analysis of problems and opportunities, to defining a scope of work, to developing a work plan, to analyzing outcomes and finally presenting that analysis. As the Community Partner, you are the consulting client. You provide information and discuss that information with the student. But you are more than a client; you are also a learner. In process consulting the client "owns the problem" as well as its solution. The consultant facilitates the client in achieving that solution. The consultant doesn't "do for" the client. Rather, the consultant works with the client.

3. What types of activities are typically included in a scope of work?

Each scope of work is unique and depends solely upon the specific needs and opportunities of the individual Community Partner. Partnerships have focused on a wide range of activities, including: personal information management (how to use Windows, organize files, backup files, use various software packages, use time managers, use Palm Pilots and other personal information management tools, e-mail, etc.), developing a plan for how to train staff and how to incorporate knowledge and skill into job description, designing a local area network, implementing Internet connectivity, designing and developing a web site, determining effective data storage methods, analyzing the needs for an information database, designing and implementing a database, solving technical problems, designing a public community technology access center, determining the specifications for computers, developing disaster recovery plans, and more.

4. Who can be a Community Partner?

This course target individuals playing an administrative or programmatic leadership role within a community organization. Typically Community Partners are Executive Directors, Directors, Assistant/Associate Directors, Coordinators, and Managers. But, we make the selection based on the organization and the role that the individual plays within that organization, regardless of title.

5. Why do you focus on organizational leaders?

For an organization to use information technology effectively, its leaders must have a vision for how it can support the organization's mission, they must be comfortable enough to integrate technology into their personal work practices, and they must know enough to budget, staff, and subcontract appropriately. By partnering one-on-one with a student consultant, the leader has a unique opportunity to build that vision, comfort, and knowledge, no matter where they are starting from.

6. What are the requirements for being a Community Partner?

- Hold a leadership role within your organization.
- Have a computer in your office or one you could or do use in your job.
- Reliably meet with the student consultant 3 hours per week, every week, for about the 13 weeks.
- Come to an on-campus gathering 2 times during the semester. Once at the beginning and once at the end.
- Share information about your organization with the student consultant.
- Read project reports prepared by the student and give the student immediate feedback.
- Complete a brief response form after reading each report and return to the instructor.
- Keep a log of consulting sessions and send to instructors twice during the semester.
- Read the final consulting report. Give feedback to the student immediately.
- Make a brief presentation at the end of the semester (with the student) at the Community Technology Forum. (This is the 2nd on-campus gathering you are required to attend.)

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