

## IT students redesign Madison's 'La Comunidad' Web site

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With all the talents of a leading professional Web site development company, the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater's Wisconsin Center for Information Technology Services (Wi-CITS) offers local businesses the chance to advance their Web site design and development technology.

Wi-CITS, a primarily student-run technology business in the College of Business and Economics, provides information technology services to regional non-profits and small businesses, while giving students real-world experience. The center, which charges at a discounted rate, also works on projects for student organizations and other campus programs.

"Wi-CITS manages development, design and functionality for companies in the area," said Paul Ambrose, associate professor and co-director of Wi-CITS. "The students and the staff often go beyond our regular duties to stay involved in the community. Regional engagement is extremely important and an important aspect of the UW-Whitewater standard."

A Spanish language online and print newspaper company, La Comunidad, became the latest regional business to hire Wi-CITS to update the look and feel of its outdated Web site.

"La Comunidad is a Madison-based journalism company that was looking for a fresh update to their Web site functionality and design," said John Chenoweth, chair of the Information Technology/Business Education Department in the College of Business and Economics, associate professor and co-director of Wi-CITS. "This was a special case because a specific code had to be written as the Web site wanted to be available in both Spanish and English, making the job that much more rewarding for our student workers."

Taking on a challenging Web site such as La Comunidad was interesting and exciting for the staff.

"There are three different aspects to a Web site, the front-end, the back-end, and the site coding," said Amy Caywood, a member of Wi-CITS and a junior at UW-Whitewater majoring in information technology infrastructure. "The front-end contains the content, which is my particular area of expertise, Angela Banike is the expert on images and graphic design while Aaron Patrick is the Web site coding aficionado. We couldn't have pulled off the transformation of La Comunidad's Web site without everyone involved."

"We were extremely impressed with the knowledge of the Wi-CITS team," said Ben Raznick, technical manager of La Comunidad. "The Wi-CITS team did an absolutely incredible job with our site, they gave us a great base to build on and we could not have chosen a better option for a Web design team. We have exactly what we were hoping to have, in fact, a site that has gone well beyond our original goals."

The Wi-CITS team has completed 15 projects and has six to seven more projects under construction.

"Wi-CITS is a different service than going with a professional publisher," said Chenoweth. "Most client projects are smaller than what companies would take on and are normally out of their budget. We essentially have on staff what a leading publishing company has in terms of multimedia, content and imaging. Not all large businesses have these three areas of expertise."

"It is an absolutely perfect partnership; there has not been one glitch that the team could not solve," said Raznick. "Putting our Web site into their hands was a great move for our organization and we are excited to maintain our partnership and continue developing our Web site in new directions."

To sample Wi-CITS work, go to its Web site at [wicits.uww.edu](http://wicits.uww.edu). To visit La Comunidad's Web site visit [www.lacomunidadnews.com](http://www.lacomunidadnews.com). For more information on Wi-CITS, contact Chenoweth at [chenowej@uww.edu](mailto:chenowej@uww.edu) or Ambrose at [ambrosep@uww.edu](mailto:ambrosep@uww.edu).

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