The Web as a Productivity Tool

Brian Burke and Natalie Helbig, CTG project managers, and Jim Costello, CTG web designer, were the guest speakers at the March meeting of the New York State Webmasters’ Guild. Their presentation explained how CTG used its XML-based Web environment to synthesize, analyze, and report on survey data collected in two projects: one for the Library of Congress on State Government Digital Preservation, and the other for the NYS IT Workforce Skills Assessment.

These projects presented two major challenges: to transform masses of survey data into useful reporting formats without extraordinary effort, due to time and budget constraints, and to do it in a way that was reliable, repeatable, and minimized duplication. The presentation focused on three major themes: (1) using the Web to create the product, not only as a final step in the process; (2) blurring the line between the Web and the desktop; and (3) producing outputs from single sources, on demand, in multiple formats.

The presentation detailed how the Web-based approach to these projects streamlined the workflow processes, and how the XML foundation helped to integrate tools and technologies such as web forms, Excel, SPSS, SQL database, PDF, Word, and HTML.

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