



U.S. Department of Energy Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

Bringing you a prosperous future where energy
is clean, abundant, reliable, and affordable

RedDot Satisfaction Survey January 2009

Completed for Sarah Kirchen by Energy Enterprise Solutions, LLC

Introduction and Study Purpose

The Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) and its contractors have now been using the RedDot content management system (CMS) for three years. In that time, we have gotten familiar with how the tool works and its benefits and drawbacks. Now that the initial RedDot migration project is winding down, we are turning our attention to assessing how our current Web site production and maintenance processes are working, and how we can best leverage RedDot to achieve high quality Web sites while keeping production costs down.

As a first step in this assessment process, EERE decided to survey both current EERE internet (not intranet) RedDot users as well as the EERE staff that manages those RedDot sites to learn more about their experiences with and perceptions about RedDot. We also wanted to learn about any barriers that might be hindering the process of creating and maintaining sites effectively.

Specifically, this project set out to answer the following questions:

- Has RedDot made it easier or harder for EERE to do Web work?
- How well is EERE's RedDot technical support (provided by Energy Enterprise Solutions, LLC) working?
- Are EERE Web managers satisfied with having contractors maintain their sites, or is there an interest in having EERE staff get more involved in site maintenance?
- If there is an interest in bringing editing capabilities in house, what are the barriers preventing more EERE staff from working in RedDot, and what could be done to remove them?

How the Study was Conducted

To help us address the study questions, we designed and deployed two surveys, each with a different audience. The RedDot users survey was sent to the 35 people who have current RedDot accounts to work on EERE internet sites. The RedDot managers study went to the 19 EERE staff members that Sarah Kirchen identified as being responsible for managing EERE's internet sites that reside in the CMS.

The surveys were developed and deployed using Survey Monkey (an online survey tool). Each survey consisted of 10 questions, and most provided a space for further comment. Before the surveys were deployed, each was tested by three people for quality assurance (QA) purposes.

Sarah Kirchen deployed the surveys via email, and recipients were given two weeks to complete them online. Survey data were collected anonymously to help ensure that respondents would feel comfortable providing frank feedback.

Results

The complete survey results are available in Appendices A and B at the end of this report. Below, we provide a summary of the main survey findings.

Response Rate and Demographics

Fourteen out of 35 responded to the users survey (response rate = 40%), and seven out of 19 responded to the managers survey (response rate = 37%). All seven of the respondents to the managers survey confirmed that they manage content or budget for at least one EERE site in RedDot. However, although the email invitation to participate in the survey was sent to federal employees, only two of the responses appear to have come from the Department of Energy (DOE). Based on the IP addresses, which Survey

Monkey collects for each respondent, three of the responses came from the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, one came from SENTECH, Inc., and one came from BCS, Inc.

All of the respondents to the users survey were contractors, the majority of whom use RedDot daily or weekly (11/14; 78%). Most of the RedDot users surveyed identify themselves as technical developers or QAers (11/14; 79%), while 29% (4/14) consider themselves as non-technical SmartEditors, and 29% (4/14) are RedDot administrators (it is possible to have multiple roles).

Satisfaction with the RedDot CMS

We collected data from the RedDot users on ease of use, system availability, and speed and performance of the RedDot system. On a scale of 1-4 (with 1 being very dissatisfied and 4 being very satisfied), users report an average satisfaction rating of 2.5 (“satisfied”) with the system. Ease of use received an average rating of 2.7; system availability received a 3.2, and system speed and performance received a 2.3.

Several of the RedDot users voiced positive comments about the system; one was pleased that the system “keeps the site structure and does allow you to undo edits to return to a previous version.” Another user reported “no big problems.” A third commented that “sometimes the system is slow and seems bogged down, but that doesn’t happen often.”

Eight of the RedDot user respondents, as well as three of the RedDot managers, provided specific comments on issues with the RedDot system that could use improvement. Below is a table showing the issues that were voiced by two or more respondents (please note that the majority of these comments came from two of the RedDot users):

Issue	# of Users Voicing Issue	# of Managers Voicing Issue
System performance is unresponsive, seems slow; sometimes there are large delays before updated pages appear on the live server.	5	1
System crashes (times out) when adding a new page (this is a known bug).	3	
HTML syntax and formatting are problematic (system strips out valid tags; unencodes HTML entities; strips out quotation marks).	2	1
Adding features is not straightforward and takes more time.	2	1
Files can be deleted from RedDot, but aren’t always then automatically removed from the live and staging servers (this is a known bug).	2	
System logs user out in the middle of working on a task.	2	
There’s no global search and replace feature for SmartEditors (only administrators).	2	
Would like to have access to see what files are in a site directory on the live server.	2	
Source code view is hard to read (compresses white space; code is all strung together)	2	
Can’t update the “Content Last Updated” date on home pages without the aid of a RedDot administrator (so most home page dates are old even if content isn’t).	2	

Time and Costs

Managers and users were also asked to provide their perceptions on whether the time they spend and costs they incur have increased or decreased since the inception of RedDot. Of the users surveyed, the majority (8/14; 57%) feel that the time they spend posting content has increased. Of the managers surveyed, the majority (5/7; 71 %) report that using RedDot has decreased or made no difference in the time they spend posting content. However, four of the seven managers (57%) feel their costs for posting content have increased.

All six of the comments from RedDot users expressed frustration with the amount of time it takes them to post content using RedDot as compared with the time it took them before their sites went into RedDot. Three of the users report that it was faster to edit files when they had direct access to them, and attribute this to the time it takes to log on, get to the page they want to edit, and then submit that page to workflow. One user also attributes this to poor system response time. Two other users report that simple tasks like updating left navigation or adding/replacing a feature take “at least twice as long” or “up to half an hour or longer” in RedDot.

Some of the comments from the managers paralleled those of the users – one manager stated, “It still seems to take a lot more time to get things posted and/or fixed. There is no fast way to do anything in RedDot...” Another commented that she believes “money is increased since the developers are spending more time to do the same tasks.”

However, another manager stated, “I hear no complaints, but I know I’m not spending any more money.” And while one manager expressed frustration that PDFs and images must still be routed through the site developer for posting, she acknowledged that these postings were in conjunction with the development of new pages, which would have required a QA anyway.

Satisfaction with EES’s RedDot Support and Support Products

Part of the survey focused on satisfaction with the RedDot support that users and managers receive from EES, which includes developing new site templates and other tasks that require a RedDot administrator, developing and QAing pages (elected by some programs), and migrating existing sites into RedDot. In addition, we asked for feedback on the custom support products EES has developed thus far in order to accommodate some of RedDot’s weaknesses.

Users were asked to assess EES’s responsiveness to requests for assistance, turn around time, quality and accuracy, knowledge of RedDot and the EERE standards, and attitude. On a scale of 1-4 (with 1 being very dissatisfied and 4 being very satisfied), users gave EES an overall rating of 3.5 for services provided (“very satisfied”), with no responses less than satisfied. The majority of the comments received were positive; for example, one user said, “Requests for support are handled professionally and completed [on] a timely basis.” To help improve services, one user suggested that EES could be more consistent in providing QAs at stated hours.

Users were also asked to evaluate the RedDot user guide, the asset transfer system (ATS), and the RedDot training that are developed and administered by EES. On the scale of 1-4, the user guide received a rating of 3.1, while the ATS received a 2.6, and the training received a 3.2 (all in the “satisfied” range). One user commented that the training is “very thorough,” and another said that the user guide is “useful.” One user suggested that the user guide could be improved by providing more guidance to developers.

Three users commented on the ATS, which allows developers to transfer images and PDFs up to the live server. They suggested that the current system could be improved by allowing users to see what files already exist in the asset directories on the live servers (this would prevent the possibility of accidentally overwriting files), providing the ability to copy assets down from the server, and developing a way for developers to delete assets that are no longer needed.

Of the managers surveyed, three indicated that they had worked with EES sometime in the past three years to migrate one of their existing sites into RedDot. Two of the managers reported having a positive experience, and one reported having a negative experience. The one comment received was that the “EES staff was very responsive and quality focused.”

Perceptions Regarding the Value of Adopting a CMS

EERE decided to move into a content management system three years ago in order to take advantage of certain features that content management systems offer. As part of this survey, we gathered data from the users and managers regarding their perceptions about the value EERE has gained in adopting a CMS.

One of the features RedDot offers is the ability for non-technical people to update Web content using a What-You-See-Is-What-You-Get (WYSIWYG) interface. On a scale of 1-4 (with 1 being not valuable and 4 being very valuable), both users and managers gave this feature a score of 2.0 (“a little valuable”). One manager commented, “Nontechnical people start out thinking they want to maintain their own site, but in fact are too busy. I’m not sure there is a real need here.” Four RedDot users also expressed their doubts as to the value of this feature; one stated, “It seems that non technical people have a very difficult time using the system and that developers end up doing the work anyway.”

RedDot also offers the ability to update Web content from any desktop with an internet connection. On a scale of 1-4, users gave this feature a score of 2.5 (“valuable”), and managers gave this a score of 2.2 (“a little valuable”). One manager commented that they “can only access RedDot from computers within DOE – VPN access (also time-consuming and requiring hoop-jumping to obtain) has never worked [for us].” Although this appears to be a frustration for some, increased DOE security requirements, which coincided with the implementation of RedDot, require all systems to reside behind a secure firewall. Therefore, VPN must be used by anyone outside the firewall to access DOE systems (this requirement would affect any CMS that EERE chose to implement). Fortunately, the majority of the existing RedDot users (those within DOE or NREL) can access the system from inside the firewall.

Another feature RedDot offers is the ability to control the site templates at the administrator level, which helps ensure that all site templates meet the EERE standards. Users gave this feature a score of 2.8 (“valuable”), and managers gave this a score of 3.2 (“valuable”). User comments ranged from positive to negative on this feature; one user stated, “It’s both a positive and a negative that the templates are controlled at the administrator level because it enforces the standards but provides very little flexibility when you do need to go outside the box.” Comments from managers followed a similar pattern; one manager stated, “I believe there is a benefit to having the template controlled. But there are some problems about what is included in the template. We would like to change the banner graphics and date last updated.”

A final feature we asked about was the idea that changes to the “look and feel” of the EERE design are easier to apply and regulate for quality across the EERE sites (note that EERE has not yet done a redesign, so we have not had occasion to test this feature out yet). Users gave this feature a score of 3.0

(“valuable”), and managers gave it a score of 2.4 (“a little valuable”). While especially users consider this feature valuable, however, comments from both users and managers expressed doubt that the CMS will, in fact, make global design changes easier to implement. For example, one manager stated, “The way the template is set up with multiple stubs for each site, I’m not sure it is easy to change look and feel easily. Working between stubs can be difficult.”

Managers were additionally asked whether they feel RedDot has provided other advantages, or if it has had drawbacks, relative to how content was posted prior to the inception of RedDot. Two of the respondents indicated that RedDot has provided advantages, while three indicated that there have been drawbacks. One advantage cited was that RedDot has “lessened the amount of management time spent on design issues.” Comments on the drawbacks include the increase in developer time required to perform updates, the assertion that non-developers do not want to use the system, and the fact that “weird things happen (pages randomly disappear).” In addition, one manager felt that RedDot has “lessened the amount of management discretion regarding design.”

Use of Contractors versus EERE Staff to Update Web Sites

Since one of the features RedDot offers is the ability for non-technical people to update Web content, EERE staff members now have the ability to perform some site maintenance themselves instead of relying on contractors. None of the managers that responded to the survey indicated that their office or program is currently taking advantage of this feature.

The top three reasons (all of which received an equal score) cited by managers regarding why their office or program chooses not performing the maintenance in house include:

- Their staff is stretched too thin as it is.
- They want someone with Web writing expertise to write and post content.
- The RedDot system seems too complicated for non-technical staff.

Two managers also felt that the EERE standards seem too complicated for their staff to take the time to learn, which has impacted their decision to use contractors instead of EERE staff to update Web content. Note, however, that while implementation of the content standards still requires a manual check, the majority of EERE’s technical standards are automatically implemented when using the RedDot templates and style sheet to create new sites.

Future Custom Enhancements

As part of the survey, RedDot users were asked to select up to four enhancements that could be made to RedDot in order to help them better accomplish their work. Of the 14 people who answered this question, 12 of them felt that the following two enhancements would be useful to them:

- Improving RedDot system speed and performance.
- Configuring the system so that pages submitted to workflow publish to staging each time, instead of only the first time.

Seven users also felt it would be helpful to make the user interface (SmartEdit) more user friendly, five would like to store and manage images using the RedDot Asset Manager (instead of the ATS), four thought a user discussion/troubleshooting forum might be useful, and only two would like the ability for multiple editors to alter the same page prior to submitting it to QA. Two users also noted in the comments section that they would like to be able to see the contents of the directories on the servers.

Conclusions

The survey results show that users and managers are generally satisfied with their experience posting Web content using RedDot. In particular, respondents seem pleased with the RedDot support provided by EES and with most of the custom support products EES has developed to assist users in posting content (especially the RedDot training and the user guide).

The most important perceived value of adopting the CMS appears to be the ability to control the Web site templates at the administrator level. Users, in particular, also like the idea that changes to the site's look and feel are easier to apply and regulate. We'll have an opportunity to test this in the months ahead as we modify the RedDot templates to handle the new energy.gov look and feel.

The results also indicate that there are areas of the user experience that could use improvement. In particular, respondents would like to enhance the system's speed/performance and ease of use, and would like to have the ability to see the HTML and asset files that reside on the servers.

Interestingly, the results suggest that EERE's business processes have not changed much with the advent of RedDot. It appears that technical contractors still perform most or all of the work on EERE Web sites, as opposed to in-house staff or non-technical contractors (11 of the 14 user respondents identified themselves as technical HTML developers). The manager survey respondents, most of whom were contractors apparently asked to complete the survey by their EERE managers, assert that this is because EERE staff are already "stretched too thin" and prefer to have someone with Web expertise writing and posting their content.

Since technical developers are still performing the majority of the content updates for EERE, it is perhaps not surprising that many of them appear to be frustrated by losing the ability to work directly on the HTML files (while they still have access to the code in RedDot, it takes more steps to access the code, and some commented that the code is "hard to read"). The technical nature of the user respondents may also explain, in part, why the fact that non-technical users can now update their Web content is only perceived as marginally valuable.

Interestingly, the EERE business processes stand in marked contrast to those now employed by the energy.gov team, where the majority of the 87 users responsible for updating their content are non-technical. One of the RedDot administrators for this project, Maura Long, reports that they have, "received an overwhelmingly positive response from non-technical users. Every once in a while, however, we might hear some grumbling from more technical users who would like to be able to change the layout of a page or use a different font size, etc. When told that the change must be approved by Public Affairs, who own the design of the energy.gov templates, they respond by labeling the RedDot CMS as being inflexible."

Over time, user and manager perceptions about EERE's RedDot implementation may well change as developers who have never updated EERE sites pre-RedDot are introduced, and as improvements are made to the system performance and "user friendliness" of the SmartEditor interface.

Improvements to the system may additionally encourage more non-technical people to perform some of the minor content updates and improve perceptions that the system is inflexible. In the short term, however, the greatest benefit to improving the system will likely be for the existing developers, by reducing their level of frustration and making it easier for them to complete their work.

Recommendations

There are several steps that can be taken to help address some of the issues raised in this survey. Here are some specific recommendations, which have been prioritized based on the survey comments:

First Priority

- Engage RedDot professional services in an evaluation of our configuration, templates, and business usage of our environment.
- Improve system performance by:
 - Separating publishing services from content management services (publishing is resource intensive)
 - Looking for low cost/high impact means for improving server configuration (memory or processing power)
 - Implementing recommended changes provided by the RedDot professional services evaluation.
- Improve system usability by implementing recommended changes and/or upgrades from RedDot to mitigate the most common sources of frustration from the users.
- Replace the existing ATS (Asset Transfer System). The new system must:
 - Allow users to see the HTML and asset files on the servers (this would prevent the possibility of accidentally overwriting files)
 - Provide the ability to copy assets down from the server
 - Allow developers to delete assets that are no longer needed.
- Look into altering the process of publishing content to the staging server in order to make the process more user friendly.

Second Priority

- Initiate discussions about template items that developers should have permission to alter versus those that should be altered by RedDot administrators only. If technically feasible, provide developers with the ability to edit agreed-upon template items that are currently only editable by RedDot administrators.
- Communicate with users about some of the mistaken impressions that appeared in the comments of the survey about how RedDot works.
- Investigate ways to make it easier for developers to add features through RedDot modification and training.
- Alter workload responsibilities to make it easier for EES staff to conduct the daily QAs at the agreed-upon QA times.
- Assess the user guide and provide more explanation for developers where needed.
- Consider starting a user trouble-shooting forum if RedDot is not able to provide satisfactory solutions to the identified usability and performance issues.

Appendix A: Data from RedDot Users Survey

The survey was sent to 35 people; 14 responded (40% response rate).

Note:

- Three surveys were not counted as part of the total number of responses received because none of the satisfaction questions were answered (only demographic questions were answered).
- Wendy Littman and Michael Thomas were not included in the total count of recipients to which the survey went, since their inclusion on the email was intended only to notify them that the survey had gone out (Michael doesn't use his account, and Wendy wrote the survey).

1. Do you have a RedDot account?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
	Yes	100.0%	14
	No	0.0%	0
	answered question		14
	skipped question		0

2. What role do you play for the RedDot sites you work on? Check all that apply.			
		Response Percent	Response Count
	SmartEditor (non-technical, make occasional edits to pages in RedDot)	28.6%	4
	Developer or QAer (know HTML, regularly create new pages and/or review pages for standards compliance in RedDot)	78.6%	11
	Administrator (set up new site templates, alter workflow/authorizations)	28.6%	4
	answered question		14
	skipped question		0

3. Which of these choices best describes your position?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
	Federal employee	0.0%	0
	Contractor to EERE	100.0%	14
	<i>answered question</i>		14
	<i>skipped question</i>		0

4. How often do you use RedDot, on average?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
	Daily	64.3%	9
	Once a week	14.3%	2
	Once a month	21.4%	3
	Once every 3 months	0.0%	0
	Once every 6 months	0.0%	0
	<i>answered question</i>		14
	<i>skipped question</i>		0

5. Please rate your satisfaction with the RedDot system itself:						
	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Rating Average	Response Count
Ease of use	14.3% (2)	14.3% (2)	57.1% (8)	14.3% (2)	2.71	14
System availability	0.0% (0)	14.3% (2)	50.0% (7)	35.7% (5)	3.21	14
System speed and performance	14.3% (2)	35.7% (5)	50.0% (7)	0.0% (0)	2.36	14
Overall, how would you rate the RedDot system?	15.4% (2)	23.1% (3)	53.8% (7)	7.7% (1)	2.54	13
	answered question					14
	skipped question					0

Comments:

1. A fundamental task such as deleting a page will almost always fail. The file can sometimes be removed from the reddot cms, but it remains on the live and staging servers. Also the basic task of creating a new page almost always leads to an error message. As for ease-of-use, I think the language used on many pop-up windows is vague and not meaningful. (eg Reference Page Vs. Reference Link) The systems performance is also sometimes unresponsive. (eg removing a page from navigation) Reddot also mangles HTML syntax and formatting. (eg it unencodes HTML entities, strips out quotation marks, and compresses whitespace that would make code more readable)
2. The lags can sometimes be an issue; also, simple tasks like cutting and pasting text can be a huge bother (limitations of web-based system?)
3. Creating/opening a new page takes about 1 minute. Seems much longer...Sometimes the system logs me out when I'm in the middle of a process.
4. No big problems. Sometimes there is a big delay before new text is live.
5. Sometimes the system is slow and seems bogged down, but that doesn't happen often.
6. There is no way to associate a page with a left navigation item when the page is more than three levels deep, e.g. to have a left nav "on" and linked to indicate the section a lower level page belongs in and to provide the ability to navigate back up to the top of the section. Cannot create a page outside of the template - for example a pop window used for content that is too wide Cannot add styles or javascript to head portion of pages (which is where they should go) Deleting RedDot pages from the system seems to work very intermittently. Often we have to call EES to delete files for us. We have no way of deleting ancillary files such as pdfs, docs, images, etc. Also, there is no way to see what files are on the production server, so there are probably many unused files out there. RedDot Smart Editor Removes

quotes from attributes and strips out tags that are completely valid (for example when adding links to media files such as Flash). This also makes it impossible to make complex tables 508 compliant. Allows users to paste in garbage code created by Microsoft Word No functionality to create an image map When you need to edit the code, you must work in the source code view, but the code is all strung together without any breaks or white spaces. It's easier to take the code out and work with it in Dreamweaver. QAers have to check the source code in the RedDot text editor to QA a site view source to make sure internal links are coded correctly, that bad Word code hasn't been pasted in, and that no extraneous formatting has been added in through the WYSIWYG. This is very difficult in RedDot because the source code view in RedDot lumps everything into one long string There is no search/replace capability for SmartEditors. SmartEditors cannot update the content last updated date of index pages of site

7. Disadvantages: The system is sporadic in availability and sometimes super-slow. Other times it responds normally but the editing process takes much longer than before. Sometimes I might be working in a page and then save it only to find that it can't re-connect and I lose my edits. Posting items to development is cumbersome and I can't search-and-replace corrections any more. Advantages: Keeps the site structure and does allow you to un-do edits to return to a previous version. Is simple enough to understand although I still only work in source code.
8. It would be much easier and more efficient to have direct access to the pages. It's frustrating that I can't see what's in any given directory.

6. How do you feel the introduction of RedDot has affected the amount of time you spend posting Web content?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
	Increased the time I spend	57.1%	8
	Decreased the time I spend	7.1%	1
	No difference in the time I spend	7.1%	1
	N/A (I didn't post content before RedDot)	28.6%	4
	answered question		14
	skipped question		0

Please explain your response (comment box):

1. A simple task such as updating left navigation, or adding a feature image takes me at least twice in Reddot as long as it does using other systems.
2. Replacing a feature button previously took approximately 2-5 minutes and now it takes up to half an hour or longer to go through the process set one up in the reddot system and there are now different choices for different feature styles.
3. When I could edit files directly, it was much quicker. Ever since our site went into RedDot, it takes much longer.
4. Before RedDot, I made the changes directly in the HTML file and FTPed it for NREL to upload. Logging into RedDot and getting to the appropriate page takes a little more time than when I used to access the file from our network. And sometimes when the system is slow, it can take up to 40 minutes to make a small content change. The Smart Editors seem wary to go in and make small content edits, so the Developers being the main users. We often make changes to a file more than once and have to submit a page to workflow more than one time. It would save time if edits to a page would show up on www2 each time it is submitted to workflow. RedDot only seems to take the edits after the first time it is submitted to workflow (subsequent submissions are not taken).
5. RedDot CMS creates an unnecessary barrier to web content updates. It crashes almost every time I add a new page.
6. Before I would simply open the document, make the edit, save, upload and then contact NREL to review. Now I have to log-in to the DOE network, log-in to RedDot, go through several clicks to then browse to the page to edits, click a couple more times to get to the edit screen, save, return to the home page of RedDot to submit the page to workflow, then log-out.

7. Please rate your satisfaction with the service provided by the RedDot support staff at EES:							
	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
Responsiveness to requests for technical assistance	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	28.6% (4)	50.0% (7)	21.4% (3)	3.64	14
Turn around time to complete requests	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	50.0% (7)	28.6% (4)	21.4% (3)	3.36	14
Quality and accuracy of the work completed	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	42.9% (6)	35.7% (5)	21.4% (3)	3.45	14
Knowledge of RedDot	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	28.6% (4)	50.0% (7)	21.4% (3)	3.64	14
Knowledge of EERE standards and processes	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	28.6% (4)	42.9% (6)	28.6% (4)	3.60	14
Attitude and professionalism of staff	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	28.6% (4)	50.0% (7)	21.4% (3)	3.64	14
Overall, how would you rate the service provided by the RedDot support staff at EES?	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	42.9% (6)	35.7% (5)	21.4% (3)	3.45	14
	answered question						14
	skipped question						0

How could the RedDot support service be improved, if you feel it needs to be (comment box)?

1. Requests for support are handled professionally, and completed in a timely basis.
2. I haven't had to interact with RedDot support staff; the training session was very good.
3. Have firmer QA times so that we can tell our clients when their changes will go live. During RedDot training, I was informed that the QAs were done 3 times a day at 8:00 am, 11:00 am, and 3:00 pm. If I were to submit a change at 5:00 pm the day before, it sometimes would not go live until the afternoon on the next day (rather than at 8:00 am the next morning).
4. The support is fine. Karl especially is terrific to work with. But the product is a problem.

8. Please rate your satisfaction with the products EES has developed to help support EERE's implementation of RedDot:							
	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
RedDot user guide	0.0% (0)	7.1% (1)	71.4% (10)	14.3% (2)	7.1% (1)	3.08	14
Asset transfer system (ATS)	14.3% (2)	14.3% (2)	50.0% (7)	7.1% (1)	14.3% (2)	2.58	14
RedDot training	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	72.7% (8)	18.2% (2)	9.1% (1)	3.20	11
	<i>answered question</i>						14
	<i>skipped question</i>						0

Comments:

1. The ATS is a blind transfer. I can't see what's in the directories. The possibility of overwriting files is troubling. Also, I rely on EES to do trivial things like creating directories. Furthermore, cleanup of out-dated files from directories is impossible without knowing/seeing what's there.
2. The RedDot user guide advises you to consult your developer and doesn't have instructions for the developer. The ATS system was lacking you had to upload one file at a time which is time very consuming when posting multiple pdfs or images. The FTP process which has been put in place leaves great room for errors b/c you can't see the files that are currently reside on the server. If you need access to a file for a client there isn't a way to copy things down from the server or see what has been used in the past.
3. I usually contact another coder who is more experienced than I am when I have problems. Haven't used RedDot support much.
4. The RedDot training is very thorough.
5. The user guide is useful. The ATS works fine, except for the fact that we don't have anyway to remove files and we can't see what's up there so we may be overwriting existing files or creating duplicates.

9. EERE moved to the RedDot content management system (CMS) so we could take advantage of the CMS features listed below. How valuable have these features been to you in completing your EERE Web work?

	Not valuable	A little valuable	Valuable	Very valuable	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
Non-technical people can update Web content.	42.9% (6)	7.1% (1)	14.3% (2)	14.3% (2)	21.4% (3)	2.00	14
Content can be updated from any desktop with an internet connection.	21.4% (3)	14.3% (2)	28.6% (4)	14.3% (2)	21.4% (3)	2.45	14
Templates are controlled at the administrator level, providing confidence that all site templates meet EERE standards.	21.4% (3)	7.1% (1)	14.3% (2)	35.7% (5)	21.4% (3)	2.82	14
Changes to the "look and feel" of the EERE design are easier to apply and regulate for quality across EERE sites.	7.1% (1)	14.3% (2)	14.3% (2)	28.6% (4)	35.7% (5)	3.00	14
	answered question						14
	skipped question						0

Comments:

1. The template imposes some flawed issues. For example, the footer "content last updated" date is often wrong on pages. Sometimes it's off by several years. This is important especially on high traffic pages such as program home pages.
2. Changes to the look and feel require republishing entire sites instead of just one include file that previously updated all EERE pages. Template images (ie. header graphics) are more difficult to update b/c EES must make the necessary changes to the template even though it's just a simple image replacement.

3. I'm unsure of the value of a CMS regarding non-technical staff (Q1). Only 1 or 2 people in this Program edit the website, and we both have some experience with Frontpage, Dreamweaver, etc. I think that expanded HTML training would have served the same purpose as RedDot (same power to change website without the hassle of a web-based system). I can't comment on the CMS "Templates" feature, but I can imagine that it would be very helpful.
4. The fact that we have to ask RedDot people to change navigation is a big problem most of the time. It would be much easier and quicker if we could change it. I don't know of any non-technical people who would dare to try to change content.
5. It seems that non technical people have a very difficult time using the system and that developers end up doing the work anyway. It's both a positive and a negative that the templates are controlled at the administrator level because it enforces standards but provides very little flexibility when you do need to go outside the box. RedDot does not seem flexible in handling changes to look and feel across the site. Any change to the template seems to be a lot of work for EES.
6. RedDot is too complex for most non-technical people so they don't use the way it was intended. It ties the hands of the technical people with unnecessary restrictions that makes the process of maintaining the web site more complicated.

10. There are several enhancements we could make to RedDot. Which of the following would best help you accomplish your work? Please select up to four of the following choices:

		Response Percent	Response Count
	Create the ability for multiple editors to alter the same page prior to submitting it to QA.	14.3%	2
	Improve RedDot system speed and performance.	85.7%	12
	Make the SmartEdit text editor interface more user friendly.	50.0%	7
	Store/manage images using the RedDot Asset Manager.	35.7%	5
	Configure system so pages submitted to workflow publish to staging each time, instead of only the first time.	85.7%	12
	Create a RedDot users discussion/troubleshooting forum.	28.6%	4
	answered question		14
	skipped question		0

Are there additional enhancements that you would find useful (comment box)?

1. I'd like to see the links in the automated emails function properly. (eg Preview, and Open page in Smart Edit) Code syntax coloring is also a basic feature that all HTML editors have now. Reddot's HTML editor is far behind and lacking many basic functionalities.
2. Fix the create and connect a new page error; which occurs about 90% of the time.
3. *Make it easier to cut + paste text - current text editor is a huge hassle.
4. Just wondering when the new fixed width template will be implemented in RedDot. It would make our site much more consistent if it was implemented.
5. I do not use the text editor when making changes.
6. The Asset manager is useful in some ways, because you can see what files are up there and delete them. But it is very inefficient because you have to load one file at a time and it takes several screens to do it. Also, you cannot rename files, you have to delete them and reupload them. And, finally, it did not allow us to build a deeper file structure to organize documents. You could only go one level deep.
7. I would like to be able to see the complete contents of any given directory. Note to choice of speed above: This would greatly improve my use of the system in that much of my time is spent waiting on the server to respond.

Appendix B: Data from RedDot Managers Survey

This survey was sent to 19 people; 7 responded (37% response rate).

Notes:

- Two surveys were not counted as part of the total number of responses received because none of the satisfaction questions were answered (only demographic questions were answered).
- Kevin Brosnahan was not included in the total count of recipients to which the survey went, since his inclusion on the email was intended only to notify him that the survey was taking place.

1. Do you manage the content or budget for at least one EERE Web site residing in the RedDot content management system (CMS)?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
	Yes	100.0%	7
	No	0.0%	0
	answered question		7
	skipped question		0

2. Now that we're beyond the initial learning curve in learning to use the system, how do you feel the introduction of RedDot has affected the amount of time your program/office spends getting Web content posted?

		Response Percent	Response Count
	Increased the time we spend	28.6%	2
	Decreased the time we spend	28.6%	2
	No difference in the time we spend	14.3%	1
	I don't know	28.6%	2
	<i>answered question</i>		7
	<i>skipped question</i>		0

Please explain your response (comment box):

1. I believe the connection slows us down, pages are unresponsive and sometimes time out. Publishing pages take longer - I hear up to 5 minutes. Adding features is not straightforward and takes more time. Adding left navs takes longer than previous system. Developers spend time reworking code that RedDot strips out.
2. Images and PDFs must still be routed through EES for posting. In addition, Red Dot formatting issues are common; EES must fix format with hard-coding in html for 50 percent of all content.
3. It still seems to take a lot more time to get things posted and/or fixed. There is no fast way to do anything in RedDot, and we're often constrained by what we can do because the system won't allow it.
4. I hear no complaints, but I know I'm not spending any more \$\$.

3. How do you feel RedDot has affected the amount of money your program/office spends posting Web content?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
	Increased the money we spend	57.1%	4
	Decreased the money we spend	0.0%	0
	No difference in the money we spend	28.6%	2
	I don't know	14.3%	1
	<i>answered question</i>		7
	<i>skipped question</i>		0

Please explain your response (comment box):

1. I believe the money is increased since the developers are spending more time to do the same tasks.
2. EES may have to bill more hours due to our inability to use Red Dot when posting PDFs or images, but we have been developing new pages throughout the time we've been using Red Dot, which would need EES vetting anyway.
3. Double the time, double the cost.

4. EERE moved to a content management system (CMS) so we could take advantage of the features listed below. How valuable do you feel these features have been for your program/office?							
	Not valuable	A little valuable	Valuable	Very valuable	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
Non-technical people can update Web content.	33.3% (2)	33.3% (2)	33.3% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	2.00	6
Content can be updated from any desktop with an internet connection.	33.3% (2)	16.7% (1)	16.7% (1)	16.7% (1)	16.7% (1)	2.20	6
Templates are controlled at the administrator level, providing confidence that all site templates meet EERE standards.	16.7% (1)	0.0% (0)	33.3% (2)	50.0% (3)	0.0% (0)	3.17	6
Changes to the "look and feel" of the EERE design are easier to apply and regulate for quality across EERE sites.	33.3% (2)	0.0% (0)	33.3% (2)	16.7% (1)	16.7% (1)	2.40	6
	answered question						6
	skipped question						1

Comments:

1. Nontechnical people start out thinking they want to maintain their own site, but in fact are too busy. I'm not sure there is a real need here. It is my understanding that content cannot be updated from any desktop. I believe there is a benefit to having the template controlled. But there are some problems about what is included in the template. We would like to change the banner graphics and date last updated. The way the template is set up with multiple stubs for each site, I'm not sure it is easy to change look and feel easily. Working between stubs can be difficult.
2. Red Dot is still a technical system on its own, and training requires a badge, meaning that contractors have a long wait to get into the system, and then a learning curve to actually become functional in it. In addition, we can only access Red Dot from computers within DOE - VPN access (also time-consuming

and requiring hoop-jumping to obtain) has never worked. EES enforces EERE standards anyway, but it's nice to be able to change text without affecting the rest of the template.

3. The uniformity in the template is valuable, but it's also restrictive. Any exceptions or changes are difficult and costly to make. Reddot has not been easy for non-technical people. Most have found it frustrating enough to give up and simply hand it over to developers. No different than before.

5. Do you feel the use of RedDot has provided other advantages to your program/office, relative to how you posted content before RedDot?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
	Yes	40.0%	2
	No	40.0%	2
	I don't know	20.0%	1
	answered question		5
	skipped question		2

Please explain your response (comment box):

1. Prior to Red Dot, web content was managed by NREL staff, not DOE/on-site contract personnel.
2. It's been more of a barrier than anything.
3. Absolutely none
4. Lessened the amount of management time spent on design issues.

6. Do you feel there have been drawbacks to your program/office in using RedDot, relative to how you posted content before RedDot?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
	Yes	50.0%	3
	No	16.7%	1
	I don't know	33.3%	2
	answered question		6
	skipped question		1

Please explain your response (comment box):

1. In general the system takes longer for developers and nondevelopers do not want use the system.
2. It takes longer to do anything. Seems more difficult for developers. Weird things happen (pages randomly disappear).
3. Lessened the amount of management discretion regarding design.

7. Since non-technical people can update Web sites using RedDot, EERE staff can now perform some site maintenance themselves instead of relying on contractors. Is your program/office currently taking advantage of this option?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
	Yes	0.0%	0
	No	100.0%	6
	I'm not sure	0.0%	0
	answered question		6
	skipped question		

8. If you answered “no” to the question above, please tell us why you feel your program/office has chosen not to have EERE staff update content in RedDot? Select all that apply:

		Response Percent	Response Count
	I didn't know the opportunity existed.	0.0%	0
	Our staff is stretched too thin as it is.	66.7%	4
	We want someone with Web writing expertise to write and post our content.	66.7%	4
	The EERE standards seem too complicated for our staff to take the time to learn.	33.3%	2
	The RedDot system seems too complicated for our staff to take the time to learn.	66.7%	4
	Other (please explain; see below):	50.0%	3
	answered question		6
	skipped question		1

Other (comment box):

1. Nontechnical staff report that RedDot takes too much time and is not intuitive. It's faster for them to go to a developer.
2. Biomass Program website maintenance and development is a major part of BCS, Incorporated contract expectations, as part of their communications support.
3. We tried it and it was too frustrating. The system didn't seem to work as it was supposed to, and developers had to go in and fix things anyway. Wasn't worth it for non-technical folks to bother.

9. Were you involved over the past three years with the process of migrating at least one of the preexisting EERE sites into RedDot? (Note that this process was primarily handled by the RedDot administrators at EES.)			
		Response Percent	Response Count
	Yes	50.0%	3
	No	50.0%	3
	I don't remember	0.0%	0
	answered question		6
	skipped question		1

10. If you answered "yes" to the question above, how do you feel about your overall experience with migrating your existing site(s) into RedDot?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
	Positive	66.7%	2
	Negative	33.3%	1
	Indifferent	0.0%	0
	answered question		3
	skipped question		4

Please explain your response (comment box):

1. EES staff was very responsive and quality focused.