Science Societies

# Societies update look of websites

## Needed Changes Make Sites ‘Device Compatible’

By Susan V. Fisk

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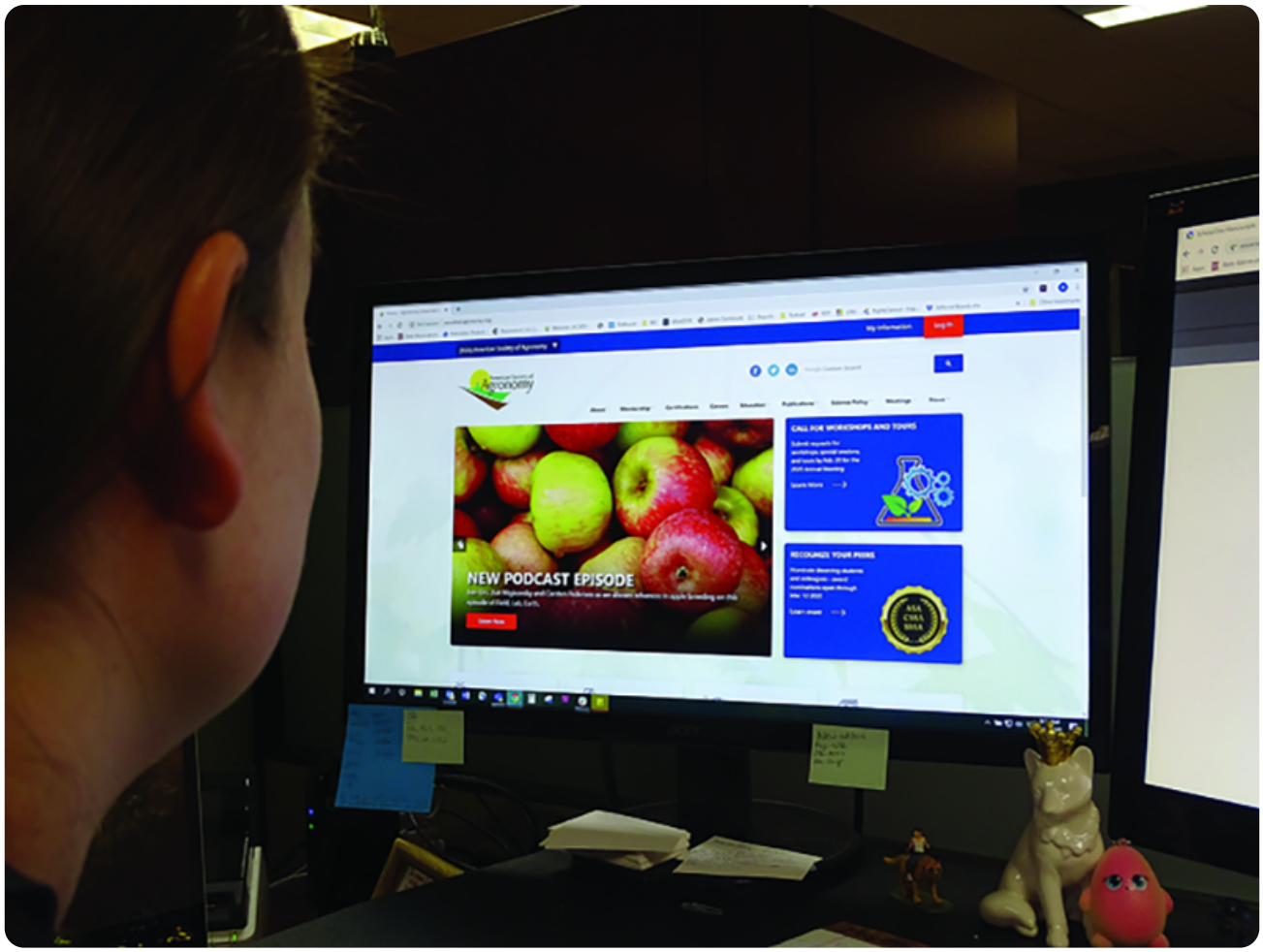

*The new website designs offer a consistent look across all devices and improve navigation, reducing the number of clicks needed to find information.*

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Logging into any of our three Society websites should be much easier by the time this article is published. And, that's good news for all our members, authors, meeting attendees, the public, and others who use our websites!

"Our websites are critical in providing the door into the Societies," says Nick Goeser, CEO of the Societies. "These sites connect us to one another and to newly interested people and organizations—advancing our missions to support science in society. I am excited to see the website updates come alive, knowing they will ease accessibility of information and connections internally and externally."

The process started in 2019 with user testing. "This was important to provide us with information on what was working and where visitors ran into navigational challenges," explains Susan Chapman, Director of Membership. "Our designers worked with a small group of members, interested audiences, and those unfamiliar with us to uncover key points to guide the redesign. Takeaways highlighted that visitors use the slideshows to view content and actively use the top navigation. In addition, the 'personas' features on the SSSA site provided a positive experience. Challenges include account login navigation and difficulty of moving through pages with lots of content."

## Fewer Clicks, Easier Navigation on All Devices

A main goal of the redesign was to reduce the number of clicks users had to make to get the information they wanted. In addition, mobile and tablet users will find the sites

easier to navigate.

“The redesign of our websites gives them a consistent look and feel no matter the device,” says Ian Popkewitz, Director of IT/Operations. “These sites are fully responsive, which means they work well with all screen sizes. On the maintenance side, the new site designs will allow our staff who create content to have more flexibility when creating pages. We developed templates that are easy to create and to add content to, which keep the look consistent throughout the sites.”

All three sites—ASA, CSSA, and SSSA—all have new, streamlined looks. Learning from the success of the former SSSA site, all three now have “persona” buttons on the middle of the pages. This is to help direct non-member audiences to content they want. The slideshow remains to promote important information. In the upper right-hand corner are key items members need to know—the most urgent deadlines.

Scrolling to the Membership tab on the navigation bar (the colored bar the runs across our main page), you’ll see that the content is more highly organized. At the bottom of the page are categories to help you quickly find the information you need. And, the My Account login has been redesigned and streamlined.

Each site has its own dedicated content about its Society’s science. This information has been upgraded on the older sites in recent years by members of the ASA, CSSA, and SSSA Science Communications Committees and the Public and Science Communications staff. Views of these pages by the public continue to grow each year. Plans are under way to keep adding additional content with these committees. On their public pages, ASA and CSSA also promote their “At Work” videos, and SSSA promotes the International Year of Soils videos, which are still well watched.

You'll continue to find information about Science Policy, Education, Publications, and Meetings on the website—all with more reader-friendly formats. Another key upgrade for staff is that behind the scenes, we will have the power of Google Analytics to gather statistics about page or subject views.

Questions? Contact your membership representatives at Send Message or 608-273-8080.

**Website Redesign Team**

The website redesign team included team leaders Susan Chapman, Ian Popkewitz, and Susan Fisk along with Beth Jacques, Rachel Leege, Dan Bank, Chad Bishop, Steven Ceithamer, Abby Morrison, Lacey Edwardson, Julie McClure, Katie Reiels, Michele Lovejoy, and Eric Welsh.

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