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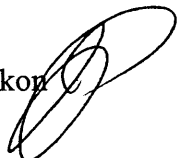
September 23, 2004

## AGENDA ITEM

For Meeting of: 9-30-04

### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Commission

**FROM:** James A. Pehrkonig  
Staff Director 

**SUBJECT:** Web Site

FEC staff recently completed a significant upgrade and redesign of the agency's web site. Since the last major overhaul in 1999, the amount of information available on the site has grown dramatically. As an unfortunate byproduct of that growth, visitors to the site have had difficulty finding the information they need. The new site offers a completely new look and feel that simplifies navigation, provides additional tools for locating information and organizes information in a clearer, more coherent fashion. Visitors will also notice that new technologies provide opportunities for a more interactive web experience, tailored to their specific needs.

#### **Finding Information**

The site's most obvious navigational improvement is the new cascading menu system that allows users to access information several layers deep in the site with a single mouse click. This menu system appears on nearly every page of the site, making it easy for users to jump from one page to another. The names of menu items have also been modified to clarify the types of information available on each page. For example, the former "Campaign Finance Law Resources" category has been divided and renamed "Help with Reporting and Compliance" and "Law and Regulations."

Perhaps the most noteworthy new tool for locating information on the site is the new search engine. Using this tool, visitors can simply type in a word or phrase and find every page on the site that contains that text.

#### **New Features**

In addition to these improvements, the site offers several new features. For example, the Commission Calendar helps users keep track of reporting deadlines, upcoming conferences and workshops, Commission meetings, comment deadlines for rules and advisory opinions and more, through an easy-to-use calendar interface. Individual calendar entries link directly to detailed information, such as report notices and open

meeting agenda documents. Using the calendar, visitors can quickly discover what is happening at the FEC.

The site also features a robust new enforcement section that includes the Enforcement Query System, information on closed MURs, the Alternative Dispute Resolution program, the Administrative Fine program, and—for the first time—it provides access to final audit reports issued by the Commission.

### **New Technologies**

In developing the new site, the Information Technology Division has implemented a tiered web site management system that allows Commission staff with content expertise to create, update and maintain web pages. IT staff, in turn, will function in a technical support and oversight role. This approach should result in more coherent organization and presentation of information, without sacrificing technical functionality.

Additionally, as noted above, the new site introduces dynamic, interactive web pages—such as the calendar—that allow visitors to select from information stored in a database to tailor the display to suit their needs. This type of interactive technology is likely to figure prominently in future web development.

While it is impossible to predict where technological advances may lead, the new site structure offers an excellent foundation on which to build.