

DEVELOPING THE REQUIREMENT TO RESTRUCTURE THE IFATCA WEBSITE

Presented by IFATCA 2030+ Task Force

SUMMARY

This paper explains the necessary steps required to develop a new website platform for IFATCA. It presents the various arguments necessary to consider before embarking on such a project, highlights where the required funds should be sought and proposes the creation of a working group/ task force that will implement the platform. It also proposes that Directors approve the creation of a budget and the adoption of a timescale within which the project should be completed.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Following research from questionnaire and most importantly, workshops with membership at the 62nd Annual conference, Montego Bay, Jamaica, it was evident that the Directors and Delegates felt that IFATCA's online platform (www.ifatca.org) needed to evolve.
- 1.2. Considerable work has been invested into the creation of the website following its conception in 1998. The website has undergone transformations after its introduction. Notably, a newer design and a wiki search engine have been introduced. The upkeep of the website requires regular work.
- 1.3. As is the nature of information technology and in particular the internet, new hardware and software continuously evolve to allow a more immersive and user-friendly experience. The current website is a valuable reference tool; however, a new platform will increase the user interface experience and allow IFATCA to keep up to date records of MA contact details (IFATCA's financial and communication lifeline), through dedicated logins. It would also be a perfect platform on which to offer training packages. A dynamic website would negate the requirement to develop a costly 'APP' as real time information, planning tools and packages could easily be displayed on various hardware (phones, tablets, laptops etc).

- 1.4. The update of the IFATCA website is seen as an important step by which the Federation can respond to the needs of the MAs and represent the face of the IFATCA to the outside world.
- 1.5. This will be a considerable project to undertake and as such, the necessary input to produce something that can truly showcase IFATCA, will require a dedicated working group, time and associated financial resources.
- 1.6. Adherence to the IFATCA vision and mission statements and our core values should form an integral and essential part of the website's design.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1. Building a business case:

- 2.1.1. An assessment of business problem or opportunity, benefits, risk, costs, technical solutions, timescale, impact on operations, organisational capability to deliver the project outcomes.
- 2.1.2. If a project is worth doing, we need a defined goal, identify what is stopping us from reaching that goal, evaluate how much change is required to overcome the problem, and then ask ourselves if we certain that this will solve the problem
- 2.1.3. Our goal has been defined through our mission and vision statements. These quite clearly show that we value communication, training and guidance.
 - 2.1.3.●. *To enhance air traffic safety, to promote the air traffic control profession and to shape the future of air traffic management.*
 - 2.1.3.●. *IFATCA is the global voice of air traffic controllers. It furthers air traffic safety, influences the sustainable evolution of aviation and embraces all members in its community. The apolitical federation provides guidance, representation, training and other services to advance the status and professionalism of air traffic control. It collaborates with other international organisations to achieve mutual goals.*
- 2.1.4. In order to reach a worldwide membership, a common platform is required for the membership to ensure access to information and resources. This information needs to be kept up to date in a timely fashion. This platform should also allow IFATCA to ensure that its contact details for MAs are current thereby ensuring business continuity (through invoice distribution). Training packages, interactive information exchange (forums, webinars) would also be required in order to meet our mission and vision goals.

- 2.1.5. The website is also the quickest means by which IFATCA can publish its public position statements and editorial opinion articles to external agencies such as the media, future Member Associations and our sister international organisations. It should be seen as our business card.
- 2.1.6. IFATCA currently has a website that enables some of our goals to be met. The necessity of this website was first identified in 1998 and introduced at the 2005 Melbourne Conference (IAM Ch.5.1). It has been continuously updated since that time (e.g. wikIFATCA), although has not seen a substantial redesign for the past 10 years. Keeping the website updated requires significant effort by dedicated individuals. The current platform does not allow for example; individual access for MAs, personalised MA pages, contact details checking, interactive training packages, forums or notice boards - this would be covered by the PWA.

2.2. Risks and considerations that are involved with a new website:

- 2.2.1.●. Cost effectiveness; a cost benefit analysis of the safeguards, including selection, acquisition, placement, maintenance, testing, and repair
- 2.2.1.●. Minimal human intervention; manual functions are the weakest point in any system
- 2.2.1.●. Information. Scalability (adapting to our dynamic needs), portability (changing provider), does it cater to all devices and browsers?
- 2.2.1.●. Sustainability; the ability to maintain the system
- 2.2.1.●. Auditability; permits the system to be monitored and tested
- 2.2.1.●. Accountability; responsibility for performance
- 2.2.1.●. Recoverability

2.3. Costs

- 2.3.1. The projection of the costs involved in a website development are difficult to identify accurately. Costs can include the use of a professional developer to ensure the highest of standards, web hosting, design template, SSL certificate, maintenance, add-ons, plug-ins and potentially search engine optimisation.
- 2.3.2. DIY websites, web builders and the use of a professional web developer are options that can determine costs.
- 2.3.3. Whereas the idea of creating a website in house for IFATCA is the most cost effective, it relies on the dedication and knowledge of several

individuals to complete the work. As is the nature of a voluntary organisation, it is difficult to ensure that the meeting of deadlines, consistent participation and that defined standards are strictly adhered to, without demotivating volunteers. We are not subject matter specialists nor contractually obliged to IFATCA.

- 2.3.4. Web builders are online tools that enable the creation of a website with significantly less involvement by volunteers. However, this is still a labour intensive task and the same problems, as mentioned above, are likely to be encountered
- 2.3.5. Using a professional web designer ensures high standards, on-time and on-budget delivery of the product.
- 2.3.6. Maintenance costs should be considered
- 2.3.7. Local tax regulations should be taken into consideration when choosing the final provider in order to minimise ancillary costs incurred.

2.4. **Timescale**

- 2.4.1. The 2030+ task force believes that a timescale of 2 years is sufficient to establish the requirements of an interactive website, identify the tools with which the website can be developed, and manage the transition to the new platform.
- 2.4.2. A timescale of 2 years is appropriate in order to fulfil the objectives to encompass the spirit of IFATCA's vision and mission when completing this project.

2.5. **Working Group/ Task Force**

- 2.5.1. The working group should be composed of volunteers from each region to ensure that the broadest range of views and experience are considered. Regional VPs are best placed to identify such candidates. The Executive Board can also nominate a suitable candidate as Chair. The working group should focus on the IFATCA vision and mission statements and the EDI framework when conducting their work.
- 2.5.2. The working group should meet regularly with the Communications Coordinator and report to the IFATCA Deputy President, in order to ensure oversight and conformity.
- 2.5.3. The Terms of Reference of this working group could contain the following items:

- 2.5.3.●. Background

A need has been identified to provide IFATCA with a new website. This website will supplement the current platform's content with an increased interactive, individually tailored and dynamic platform that will address the future demands of the Federation. It will provide the 'go to' experience for MAs to access information and also for external agencies when they require information about the ATC profession and industry. Adherence to the IFATCA vision and mission statements and our core values shall form an integral part of the website's design. This will be undertaken in close cooperation with the Communications Coordinator.

- The Working Group/TaskForce shall use the "Guidelines for the creation of an IFATCA PWA" information paper by the 2030+ Task Force as a requirements checklist for the development of a PWA for IFATCA.

2.5.3.●. **Scope**

The working group should consider the following functions from a new web platform:

Project time scale: max 2 years to delivery

User Authentication: Implement secure login methods, such as email and password, or social media integration, to ensure only authorised members can access the app.

Information Sharing: Provide features for posting and sharing various types of content, such as text, images, and documents, with options for public and private sharing.

Real-time Updates: Include push notifications to alert users of new posts, messages, or important announcements.

Member Directory: Incorporate a searchable member directory with profiles, contact information, and roles within the organisation. (A55)

Discussion Forums: Create dedicated spaces for members to engage in discussions, ask questions, and exchange ideas.

Events Calendar: Include a calendar to display upcoming events, meetings, workshops, and other important dates.

Document Repository: Offer a repository for storing and accessing organisational documents, forms, and resources. An ideal place for publishing conference working papers, rather than by email.

Accessibility: Ensure the app is accessible to individuals with disabilities, incorporating features like screen reader compatibility and adjustable font sizes.

Feedback Mechanism: Integrate a feedback channel for users to suggest improvements and report issues within the app.

Analytics: Implement analytics to gather insights into usage, user engagement, and popular features, guiding future enhancements.

Maintenance and Updates

Canadian security and internet laws, local tax.. etc

Electronic voting function possibility

Possibility of 2 or more sections: one for general members, one for working groups, EB.. etc

Consider 3 web developers: for best price and quality.

- **Membership Arrangements:** Up to 8 persons, ideally 2 from each region. Selected by the EB based on experience, diversity, creativity, and teamwork, a WG/TF Chair will be appointed from the group. The Chair will report to DP who will inform the rest of the EB of the activities of the task force. The membership of the taskforce will be determined following a number of criteria including, but not limited to: geographical representation, skills, experience, equity and diversity. The Chairperson, in consultation with the IFATCA Executive Board, may elect to revisit the composition and membership of the taskforce periodically to ensure the membership fits the objectives of the taskforce and/or the overall objectives of the Federation. Working Methods: WG/TF will meet via teleconferences as scheduled by the Chair.

2.6. Funding

2.6.1. IFATCA resources are limited and therefore must be used wisely. The annual budget is understandably tightly controlled and scrutinised. In order to fund a project of this importance, it may be necessary to draw down monies currently allocated to the substantial reserve fund. EVPF is best placed to identify from which particular reserve fund the money should be allocated.

2.6.2. The IAM describes the reserve fund as:

Reserve Fund

2.1.1. This fund is established as the specific membership equity account. (Amman 11.A.14)

2.1.2. This fund is fed through affiliation fees levied upon new Member Associations and Associate Professional Members, as well as through annual credit balances directed accordingly.

2.6.3. The reserve funds for 2021 and 2022 are highlighted below.

6. Restricted net assets

Reserves are appropriated from the net assets of the year as follows:

	Balance, beginning of year	Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenses	Transfer between reserves	Internal restrictions	2021 (US\$)
Reserve	372,687	-	-	-	372,687
Controller reserve	60,941	-	-	-	60,941
Legal contingency reserve	4,880	-	-	-	4,880
Financial circumstances reserve	18,939	(7,983)	-	-	10,956
Equipment reserve	1,287	-	-	-	1,287
Conference attendance reserve	45,273	-	-	-	45,273
Travel assistance reserve	5,000	-	-	-	5,000
ANC representative reserve	43,281	-	-	-	43,281
Regional meeting attendance reserve	15,000	-	-	-	15,000
Training reserve	3,400	-	-	-	3,400
	570,688	(7,983)	-	-	562,705

6. Restricted net assets

Reserves are appropriated from the net assets of the year as follows:

	Balance, beginning of year	Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenses	Transfer between reserves	Transfer between net assets	2022 (US\$)
Reserve	372,687	-	-	200,000	572,687
Controller reserve	60,941	-	-	-	60,941
Legal contingency reserve	4,880	-	-	-	4,880
Financial circumstances reserve	10,956	(21,041)	-	50,000	39,915
Equipment reserve	1,287	-	-	-	1,287
Conference attendance reserve	45,273	-	-	-	45,273
Travel assistance reserve	5,000	-	-	-	5,000
ANC representative reserve	43,281	-	-	-	43,281
Regional meeting attendance reserve	15,000	-	-	-	15,000
Training reserve	3,400	-	-	-	3,400
	<u>562,705</u>	<u>(21,041)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>250,000</u>	<u>791,664</u>

- 2.6.4. The 2030+ task force has conducted some research into the costs involved in the creation of websites. Various options exist as highlighted in 2.3 of this paper. We have established that the use of a professional web designer is the most suitable for our project. This is, however, also the most expensive option.
- 2.6.5. A US based web developer platform (www.designrush.com) includes quotes from over 30 companies. The average costs of website development are situated between USD50 and USD150 per hour.
- 2.6.6. The 2030+ task force believes that an initial budget, subject to Director's approval of USD20,000 would be sufficient to create a new website platform. In the event that extra funds are required, then the request for these should be put forward to Directors to consider.
- 2.6.7. The creation of a separate reserve fund for website development would require Director's approval, however as is visible from the amounts available, even if the whole proposed budget of USD20,000 is spent on this project, the overall impact is minimal for a maximal return on investment for us as a federation.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1. An appropriate business case has been presented that provides the required evidence to proceed with this project.
- 3.2. The risks, considerations and associated cost areas have been identified.
- 3.3. The use of a professional web designer is the most suitable solution for our needs.
- 3.4. The 2030+ task force believes that an initial budget, subject to Director's approval of USD20,000 would be sufficient to create a new website platform.
- 3.5. The 2030+ task force has suggested the terms of reference required to form an appropriate work group/ task force and has defined a time frame of 2 years within which work shall be completed.

4. DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1. The Executive Board shall form a working group/ task force that will facilitate the development of the website platform.
- 4.2. This working group/ task force, in collaboration with the Executive Board shall appoint a professional website designer and manage the development and implementation thereof.
- 4.3. EVPF shall identify the most appropriate reserve fund budget, or create a new fund, to enable the development of the new website platform.
- 4.4. The initial allocation of funds shall not exceed USD20,000 without seeking further acceptance from Directors.
- 4.5. The website platform should be completed by the 65th IFATCA Annual Conference in 2026, with an interim report by the working group at the 64th IFATCA Annual Conference in Abu Dhabi in 2025.

5. REFERENCES

5.1. *The IFATCA Web Site*

5.3.1. *At its October 1998 meeting, the Executive Board decided to set up an IFATCA internet web site with the objective of becoming an integral tool in the Federation's communications with information, publications, reports and bulletins that can be easily accessed by members and the public. (Melbourne 05.A.17)*

5.3.2. *The address of the web site is: www.ifatca.org*

5.3.3. *The web site will be comprised of three general areas: - forum, - public, - and restricted. The latter will be for the exclusive access for Federation Members, through a specific password. (Melbourne 05.A.17)*

5.3.4. *The passwords for the restricted area can be obtained from the Office Manager by each Member Association's Liaison Officer. (Melbourne 05.A.17)*

5.3.5. *The Executive Board has appointed a Web Manager. The Web Manager shall be responsible for the design, construction and maintenance of the web site and shall report to the Deputy President in the performance of their duties. Requests for financial expenditure shall be referred to the Executive Vice-President Finance. (Toronto 17.A.5)*

5.3.6. *The Executive Board and the IFATCA Office shall assist the Web Manager as required to ensure that the web site is properly managed, relevant and up-to-date.*

5.3.7. *The Executive Board may propose that certain publications currently produced by the Federation can be included in the web site. 5.3.8. Address of the Web Manager: Philip Marien Phone: +32 498 160 802 E-mail: philip.marien@ifatca.org*

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