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## Operations Central Instruction Website Clicking with Users

By Laura Kloth  
Staff Writer

(August 6, 2009) With its bright orange colors, simple design and large friendly icons, the recently launched Operations Central Instruction (OCI) intranet website is attracting attention and drawing praise.

That's quite an accomplishment for website containing so much information critical to supporting the heart of Metro operations.

"I'm very pleased with the new site and users have been reacting positively," said OCI Director Doug Middleton. "It's pretty distinctive among the websites. I love it. I think, first of all, in terms of appeal to the eye, it draws you in."

Currently, the website contains information on 18 courses available for bus operators, and 43 for maintenance personnel.

Users can also link to the calendars and registration sites to participate in the courses and Middleton expects, "There's a whole lot more that we could build onto it."

Launched on May 20, the website was designed not only to be user-friendly, it also had to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements – that is, the site had to include bright colors with information that could be scanned by visual readers used by visually impaired users.

In addition, it couldn't have any flashing content, which is known to set off epileptic seizures.

The best part of the website, Middleton said, is that it provides a time-saving resource of information that wasn't readily available before.

"We get called around the clock here," he said, "We get calls about laws

that affect operators and operations, drive times, licensing, Department of Education information and certification. Now, we are making much of this information available on one site."

OCI is among the very first Metro departments to launch a new internal site, and Operations Training Digital Media Coordinator Caroline Mallari said the time spent creating it was well worth it.

"We've been getting a lot of great feedback," Mallari said, adding the site was designed and completed in about a year with the assistance of Creative Services Manager Lan-Chi Lam and Webmaster Joe Simpson, both of whom provided assistance with the final framework.

"I gathered, managed and designed all the contents," Mallari said, noting that she worked to design icons to help convey what OCI offers and that one of the more challenging aspects was creating functional map to comply with Metro's standards.

"The process of mockups and revisions were tedious, but was executed successfully and well worth the wait," she said, "We just wanted it to be as easy and as intuitive as possible."

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