Wisconsin Agency Content Management System
Policy for Partner-managed Cascading Stylesheets (CSS)

Version 1.0

Contents

Overview

In some cases, an agency may determine the styles provided by the templates are not sufficient to Agency needs. In such a case, the agency may elect to manage its own cascading stylesheets (CSS); this document describes the process to apply CSS, and describes some of the implications and limitations of this approach.

Advantages

Self-managed CSS allows an agency to supplement the template-provided styles without a change request to Wisconsin Interactive Network (WIN). This allows the agency to standardize to a greater level of granularity the way specific content is presented.

Disadvantages

Every CSS change has the potential to affect entirely unrelated content elsewhere on the site. Changing the template styles may have unintended effects on other styles; therefore, when a change is made to the CSS, it's generally advisable to thoroughly test not only the new/changed styles, but the other content as well. This means that partner-managed CSS may have a much higher testing overhead.

Changing template styles may also cause unintended effects which may be difficult to troubleshoot or undo. This means that partner-managed CSS may require significant troubleshooting on the part of agency technical staff.

WIN cannot track and manage the changes made by partners to partner-managed CSS; when an agency takes on the management of CSS, the agency assumes the responsibility for testing and troubleshooting changes. NOTE: If an Agency-managed CSS file damages the site or causes unexpected problems, WIN will restore the template CSS. WIN cannot provide CSS support or troubleshooting.

Notifying WIN

Unless self-managed CSS is documented in your agency template Statement of Work, please submit a no cost change request to WIN indicating your agency will manage and maintain CSS. The Change Request template provided at the end of this document may be used.

Uploading CSS

The agency maintained CSS file will be located in Site Contents -> Style Library. It will be called "agency.css". You will need to download a copy by choosing "…" next to the filename, then "…" again in the file properties popup to find the "Download a Copy" menu option. After the CSS file downloads, you will be able to open it in the editor of your choice.

When you are finished making changes, choose the "+ new document" link in the style library, browse to your copy of the CSS file, add versioning comments (optional), and click "Ok". Make sure to have the "Add as new version to existing file" checkbox selected. You will then be prompted to check in the file. After the file is checked in, select the "…" menu next to the file name again, and again choose the "…" option in the file properties popup. Select "Publish a Major Version", enter any comments, and click "Ok". Your new CSS should now take effect.

Cautions and Considerations

Bootstrap Framework

Where possible, WIN has used existing Bootstrap framework components. Before creating and styling new widgets, WIN suggests checking the Bootstrap documentation to see if there are existing components/styles that could meet your needs. Bootstrap documentation can be found at: http://www.getbootstrap.com.

!important tag

The !important workaround should be employed using extreme caution, as it can have unintended effects. The agency CSS has been added to the page last in the CSS list, thereby granting It the highest precedence in the style cascade. Authors should verify that they cannot achieve the desired effect by using a more specific selector before deploying !important. The entire site should be looked at closely to make sure no adverse effects have occurred. Increased specificity is always preferable to using !important.

Verification

Because of the complex nature of the CSS that runs the agency templates (bootstrap framework, WIN styles, agency styles), it is vital that every CSS change you introduce be verified across the entire site. Verification should also include responsive testing in devices or device emulators, and accessibility testing according to your agency's accessibility governance.

Responsiveness

The agency CSS will be capable of utilizing media queries to ensure responsive behavior across devices (including print). When authoring CSS, make sure to include responsive requirements where needed. There are many sites online that can teach you about media queries and their proper usage.

Support and Troubleshooting

WIN can restore back to a previous version of the CSS, or restore the agency template master CSS at the request of the agency. Contact your WIN Project Manager for assistance.

Appendix A: Change Request Template

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