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Makers of the Award-Winning Cascade Server content management software

How Cascade Server and its Users Benefit from Beta Testing

Thursday, June 25th, 2009 at 1:00pm -- Morgan Griffith

If you frequent Hannon Hill's web site, use our content management system, [Cascade Server](#), or are an active member of our user community, you've probably noticed that one of the things that sets us apart from other CMS vendors is our true commitment to our customers' experience. We provide a variety of mediums to give our clients a voice, and unlike some vendors, we listen to it.

Our [Cascade Server Success Community](#) serves as a fulcrum for our expansive user community, offering idea exchanges, a forum, and more for our clients to share ideas and get questions answered. The Cascade Server higher-ed listserv, which is run and managed by a client organization independent from Hannon Hill, is another great resource our users frequent to share product ideas and get support from other users. With these resources and many others, we at Hannon Hill are provided with valuable feedback and insight into the needs and wants of our CMS users. However, the one addition to our CMS feedback loop that has provided us with insight beyond what we could have hoped for, is the inclusion of a formal beta release testing period.

Prior to the release of the Cascade Server 6.x series, we had put out a few "silent" betas, with smaller groups of users testing our releases and providing us with feedback. However, because we're constantly striving to improve our product's usability and include those features our users want, we have scaled this process out in an effort to gain even more insight into what Cascade users are looking for.

When we released [Cascade Server 6.0](#), we publicly advertised a beta release that we made available for download from our Success Community for approximately a month. With nearly 35 of our client organizations downloading the beta and submitting ideas and concerns, these users were given the opportunity to truly have a voice in shaping the 6.0 release. Getting this actionable user feedback during the beta period made us aware of several key benefits and issues associated with the release that led us to include even more improvements in the final 6.0 release.

Because of the valuable user response we got with the 6.0 beta release, we have decided to incorporate a beta testing period in each of our future feature releases. Most recently, we made Cascade Server 6.2 available for beta testing several weeks ago. Much of what's being included in the 6.2 release came from user-suggested improvements to core functionality received during the 6.0 beta testing.

We want to encourage all of our current Cascade users, and even prospects, to download our Cascade Server 6.2 beta release and see the value in the process. We rely heavily on user feedback to shape and improve Cascade Server, and will continue

to do so for all future releases. If you haven't gotten a chance to check out the 6.2 beta release yet, feel free to [download it today from our Success Community](#). We'll be releasing the final version of Cascade Server 6.2 in the coming weeks and would appreciate any and all feedback aimed at improving this release of Cascade Server and the product as a whole.

Category

- Commentary

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