J2.1 SUPPORTING THE BROADCAST METEOROLOGY COMMUNITY THROUGH CONTINUING EDUCATION INITIATIVES

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I. INTRODUCTION

The COMET® Program has undertaken several new endeavors to support continuing education in the broadcast meteorology community. These activities include a new Website for broadcast meteorologists, contributions to the American Meteorological Society (AMS) Certified Broadcast Meteorologist (CBM) exam and study guide, and a registration system for tracking completion of online training modules.

The MetEd Website (http://www.meted.ucar.edu) will soon host a community page specifically designed for broadcast meteorologists. This page will provide access to continuing education materials as well as freely available images and graphical materials for use on the air as well as on station Websites.

COMET staff played an active role in helping to develop the written exam used in the new AMS Certified Broadcast Meteorologist (CBM) program and the associated study guide. The study guide incorporates many of the online training modules available through the COMET MetEd Website as well as other helpful sites.

In addition, the COMET Program has expanded the MetEd Website to better support continuing education by providing documentation and certificates for people completing online courses. This documentation can be useful for both National Weather Association (NWA) Seal recertification and professional development activities for the AMS CBM program.

2. BROADCAST METEOROLOGY COMMUNITY SITE

The COMET Program is currently developing a broadcast meteorologist community page on the MetEd Website. This page is designed not only as a portal to training already available to the community, but also to provide access to myriad other resources to facilitate professional development and enhance on-air presentations.

Links related to professional development give access to training materials and the MetEd registration and assessment system. In addition, information is provided about certification of broadcast meteorologists by the AMS and NWA.

Among the resources available through the site are image libraries sponsored by COMET and UCAR as well as many other online libraries. The COMET Multimedia Database offers a wealth of imagery, illustrations, animations, data products, and other informational materials that can be freely used both on the air and on station Websites. The Warning Coordination Meteorologist (WCM) Resource Center houses materials developed and identified by National Weather Service WCMs and used in their outreach activities. Other links include resources by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the National Science Foundation, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Resources developed specifically for broadcast meteorologists include demo clips and story ideas. Examples of presentation techniques developed by pioneering station scientists are provided with the goal of facilitating the exchange of ideas. Also, visitors to the site are given the opportunity to both comment on the examples and to submit new ideas and clips.

To support the evolving role of station scientists, the site invites visitors to go beyond the forecast and broaden their horizons as the station scientists. Topics include air quality, climate, drought, earthquakes and tsunamis, flooding, forest fires and fire weather, marine meteorology, sky and solar phenomena, volcanoes, and water quality.

Additional links are listed on every page of the community site for weather education resources, broadcasting associations, certification programs, public safety information, and science news for the media. Numerous opportunities are provided to allow visitors to submit comments, suggestions for improvement, and new items for the site.

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3. CBM STUDY GUIDE

To help prepare broadcast meteorologists for the written exam portion of the CBM process, the test development team produced an online study guide that covers topics addressed in the exam questions (http://www.ametsoc.org/amscert/). References linked in the study guide include many hours of online training and comprehensive Websites. Such an all-inclusive list of resources can be daunting to someone trying to prepare for the test. Therefore, the study guide can best be used by making use of the following guidelines:

1. Use the topics listed in the guide as an outline from which to study.
2. Choose topics that you feel you need to review.
3. Review the list of available resources.
4. Select the specific resources to review based on the aspects of the topic with which you feel less comfortable.

The developers of the study guide did not intend the users to carefully review all of the material listed. Rather, the list of resources is meant to remind users of different topics that will be covered and provide an opportunity for refresher training, or an introduction of newer techniques and products available to broadcast meteorologists.

4. METED REGISTRATION AND ASSESSMENT

The MetEd site was designed to organize training available from the COMET Program and to give information about the targeted audience in order to help visitors choose training that best fits their needs.

Now, a new registration system takes the next step in professional development support by providing the opportunity to track training and receive completion certificates. By registering for a course, visitors to the site can take a quiz related to an online module and receive a completion certificate for that course. This certificate can then be used as documentation for continuing education requirements. With the push to expand the role of broadcast meteorologists as station scientists, the MetEd site provides access to a wide variety of geosciences training. New topics include space weather and rip current development. In addition, up-to-date information on numerical weather prediction (NWP) models is presented and case studies demonstrate the use of NWP products.

The MetEd Registration and Assessment system allows participants track their training. Registered customers can view transcripts of all their courses with associated quiz scores and dates of completion. All information is kept confidential and is password protected by the customers of the system.

5. SUMMARY

Efforts by the COMET Program to improve support of the broadcast community have resulted in expanding the MetEd Website to include a community page specifically for broadcast meteorologists, developing a study guide for the CBM program, and opening the MetEd registration and assessment system to the entire meteorological community.

Comments on the utility and content of these initiatives are encouraged so that the COMET Program can better meet the needs of the broadcast meteorology community.

6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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7. Links

Meteorology Education and Training Website (MetEd) (http://meted.ucar.edu/)

AMS Certification Programs (http://www.ametsoc.org/amscert/)

Figure 1. Prototype of MetEd Broadcast Meteorology Community page