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Astronomical Web Sites

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Abstract. This BoF was an informal get-together to discuss the trials and tribulations involved in creating and running a web site associated with the wacky world of astronomy.

1. Open Forum Discussion

Twenty to thirty people attended the session. Some of the discussion topics were:

- Types of Web Sites: internal (inventory, control systems); group (collaboration); professional (services, preprints).
- Development Tools: various editors (vi, Bluefish, Composer) as well as environments (Zope).
- Platforms: operating system (Linux, Unix, Microsoft); server (Apache, AOLserver).
- Hardware: bandwidth and compute power.
- Network Relations: isolating web servers from the rest of an internal network; supporting efficient protocols; warning network administrators when large number of hits is expected (e.g., when a press release occurs).
- Web Security: the server, CGI scripts and problems of popularity.
- Services: new realm of potential problems and solutions.

The offering of web services and generation and use of XML were not discussed much, other than their impact on the general running of a web site. These topics were well covered in the tutorial and other presentations.