

# Army.mil gets facelift in new year

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WASHINGTON (Army News Service, Jan. 12, 2009) -- Come Jan. 16, the official Web site of the United States Army will sport a new look.

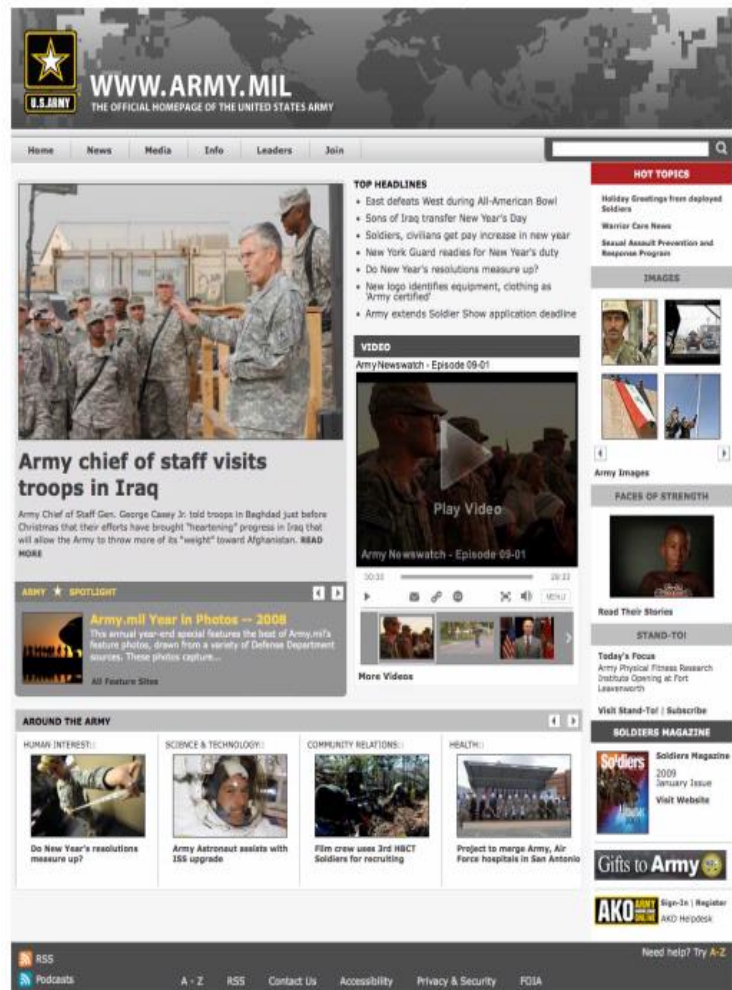
The new site features a graphic redesign, a new "subdued" color palette, and a downplaying of page graphic elements so user focus will be on content and not flashy graphics. Billed as a "refresh" of the "official homepage of the United States Army," the newly designed Army.mil will be more than just a change to the look and feel of the site, however.

The new Army.mil also includes software to ensure more streamlined delivery of video content, additional servers to host content closer to the user, expanded image galleries, an increased emphasis on visual products, and streamlined navigation menus to help users find information more quickly.

"We wanted to make it easier for visitors to find what they wanted on the site," said Lt. Col. Kevin Arata, director of the Army's online and social media division. "We also wanted to focus more on visual content and new media."

Each print story page on the site will now feature larger photographs at the top of the page. Articles with multiple photos will automatically display "slide shows" to make it easier for users to see all images associated with a story.

The Army's official Web site has hosted video content for several years now, but Arata said the site was having difficulty handling the bandwidth associated with video content. The site redesign will



feature software that makes it easier to stream video content to the user. The site will also utilize multiple servers strategically placed around the world, so bandwidth-intensive content is located closer to the user.

Due to the new video software, video content can now also be higher quality. And users can share the best of those videos with friends and family via mail-to options and URLs that allow users to embed video into their own Web pages.

"The neat thing," Arata said, "is that if I want to share a video I find on Army.mil with my dad, I can easily do that now."

The Jan. 16 refresh of Army.mil will also feature links on content that allow users to tag stories and video pieces using social bookmarking links like Delicious, Digg and Reddit.

The January refresh is just foreshadowing of even better things to come for Army.mil, Arata said.

"The refreshed website launched in January is the first step in what will ultimately be a totally redesigned website launched in October 2009," he said. "The website in October will incorporate the latest in technology to ensure we have a world class website for our world class Army."