Quality:

- Provides a **platform** for **faculty** to **share ideas** and **best practices** regarding the **assessment of student learning** and **effective active learning activities**.
- **Documents effective practices**.
- The **"CATS of the Month"** feature allows the Student Academic Achievement Committee (**SAAC**) to promote those **CATS forms** that are of the **highest quality** to all **EMCC employees** ("CATS of the Month" awardees earn a special coffee cup delivered to their office).
- Even the CATS system itself is **designed with quality improvements** in mind; since the launch in Fall 2012, **multiple edits** have already been made to the system to reflect what users communicated they desire most from their experience, thereby enhancing a **cycle of continual improvement.**

Efficiency:

- Like **Facebook**, designed with **ease** and **minimal time investment** for **users**.
- **Little training needed** for participants.
- **Anyone** at **any time** can go onto the website and **review all CATS** forms (even those outside the organization).
- Within a couple of clicks of the mouse, **CATS forms can be filtered** and **sorted** by **division**, by **time** of posting, or by **type of assessment**.
- The **advanced search feature** within the CATS system allows users to pinpoint exact forms within seconds.
- It is now possible for a user to **find all assessments** related to a specific topic of interest **instantaneously**.

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Cost Effectiveness:

- Uses **Free Open Source Software** (FOSS) – **no technology cost**.
- The **value of sharing** best teaching and assessment practices across disciplines and divisions is **enormous**.
- The **monetary cost** of **maintaining** this innovation is virtually **nonexistent**.
- There are **no licensing fees** associated with this product because it was **developed "in-house"** using the skills of **Maricopa employees**.
- **CATS is a standalone installation** of the existing information technology platform, the **EMCC website**.
- It was **developed within the regular work duties** of existing employees without any need for auxiliary contracts.

Replication:

- Right now, **any college in Maricopa can access the CATS** website.
- **CATS can readily be replicated** in other institutions in a day or less.
- **With our blueprints and trial-and-error experiences**, it should take little time and effort to **implement** this system across other district colleges that use the Drupal system.
- *What's ours is yours.*

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Creativity:

- The system is a **complete reimaging** of the way that faculty and staff approach **documenting and sharing best teaching, assessment,** and **learning practices**.
- **CATS** was built on the premise that **good ideas** need to be **spread** in a **user-friendly manner**.
- The **comments** section acts as an **asynchronous conversation** about **good teaching** and **assessment practices**.
- Users can find **high quality, peer-reviewed CATS** forms both through **user ratings** as well as through the more formal recognition of the "**CATS of the Month**" awards.
- The ability to **search for key words** within the **CATS** system creates new ways for users to find and analyze others' forms. The genesis of this innovation was **purely employee-driven** and **from their own creativity**.
- It has an **immeasurable potential** to **change** the way **best teaching** and **learning practices** are shared within a college or across a spectrum of colleges.

Timeliness:

- **Development** began in Academic Year 2011-12.
- **Prototype** developed during Summer 2012.
- Officially **launched** in Fall 2012.
- As of today, **over 50 unique CATS** forms have been **submitted** to the system, **representing all 9 divisions** of the college.

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Learning:

- The **central purpose** of the CATS system is to spread **best practices** to **improve student learning**.

- In other words, when **Faculty Members learn**, the **students learn**. **CATS** is all about **Faculty learning** so they can **optimize student learning**.

- **Faculty and staff** have **benefited** from the **best practices** shared by their colleagues.

  - "Love this idea… I will implement a version of this with my CHM152 research projects this semester."

  - "This is what CATS is about! Try something out, learn from it, make adjustments, and then do it again with modifications. And then . . . SHARE your results."

  - "After reading over your plan, I am eager to take my final presentation and correlate that with how my students fair when aligning their progress to the learning outcomes for my ENG101, 102 and 091 courses!"

  - "For Fall '12, the grading rubric was revised, group formation was made earlier, and a group contract was added to the project based upon the document provided by a finished CAT titled 'Increasing Group Accountability with a Contract'."

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Collaboration:

- The **features** of the **CATS** system were the **brainchild of many faculty** members and **staff** who gave **valuable input** into desired features and abilities.
- There was **collaboration** between the **SAAC co-chairs** and staff of EMCC's **Information Technology** division.
- Once the system was up, **suggestions for modifications** could be made and accepted from **anyone** in the college.
- The **CATS** system itself is based on **collaboration**, where **good teaching and assessment practices** are **shared** with the college and the community.
- Other people **collaborate by giving feedback**, **suggestions**, and **ideas** to **further a best practice**. The system allows good ideas to spread throughout the college based on collaboration.
- In short, **CATS** was **created in, modified through**, and is all about sharing best practices in a **venue of perpetual collaboration**.
- **CATS** is **OF, BY,** and **THROUGH** … **COLLABORATION.**

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