

Monitoring Published Calendars and Making Modifications to Existing Calendars

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It is very easy once you have done all of the hard work to bring a calendar live to think your work is done and forget about it. **You definitely should not do that!** Once your calendars have been published on a campus web page, you will need to perform some periodic monitoring. Think of it like performing routine maintenance for anything you place on the website. There are a number of things you should monitor.

Monitoring Your Published Calendars

Are the right events appearing on the calendar?

You will definitely need to keep an eye on your calendar to ensure that the right events are actually showing up on your published calendars. Conversely, you need to keep an eye out for events that should not be appearing on this calendar. No matter what method you use for building your calendars, you need to remember that your calendars are driven by the work being done in 25Live by your users, both requestors and approvers. As such, there is a very human element involved. People will make mistakes in applying the appropriate criteria to get an event on the right calendar. Some of those "mistakes" will be inadvertent decisions made by either requestors or approvers while others will be misunderstandings about what should appear on which calendars. This is where your monitoring will assist in making sure all users understand what events are appropriate for what calendars. The good news is that a quick update to the event in 25Live will rectify the issue on your calendars the next time the feed executes the underlying search driving your calendar.

Are duplicate events appearing on the calendar?

This issue only applies to campuses making use of mixed-in calendars. An inherent problem with a mixed-in calendar is the potential for duplicated events (and in some really bad cases, triplicate and quadruplicate events). What is happening is that the underlying feeds have been mixed together for a more comprehensive calendar, returning multiples of the same events. The only way to correct this issue is to ensure that each of the feeds mixed together has an underlying search that is looking at its own unique set of events. This issue most often crops up for campuses driving calendars with either event categories or calendar resources. In these instances, an event has had multiple calendar categories or calendar resources applied to it which are then picked up by more than one of the event feed searches. To stop this, you have to enforce a one event category or one calendar resource per event rule. If that is not possible, then you should use a different method to deploy your comprehensive calendar which involves creating a search for all the calendar categories or resources you want to be included on a comprehensive calendar.

Are event descriptions for major promotable events being populated with enough information for a potential audience?

Many events do not need event descriptions as they are not promotable events aimed at a potential audience that is either all students or possibly off-campus patrons (e.g., meetings). Those events are not likely going to be on your public-facing calendars anyways. However, most of the events on your public-facing calendars are there so that you

may draw an audience to the event. As such, the event description is a critical element of those events. A good event description for this type of event would include:

1. An enticing summary description of the event including links to performers or group web pages,
2. Information about where to obtain tickets including the possibility of a link or button taking the visitor to the web page to buy those tickets,
3. When the doors open for the event,
4. Who to contact for more information including a phone number and an email address, and
5. If possible, an embeddable short video of a few seconds to entice a potential audience.

A good event description will make full use of HTML and inline CSS styling to really make the event description pop. Obviously, not all of your users will be able to do that on their own. Consider providing a template of what they should include in their event description and even a guide to how they could "jazz" it up. You could even link to that information from the event description notes in the event form.

Are images for major promotable events actually being provided?

Every event in your Publisher calendars may contain images. There are two system-provided event custom attributes for images that may be included in calendars: the **Event Image** and the **Detail Image**. Remember that the **Event Image** is a thumbnail-sized image, while the **Detail Image** is a larger image. The **Event Image** is most often used to float next to calendar entries on the main calendar spud view or promo spud views. The **Detail Image** is the image that will appear when someone clicks for more details about any specific event on your calendar. These images may be two separately sized versions of the same image or they may be the exact same image with scaling controlled by your settings in the appropriate spud. You may also use different images for the two custom attributes. One image at thumbnail size in the **Event Image** and a second different image of fuller size in the **Detail Image**. Adding images to your calendars is a great way to add visual appeal and pop to your calendars. An appropriate image can increase the interest and curiosity about an event and lead to people joining the audience for your event on campus.

Are featured levels being used and applied properly?

Featured Events functionality and featured levels allow you to differentiate major events from all the rest of the events on your calendar. Proper use of this functionality can draw attention to events and can be used to populate promotional spuds with only the events you are attempting to more widely promote to potential audiences. Monitoring these elements is important especially if you have multiple 25Live Users with the ability to set the featured level on events. Ideally, you want a smaller group of people accessing and setting featured levels on events. At the very least, you should have some sort of guidelines for folks with the ability to tag featured levels to know what events do and do not rise to the level of featured events.

Featured Levels for Event Grouping

Another way to make use of featured levels is to define a large set of featured levels and use them on all of your events. In these instances, you could color-coordinate the event icon and the featured level color making a very useful grouping technique for visitors to the calendar. This approach looks especially stunning when applied to the **Tile** calendar view.

Making Modifications to Your Existing Calendars

Every calendar over time will require you to perform some maintenance activities which might include:

1. Modifying the underlying search driving the Publisher feed and your calendar,
2. Updating featured levels or adding additional event custom attributes for newly required filters or other functionality, and
3. Revising existing stylistic elements due to a campus website redesign.

The beauty of Publisher is that once your feed is published and the spud code has been placed on your website these changes will, for the most part, happen instantaneously. However, modifying the underlying search will carry a small delay until the feed re-executes the event search driving the calendar. If you are impatient, you may force this re-synchronization by visiting the **Publisher Overview** in 25Live and clicking the **Update Now** button next to the calendar feed whose search you have modified. This will force immediate execution of the search updating the calendar to reflect the changes to the search criteria.

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