



Developing Customizable Help with JavaScript and ASP

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Session Overview

We will discuss how to provide:

- personalized
- secure
- flexible
- annotated*

Help using JavaScript and ASP

* ASP only.

Sample application

JavaScript examples



JavaScript's advantages over ASP

- Does not require a database
- Does not require IIS (runs on the client)
- Better learning resources



Personal Help

Recognizing users

How to...

- Hide topics that do not apply to the user's job
- Remember completed sections
- Remember user settings



Hiding topics that do not apply to the user's job

sample_tutorial.htm

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer window titled "Sample Tutorial - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by EarthLink Inc.". The page content includes:

- Sample Tutorial** (h1)
- [big normal](#) (link)
- User tutorials** (h2)
- [✓ How to log-in](#) (link)
- How to create a project
- How to view projects
- How to search
- Admin tutorials** (h2)
- How to customize the application

A green callout box with the text "Show admin tutorials if the user logs in as 'admin'" has an arrow pointing to the "Admin tutorials" section. The "Admin tutorials" section is also enclosed in a green box.

Done Internet



Hiding topics that do not apply to the user's job

Code to write the cookie

(in sample_login.htm)

Number of days to store the cookie

```
var today = new Date();  
var expires = new Date(today.getTime() + (60 * 86400000));
```

```
function set() {  
var cookieID = document.form.name.value;  
Set_Cookie("security",cookieID,expires); }  
}
```

```
function Set_Cookie(name,value,expires) {  
document.cookie = name + "=" + value + "=" + "; path=/" +  
((expires==null) ? "" : "; expires=" + expires.toGMTString()); }  
}
```

code for the "Submit" button:

```
<input type="button" name="submit" value="Submit" onClick="set()">
```




Hiding topics that do not apply to the user's job

Code to read the cookie

(in sample_tutorial.htm)

```
<script>
```

```
var cookiecheck=unescape(document.cookie);
```

```
if (cookiecheck.indexOf('admin') != -1) {
```

```
document.write('<p><font face="Arial, Helvetica,  
sans-serif"><b>Admin tutorials</b><br>How to  
customize the application</font></p>');
```

```
}
```

```
</script>
```



Remembering completed sections

sample_tutorial.htm

Sample Tutorial - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by EarthLink Inc.

Sample Tutorial

[big normal](#)

User tutorials

- [How to log-in](#)
- How to create a project
- How to view projects
- How to search

Admin tutorials

- How to customize the application

Done Internet

Show check if the user has completed the section



Remembering completed sections

Code to write to the cookie (in sample_tutoriallogin3.htm)

```
<script>  
var today = new Date();  
var expires = new Date(today.getTime() + (60 * 86400000));
```

Number of days to store the cookie



```
function Set_Cookie(name,value,expires) {  
document.cookie = name + "=" + value + "=" + "; path=/" +  
((expires==null) ? "" : "; expires=" + expires.toGMTString()); }  
</script>
```

...

```
<body onLoad="Set_Cookie('checklogin','yes',expires)">
```



Remembering completed sections

Code to read the cookie

(in sample_tutorial.htm)

```
<script>
```

```
var cookiecheck=unescape(document.cookie);
```

```
if (cookiecheck.indexOf('checklogin') != -1)  
document.images['checklogin'].src = "check.gif";
```

```
</script>
```

code for the image:

```

```



Remembering user settings

sample_tutorial.htm

Sample Tutorial - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by EarthLink Inc.

Sample Tutorial

[big normal](#)

User tutorials

- ✓ [How to log-in](#)
- How to create a project
- How to view projects
- How to search

Admin tutorials

- How to customize the application

Done Internet



Remembering user settings

Code to open the tutorial

(in sample_home.htm)

```
var security=unescape(document.cookie);
```

```
function opentutorial() {
```

```
var w=600; var h=400;
```

```
if (security.indexOf('big') != -1) w=800; h=600;
```

```
window.open('sample_tutorial.htm','tutorialwin','toolba  
r=0,location=0,directories=0,status=1,menubar=0,scr  
ollbars=0,resizable=1,width=' + w + ',height=' + h);
```

```
}
```



Remembering user settings

Code to resize the tutorial (in sample_tutorial.htm)

```
function checksize() {  
var security=unescape(document.cookie);  
if (security.indexOf('big') != -1) window.resizeTo(800,600);  
if (security.indexOf('big') == -1) window.resizeTo(600,400);  
}
```

...

```
<body bgcolor="#FFFFCC" onLoad="checksize()">
```



Remembering user settings

Code to store the new size (in sample_tutorial.htm)

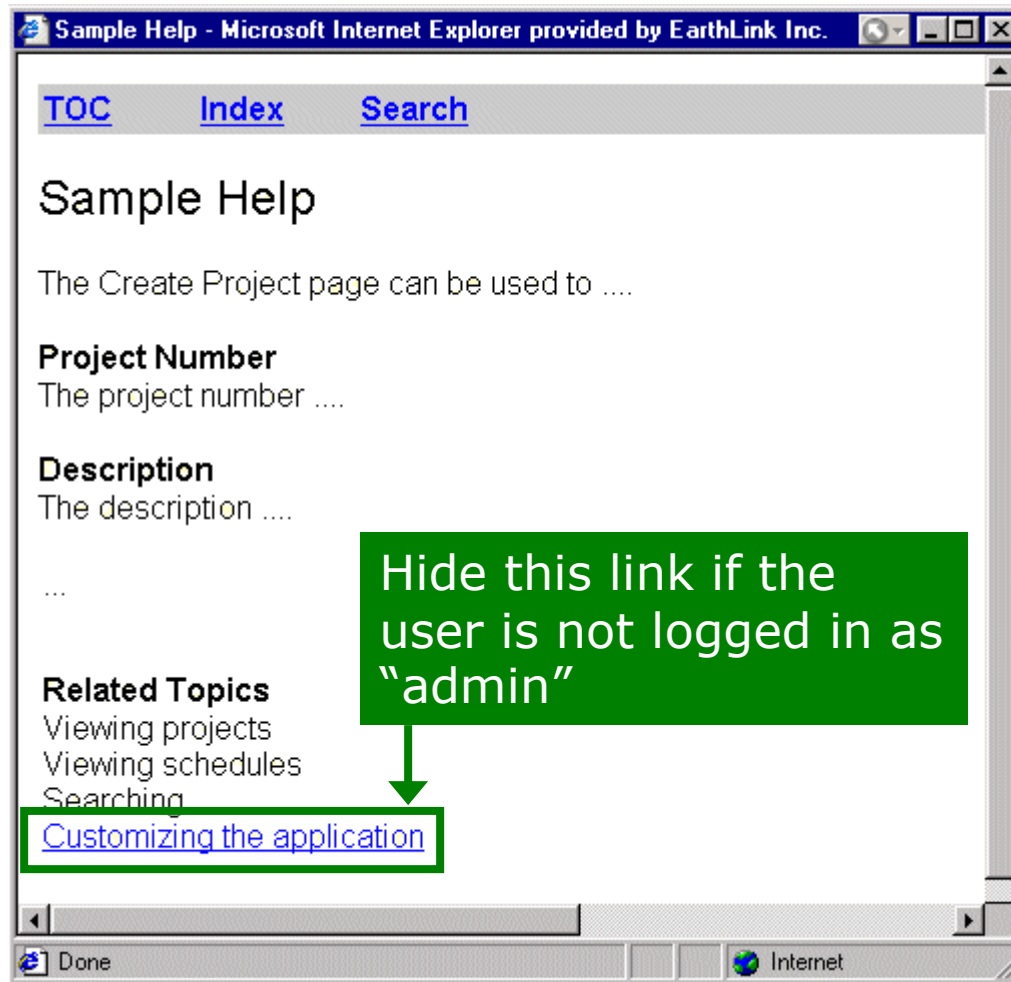
```
function changesize(size) {  
  var today = new Date();  
  var expires = new Date(today.getTime() + (60 * 86400000));  
  if (size == "big") {  
    document.cookie = "tutorialsize=big" + "; path=/" + ((expires==null) ?  
    "" : "; expires=" + expires.toGMTString());  
    window.resizeTo(800,600); }  
  if (size == "normal") {  
    document.cookie = "tutorialsize=normal" + "; path=/" +  
    ((expires==null) ? "" : "; expires=" + expires.toGMTString());  
    window.resizeTo(600,400);  
  }  
}
```

Number of days to store the cookie



Secure Help

Limiting access to topics logins



sample_help.htm



Hiding Links

Code to tag links

(in sample_help.htm)

```
<a href="javascript:void()" id="admin1">Customizing  
the application</a>
```



Hiding Links

Code to hide links

(in sample_help.htm)

```
<script>
```

```
var security=unescape(document.cookie);
```

```
if (security.indexOf('admin') == -1) {
```

```
for (var i=0; i < document.links.length; i++) {
```

```
if (document.links[i].id.indexOf("admin") != -1)
```

```
document.links[i].innerText = "";
```

```
}}
```

```
</script>
```



Flexible Help

Modifying topics on the fly

sample_home.htm

Sample App
01/06/2002 You are logged in as: sss

[Create project](#) **Create Project**

[View projects](#)

[View schedule](#)

[Search](#)

Project Number:

Description:

Start Date:

Completion Date:

Requestor:

Priority:

Tasks:

Sample Help - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by EarthLink Inc.

[TOC](#) [Index](#) [Search](#)

Sample Help

The Create Project page can be used to

Project Number
The project number ...

Description
The description

...

Related Topics

- Viewing projects
- Viewing schedules
- Searching
- [Customizing the application](#)

Done Internet

Field names need to match between application and Help

sample_help.htm



Modifying topics on the fly

Code to tag application elements

(in sample_home.htm)

```
<span id="projectnumber">Project Number</span>  
<input type="text" name="name_projectnumber">
```



Modifying topics on the fly

Code to read from application and modify Help (in sample_help.htm)

```
var projectnumber = "The " +  
(opener.document.all.projectnumber.innerText).toLowerCase() + "  
....</font></p>";
```

// repeat above for each field on page

```
var form = opener.document.forms[0];  
for (i= 0; i < form.elements.length-1; i++) {  
var elemspan = (form.elements[i].name).substr(5);  
document.write("<p><font face='Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif'><b>" +  
opener.document.all[elemspan].innerText + "</b><br>");  
document.write(eval(elemspan));  
}
```

chops off "name_"



ASP examples



ASP's advantages over JavaScript

- More secure
- Database approach more powerful
- Can reduce browser requirements
- Does not require cookies for data storage



Personal Help

Recognizing users

How to...

- Hide topics that do not apply to the user's job
- Remember completed sections
- Remember user settings



Hiding topics that do not apply to the user's job

sample_tutorial.asp

Sample Tutorial - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by EarthLink Inc.

Sample Tutorial

[big normal](#)

User tutorials

- ✓ [How to log-in](#)
- How to create a project
- How to view projects
- How to search

Show admin tutorials if the user logs in as "admin"

Admin tutorials

- How to customize the application

Done Internet



Hiding topics that do not apply to the user's job

Code to request the user's login (in sample_login.asp)

```
<form name="form" method="post" action="sample_home.asp">  
<input type="text" name="name">  
<input type="submit" name="submit" value="Submit">
```

Code to store the user's login (in sample_home.asp)

```
<% Session("security") = Request.Form("name") %>
```



Hiding topics that do not apply to the user's job

Code to show/hide topics based on the login (in sample_tutorial.asp)

```
If objRS("ID") = Session("security") Then
```

...

```
If objRS("Custom") <> "N" Then
```

...

```
Response.Write "<td width='97%'><font face='Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif'><a href='sample_tutorialcustom1.asp'>How to customize the application</a></font></td></tr>"
```

```
End If
```

```
End If
```



Remembering completed sections

sample_tutorial.asp

Sample Tutorial - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by EarthLink Inc.

Sample Tutorial

[big normal](#)

User tutorials

- [How to log-in](#)
- How to create a project
- How to view projects
- How to search

Admin tutorials

- How to customize the application

Done Internet

Show checks if the user has completed the section



Remembering completed sections

users database (users.mdb)

ID	Login	CreateProject	ViewProjects	Search	Custom	Size
admin	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Normal
user	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Normal

Key:

Y (yes)

user is authorized to view the section

N (no)

user is not authorized to view the section

C (complete)

user has completed the section



Remembering completed sections

Code to open the database (in sample_tutoriallogin3.asp)

```
Dim objConn
Set objConn = Server.CreateObject("ADODB.Connection")
objConn.Open "DRIVER={Microsoft Access Driver (*.mdb)}; DBQ=" &
Server.MapPath("\userfirstdemos\db\users.mdb")
```

```
Dim objRS
Set objRS = Server.CreateObject("ADODB.Recordset")
objRS.Open "Tutorial", objConn, , adLockOptimistic, adCmdTable
```



Remembering completed sections

Code to write to and close the database (in sample_tutoriallogin3.asp)

```
Do While Not objRS.EOF
If objRS("ID") = Session("security") Then
    objRS("login") = "C"
    objRS.Update
End If
objRS.MoveNext
Loop
```

```
objRS.Close
Set objRS = Nothing
objConn.Close
Set objConn = Nothing
```




Remembering completed sections

Code to mark completed sections

(in sample_tutorial.asp)

```
If objRS("login") <> "N" Then
```

```
    If objRS("login") = "C" Then
```

```
        Response.Write "<tr><td width='3%'><img src='check.gif'
width='15' height='15'></td>"
```

```
    Else
```

```
        Response.Write "<tr><td width='3%'><img src='nocheck.gif'
width='15' height='15'></td>"
```

```
    End If
```

```
End If
```



Remembering user settings

sample_tutorial.asp

Sample Tutorial - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by EarthLink Inc.

Sample Tutorial

[big normal](#)

Remember and use selected size

User tutorials

- ✓ [How to log-in](#)
 - How to create a project
 - How to view projects
 - How to search

Admin tutorials

- How to customize the application

Done Internet



Remembering user settings

Help database (fieldhelp.mdb)

FieldID	FieldLabel	HlpText	HlpTextCustom
ProjectNumber	Project Number	The number	Note: This number is automatically generated.
Description	Description	A brief	
StartDate	Start Date	When the project needs to begin.	
CompletionDate	Completion Date	When the project should end.	
Requestor	Requestor	The person	Requestors must be managers.
Priority	Priority	The importance	
Tasks	Tasks	What should	

Note:

"HlpText" is used to store defaults.

"HlpTextCustom" is used to store modified Help topics.



Remembering user settings

Code to set the window size (in sample_tutorial.asp)

```
<a href="sample_tutorial.asp?big">big</a>
```

...

```
If Request.QueryString = "big" Then
```

```
  Do While Not objRS.EOF
```

```
    If objRS("ID") = Session("security") Then objRS("size") = "big"
```

```
    Response.Write "<script language=vbscript>Call window.resizeTo(800,  
600)</script>"
```

```
    objRS.MoveNext
```

```
  Loop
```

```
End If
```



Remembering user settings

Code to change the window size (in sample_tutorial.asp)

```
If Request.QueryString = "" Then
  Do While Not objRS.EOF
    If objRS("ID") = Session("security") Then
      If objRS("size") = "big" Then Response.Write "<script
      language=vbscript>Call window.resizeTo(800, 600)</script>"
      If objRS("size") = "normal" Then Response.Write "<script
      language=vbscript>Call window.resizeTo(600, 400)</script>"
    End If
    objRS.MoveNext
  Loop
End If
```



Secure Help

Limiting access to topics

Sample Help - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by EarthLink Inc.

[TOC](#) [Index](#) [Search](#)

Sample Help

The Create Project page can be used to

Project Number
The project number

Description
The description

...

Related Topics
Viewing projects
Viewing schedules
Searching
[Customizing the application](#)

Hide this link if the user is not logged in as "admin"

Done Internet

sample_help.htm



Hiding Links

Code to hide links

(in sample_help.asp)

```
<%  
If Session("security") = "admin" Then  
Response.Write "<a href= 'link.htm'>Customizing the  
application</a><br>"  
End If  
%>
```



Flexible Help

Modifying topics on the fly

sample_home.asp

Sample App
01/06/2002 You are logged in as: sss

[Create project](#) **Create Project**

[View projects](#)

[View schedule](#)

[Search](#)

Project Number:

Description:

Start Date:

Completion Date:

Requestor:

Priority:

Tasks:

Sample Help - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by EarthLink Inc.

[TOC](#) [Index](#) [Search](#)

Sample Help

The Create Project page can be used to

Project Number
The project number ...

Description
The description

...

Related Topics

- Viewing projects
- Viewing schedules
- Searching
- [Customizing the application](#)

Done Internet

Field names need to match between application and Help

sample_help.asp



Modifying topics on the fly

(in sample_help.htm)

Do While Not objRS.EOF

```
Response.Write "<font face='Arial'><b>" & objRS("FieldLabel") &  
"</b><br>"
```

```
If objRS("HlpTextCustom") <> "" Then
```

```
    Response.Write objRS("HlpTextCustom") & "</font></p>"
```

```
Else
```

```
    If objRS("HlpText") <> "" Then
```

```
        Response.Write objRS("HlpText") & "</font></p>"
```

```
    Else
```

```
        Response.Write "No Help has been written for this  
field.</font></p>"
```

```
    End If
```

```
End If
```

```
objRS.MoveNext
```

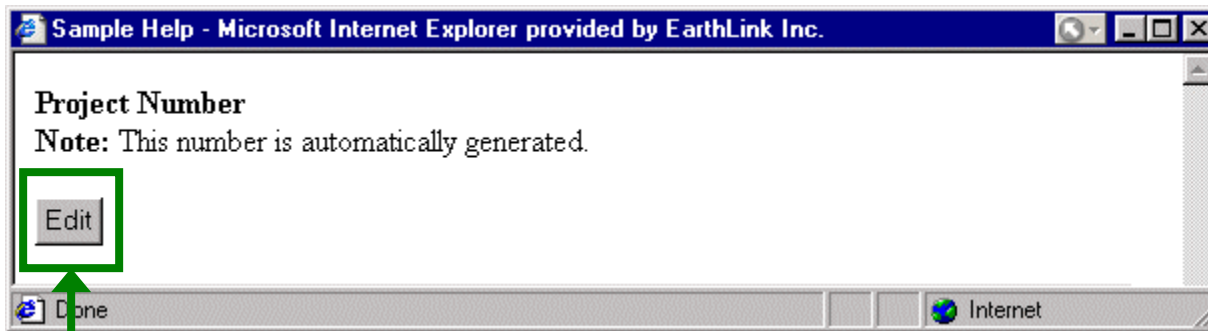
```
Loop
```



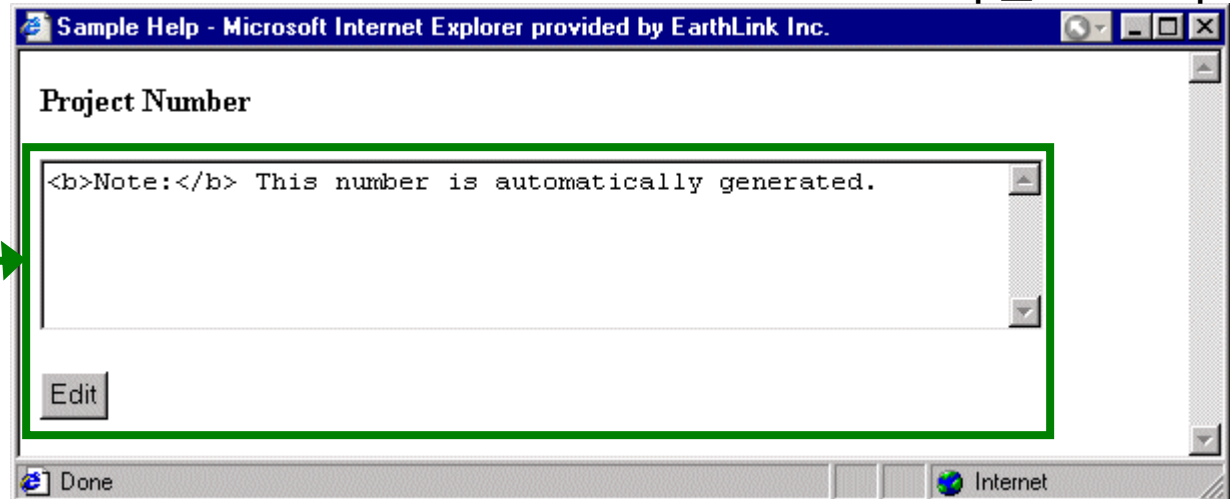
Annotated Help

Allowing users to modify/add topics

fieldhelp.asp



fieldhelp_edit.asp



Administrators see the "edit" button, which they can use to add or change the field Help topics.



Modifying/Adding Help topics

Code to show field Help

(in fieldhelp.asp)

Do While Not objRS.EOF

```
If Request.QueryString = objRS("FieldID") Then
```

```
    If objRS("HlpTextCustom") <> "" Then
```

```
        Response.Write "<b>" & objRS("FieldLabel") & "</b><br> " &  
        objRS("HlpTextCustom")
```

```
    Else
```

```
        Response.Write "<b>" & objRS("FieldLabel") & "</b><br> " &  
        objRS("HlpText")
```

```
    End If
```

```
End If
```

```
objRS.MoveNext
```

```
Loop
```



Modifying/Adding Help topics

Code to show Edit button

(in fieldhelp.asp)

```
If Session("security") = "admin" Then
```

```
Response.Write "<form name='form' method='post'  
action='fieldhelpedit.asp?' & Request.QueryString &  
''><input type='submit' name='submit'  
value='Edit'></form>"
```



Modifying/Adding Help topics

Code to display the "Edit" form (1 of 2) (in fieldhelpedit.asp)

Do While Not objRS.EOF

```
If Request.QueryString = objRS("FieldID") Then
Response.Write "<b>" & objRS("FieldLabel") & "</b><br>"
Response.Write "<form method='post' action='fieldhelpupdate.asp?' &
Request.QueryString & "">"
```

```
If objRS("HlpTextCustom") <> "" Then
Response.Write "<textarea name='helptext' cols='60' rows='5'>" &
objRS("HlpTextCustom") & "</textarea>"
```

```
Else
Response.Write "<textarea name='helptext' cols='60' rows='5'>" &
objRS("HlpText") & "</textarea>"
End If
```



Modifying/Adding Help topics

Code to display the "Edit" form (2 of 2) (in fieldhelpedit.asp)

...

```
Response.Write "<p><input type='submit' name='submit' value='Edit'>  
</form>"
```

```
End If
```

```
objRS.MoveNext
```

```
Loop
```



Modifying/Adding Help topics

Code to update the Help

(in fieldhelpupdate.asp)

```
Do While Not objRS.EOF
```

```
If Request.QueryString = objRS("FieldID") Then
```

```
    If Request.Form("helptext") <> "" Then
```

```
        objRS("HlpTextCustom") = Request.Form("helptext")
```

```
        objRS.Update
```

```
    End If
```

```
End If
```

```
objRS.MoveNext
```

```
Loop
```

Wrapping Up



Viewing and downloading the sample files

JavaScript sample files (zipped and live)

www.userfirst.net/sample_app/index.html

ASP sample files (zipped and live)

www27.brinkster.com/userfirstdemos/index.html

(Brinkster is a free ASP hosting site, so it goes down from time to time.)

Both versions (zipped only)

www.winwriters.com/ohc02/suppmat1/index.html

This presentation and notes about both versions

www.userfirst.net/demos/index.html



Recommended JavaScript books

“JavaScript Visual Quickstart Guide”

Tom Negrino and Dori Smith

“Designing with JavaScript”

Nick Heinle and Bill Peña

“JavaScript Bible” and “JavaScript Examples”

Danny Goodman



Recommended VBScript and ASP books

“Teach Yourself Active Server Pages in 21 Days”

Scott Mitchell and James Atkinson

“VBScript in a Nutshell”

Matt Childs, Paul Lomax, & Ron Petrusha



Questions?

Feel free to call or e-mail me. Or,
catch me later at the conference!

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sample_login.htm

Login as "user" or "admin." The password is not really used.

Name:

Password:

Note: This application only supports IE 4+
with JavaScript and cookies enabled.

Sample App

[Home](#)[Tutorial](#)[Help](#)

01/06/2002

You are logged in as: sss

[Create project](#)

Create Project

[View projects](#)

Project Number:

[View schedule](#)

Description:

[Search](#)

Start Date:

Completion Date:

Requestor:

Priority:

Tasks: