

PLANNING A WEBSITE

IMED 1316

GETTING STARTED

- ▶ Talk with your client to see what they want in their site
- ▶ Find out about their business strategy and how it integrates with the web. Some may not have a strategy, but you need to press them to develop one as it can drive what their site should do.
- ▶ Get an idea of the content they want on the site. Pictures, text, etc. Start getting ideas so you can draw a site map.
- ▶ Decide if they are wanting a static site or a CMS – Content Management System.
- ▶ For most, a CMS is better as it is easier for the client to update. Until recently, CMS sites were very expensive, now there are several that are open source and FREE!

QUESTIONS FOR BUILDING A WEB SITE

- ▶ What product or service are you offering?
- ▶ Who are your competitors?
- ▶ What is your competitive advantage in offering this product or service? What makes your product special or unique?
- ▶ Why are you better than others offering the same product or service? IE: Why should a customer buy from you?
- ▶ Who are your customers or clients? Don't say everybody!
- ▶ Does your company have a mission statement, or do you have a set of company values?
- ▶ Does your company have a logo set or specific colors that you are required to use?
- ▶ How are you marketing your business?
- ▶ One site or more? See next slide..

WEB PLANNING STRATEGY

- ▶ Just because you can, doesn't mean you should! Each widget you incorporate should have a specific purpose.
- ▶ Does your client have the technical knowledge (or can they learn) to update the site? Or will they need you to do it? If you use a CMS the client MIGHT can do it.
- ▶ WHO will update and maintain the site?
- ▶ Be sure the client knows about recurring fees. Monthly hosting fees. Domain name fees.
- ▶ What technology is right for your client? It is best if everything they need is incorporated into one site. Example: Photo Gallery & Blog on same site. That way they don't have to leave the site to update all parts.

ONE OR MORE SITES

ONE SITE

- ▶ Advantages
 - ▶ Everything is in one place
- ▶ Disadvantages
 - ▶ Different audiences with different needs

TWO OR MORE SITES

- ▶ Advantages
 - ▶ Can target each audience directly
- ▶ Disadvantages
 - ▶ Two Sites to maintain

MAIN CMS SYSTEMS

- ▶ Weebly.com
- ▶ WordPress
- ▶ Drupal or Joomla

STATIC VS CMS

POSITIVES AND NEGATIVES OF STATIC AND CMS

STATIC DESIGN



- Positives
 - Cheap and quick
 - Any web hosting works, so you may be able to get something very cheap
- Negatives
 - Updates are hard (Contribute required for client, or you do all updates in Dreamweaver)
 - Changing the design is difficult -- complete redo of the site
 - Does not support Web 2.0 tools like blogging, photo gallery, etc. (Much harder to update)

CMS DESIGN



- Positives
 - Content is in database, so it's portable to other systems
 - Many free, open source choices
 - Easy to support alternative platforms
- Negatives
 - More specific web hosting, backups are important
 - More expensive developer time, generally the site costs more upfront
 - Increased risk of being hacked



WHICH CMS IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

www.cmsmatrix.org

CMSmatrix lets you easily compare the features in over 1200 content management system products. Check the boxes next to the software you're interested in and click the Compare button. CMS comparison data is added/maintained by the vendors who develop the products. If a product is out of date or not included in the matrix, be sure to contact the vendor of the software and ask them to update or add their product listing.

You need a CMS that you can learn quickly – but also that your client can learn easily.

It is a good idea to pick one that has lots of books and training videos available and possibly even a college class.

WEB HOST

- ▶ How long are back ups kept?
- ▶ How are they accessible? How long do roll backs to the last back up take?
- ▶ How often is the site backed up?
- ▶ It is a good idea for you to make a copy on your hard drive as well. I also suggest you make a thumbdrive back up as well,

HOSTING TYPES

Shared Hosting

- ▶ Hundreds of thousands of sites share the same server
- ▶ Cheap Pricing
- ▶ Your Site Might Crawl-SLOW
- ▶ May be more vulnerable to being hacked.

Dedicated Hosting

- ▶ Your site is the only site on that server hardware
- ▶ Yours is the only site drawing on the servers resources
- ▶ VERY expensive, usually out of range for a small business

Virtual Private Server

- ▶ Share server hardware, with access to the root of the web server.
- ▶ Walled off from other clients
- ▶ Provided dedicated time for server CPU

PEOPLE TO HELP YOU.....

"WHERE DO I FIND GOOD HELP?"



designer



developer



programmer



photographer



writer



project manager

WHAT DO I CHARGE?

my cost

- subcontractor
- software purchase
- photography
- hosting and domain names



my billable hours

- planning
- building
- debugging
- communication
- training

total = reasonable fixed-price estimate

WHAT DO I CHARGE

- ▶ Figuring cost...
- ▶ <http://freelanceswitch.com/rates/>
- ▶ If your hourly rate is too high or too low, you may lose business. If you are too cheap the client may think you are not any good! Make sure you charge what you are worth.
- ▶ Be sure to figure cost of domain name, hosting, building, updates, etc.
- ▶ Pricing can be a fixed price, an hourly rate or a combination of both. Most clients will prefer a fixed price as they know what the total price would be.
- ▶ Be sure to include a payment schedule. It is common to get 1/2 up front and then the remainder prior to the site launching. Unfortunately there are clients who will decide not to pay you. Best way to prevent that from happening is to get 1/2 up front and then wait until you get the rest to launch the web site. An exception would be government organizations as they can not pay up front. They will pay, but it might be slow.

STICKY NOTE AND KEY WORDS

- ▶ Sticky note exercise –
- ▶ Write down a bunch of ideas on sticky notes, then group them together and give them titles. Then organize them in a logical way.
- ▶ Watch out for redundant information on the site – ie: don't say the same thing over and over again. Say your message once, then link to it for ease of maintenance.
- ▶ Key words need to be included on your web pages for search engine optimization.
- ▶ <http://www.googlekeywordtool.com>
- ▶ This can give you ideas of words and word combinations to use on your site and in your meta data.
- ▶ When you search in google the text following the link is typically the meta data for your site.

SITE MAP

15 minutes to navigate

Old Site Map:

Home

Products

Shopping online

- Catalog
- Delivery options
- Payment methods

Links we love

Directions

- Mapquest directions
- Visiting Us
 - Location
 - Phone Number
 - Hours

3 CLICKS just to find phone number!!!!

5 minutes to navigate

New Site Map:

Home (phone number on home page)

0 clicks to find phone number!!!!

About Us

Products

Online Catalog

Links

Visiting Us

- Store hours and phone number
- Location
- Mapquest directions

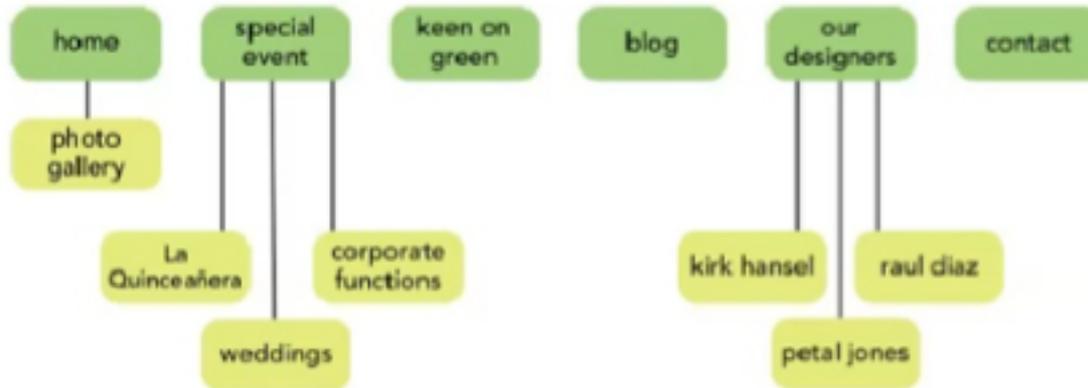
TO DO LIST

"TO DO" LIST

1. Interview client
3. Determine target audience
5. Understand personas
7. Determine features and functionalities
9. Decide upon web site maintenance
11. Determine success indicators/apply Google Analytics
13. Choose specific technologies, including blogs, photo galleries, and social networking
15. Choose between CMS and Static Web Site Design
17. Determine web hosting strategy
- 19. Find contractor help**
21. Determine pricing
23. Integrate pricing into proposal
24. Communicate milestones
26. Develop your site map
28. Evaluating ROT on your current site
30. Create a content tracking sheet
32. Add keywords and description for SEO
34. Add and track images and supporting files

site map

main navigator



header



footer



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