



Peninsula College Continuing Education - Website Development

Week 1 Introduction to Website Development

- Working in the Web Cloud or Designing Websites you have full control of
- Define your Website's mission
- Develop the information architecture
- Domain Registration
- Site Hosting
- Connecting

Welcome to the new Web (2.0)!

Now you are working in the Web Cloud and designing websites you have full control of and not the other way around. It is easier, faster, cheaper, and sometimes free!

- Participation / Social Networking / User Engagement
- Internet applications work beyond the PC
- Software Out – Services In
- DIY (Do It Yourself)
- Free is a very good price.

Development, Define, and Design

Before you start making a website, you have to have a plan of action. Here is my process to achieve website design and utilization for clients:

- Implement site mission based on the organization's objectives of site functionality and usability.
- Develop the information architecture and site map.
- Design a distinct and unique presence to create interest through a visual experience.
- Produce a custom interface design and interactive navigation mechanism with an individual look and feel.
- Construct designs that articulate your aspired image or established branding appearance.
- Enhance images and photography specifically composed for the site.
- Encourage harmony with your content and visual context.
- Integrate interactivity to generate connectivity and familiarity with the organization to develop loyalty and curiosity.
- Build and program a technical infrastructure and test the completed site.
- Administrate site with updates and additional pages.
- Instruct organization site manager in the method to modify the site with essential software, if you want to maintain your site personally.

Enthusiasm is better than Perfectionism.

Get excited by what you are about to share with the whole world. Your enthusiasm must show through the design and content of your site. Excitement and passion is your mission.

Brainstorm!

Develop a design plan that is firm, but flexible. Everything will fall into place once you create your information architecture. To do that, you need to define your site's mission. Let's go through the hard questions first so that it will be easier in the end.

Regardless if your site is for a business, personal hobby, or family memories, you still have to consider these questions. They are fundamental and the foundation to your design.

What is the Mission of your website?

Who is your Audience?

How will you interface with the world?

Develop the information Architecture and Site Map

Information architecture is the term used to describe the structure of a system commonly associated with websites and intranets. It is the way information (content) is grouped and the navigation method to facilitate people to move logically through a system.

Layout Parent Pages – Children Pages – Grandchildren Pages

Important!

Do a great deal of research before paying for any service. Know what you need from your site, even your way future plans. The server or services you are paying for may not have all the features you want in the long run. It is easier to do the research ahead of time than to switch providers. Look for hidden costs and set up fees.

Domain Registration

A domain name registrar is a company accredited by the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers and/or by a national ccTLD authority to register domain names. Do your homework about the cost, ease to move your domain from one server to another, and if they are not scam artists. You might ask your server whom they use. Do a WHOIS search to find out if a domain is available or who owns it.

The cheapest in domain registration doesn't mean the best.

Site Hosting

With site hosting, you have many options and pay scales to choose from. I suggest that you do your research and look at local servers for hosting. Some hosting companies that I have worked with in the past:

Blue Host
bluehost.com
888.401.4678

Olypen.com
support@olypen.com
360.683.1456

InsideOut Solutions
insideout.com
360.683.5774

Connecting

You need to obtain a FTP to maintain your site. File Transfer Protocol (FTP) is a network protocol that is used to transfer your data from your computer to the server that is hosting your site. The application you are using to manage your site might have one built in, like Dreamweaver, or you have to buy one. Though, there are some shareware ones that are free or have trial versions. CuteFTP and FireFTP are often used by new webmasters.

FileZilla is popular too.
<http://filezilla-project.org>

You will need the ftp address from the server, your username, and password to log on.

FTP takes two different forms of information, ASCII (American Standard Code for Information Interchange - 128 characters) and binary (codes made up of only zeros and ones).

When working with a FTP, your files on your computer are in the “local site” and the files on the server are in the “remote site”.

Managing

Content Management System (CMS) is software that assists in the organization and presentation of content on a website. Some are easy, some are complex, some are expensive, and some are free.

It is best to research what will work for you. Some CMS are Joomla!, WordPress, and Adobe Contribute.

This authoring software is designed to allow its users with little or no knowledge of programming to create and manage content. In comparison, website building software like Dreamweaver. If you are using a CMS, to add more features

someone who understands code could add them or you can buy extra widgets. A CMS is perfect for website maintenance. There are hundreds of CMS out there, some are proprietary and some are free and open source software. Find something that has plenty of instruction and help files.

Starting with Templates – Interface Design

A great way to learn website design basics is to try out a template and then taking it apart like reverse technology of alien spacecraft.

Sometimes a Template is called a Theme.

Each CMS has several templates, prefab website layouts, that you can use. You can also pay for a custom one.

They are not always totally what you want, if you want that then you need to learn how to use Dreamweaver, GoLive, or a good amount of html code.

The template will have to be uploaded to your server.

Most give you options for customizing the look of the template. Before fooling around with the design too much, you might save the html code in a Word document (or any text program) so that you can always go back to a previous version. There will be a panel that you can view the html code, select all, copy, and paste in to Word file. Save! Any time you want to experiment with the template, it is a good idea to you save the html first.

Pages

Because you developed your information Architecture, this will be easier. The main pages of a website are called “Parents” and the pages within that section are called “Children”. You produce the Parent pages

first, then add the Children marking that they belong under a certain parent. Sometimes this way of organizing involves numbering the pages, which you don't see on the website itself. I tend to give a wide amount of space to allow for growth by going in between the thousands.

Pages and Posts are two different things. Pages most likely are static and not time based. Posts are flexible, timely, and Blog like. Both can be changed at anytime.

When adding to a page, I build my text content in a word processor to catch my spelling and grammar errors. Then I copy and paste this text. I save the files as well, you never know when you website content will be lost, so keep a backup.

Adding Links

A vital aspect of a website is links. This is how your viewer moves around your website to discover all of its content. Links happen within your website and you can make links that go to other websites. You will have a higher ranking in search engines if you have more links.

It is best to have at least two ways for people to navigate around your site. This may take the form of buttons at the top of your site and a side bar of links. I like to put links at the bottom of a page as well, if I can.

Be sure that you have the correct URL for a link. Everyone hates an error message that a page cannot be found. Check often to see if the links you have added still exist.

Adding images

Images make a huge difference. Make sure they are optimized for the web so the download is fast. Some CMS will resize your images to fit on the page. If you can, try to start with the right size in the first place.

Remember, you can always change your mind. Isn't that nice?

Adding Content

Do this often. Even if you just change one word, that is enough. Swap photos once and awhile. Add event dates. Take something away.

Make changes. This makes your website a living thing. Users love that! A personal touch is great marketing. Have a page that is just fun stuff that you add to like a blog.

You can always add and take away at anytime. The web is open 24-7.

Have fun with it!

Practice on a Blog

It is a great place to test the waters, and who knows – you may just use it to connect with people on another level.

<http://wordpress.com> **Use this for class!**

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