Planning Your Web Site

All You Want To Know
And Have No One To Ask

What to do

BEFORE

DURING

and

AFTER
Before You Build

PLAN, PLAN, PLAN

- Domain Name
- Hosting Solutions
- Ecommerce?
- Databases?
- What kind of content?
  - Newsletter?
  - Event Calendar?
  - Meeting Minutes?
Domain Names

Choose a name that is:

- Easy to spell
- Easy to say (without explanations)
- Describes who you are what you do
Domain Names

Where to get them
- GoDaddy.com
- Register.com
- NetworkSolutions.com
- Penchina.com

Cost
- Approximately $9 a year

Considerations when purchasing
- Forwarding to other URL
- Ease of managing your account
- Auto Renew
Domain Names

How do they work?

Machines use numbers.

People use names.

Hi. My name is 192.87.215.6

Hi. My name is Cindy.
Domain Names

IP address – a numerical address
- Given to you by your hosting company.
- It is the address of the physical computer your site will live on.

Domain Name – a name for your numerical address
- Need to inform the database of your IP so that it can match up your name to the correct machine.
Web Site Hosting

What should I be looking for in a web hosting partner?

– Cost
– Types of plans they offer
– Customer support
– Reliability

– Recommendation: Choose a HOSTING company NOT an ISP
Web Site Hosting

What do I need?

- Items to consider
  - Disk space
  - Bandwidth
  - Ecommerce
  - Databases
  - Scripting Languages
  - Streaming Media
  - Email
  - Web Traffic Statistics
  - SSL
    - Shared
    - Our Own
  - Approximate Cost - $10/month - $50/month
Ecommerce

Catalogs and Shopping Carts
- Miva Merchant
  - Pros
  - Cons
- Yahoo Stores
  - Pros
  - Cons

Shareware Scripts

Custom Applications
Online Donations and Payment

What are my options?

– Credit Cards
  • With online verification services
  • Without online verification services
– Pay Pal
– ClickandPledge.com
– Print and send
Online Databases

What are they for?

- Email lists
- Donor/Client Lists
- Content Management
- Searchable Content
- Interactive Content
Building Your Website

Website Pieces
– Content
– Design
– Information Architecture
– User Interface
General Rules for Building a Good Website

Most popular reasons for visiting a website.
- To get information
- To make a purchase or donation
- To be entertained

If something on your site doesn’t solve a potential need or problem, eliminate it.
Content

How much?
- Most people SCAN
- Omit needless words

What kind?
- Omit instructions, or at least pare them back
- Omit “happy talk”

How to deliver?
- HTML
- PDF
- Images
Design

Good Design

- Supports your message
- Enhances your content, not overpowers it
- Uses color effectively
- Works to support the user interface and the information architecture

A word about your home page...

It should take visitors no longer than 4 seconds to figure out who you are and what you do...

Case in point... http://www.1amp.com/
Information Architecture

It is easy to find the content?

– Think about supermarket shopping
  • Outside aisles are usually produce, dairy, meat
  • Inside aisles are organized by categories
Information Architecture

Navigation menus

– How to organize them

• Sections of the site – about us, programs, history
• Utilities – help, site map, checkout, search, support

AN EXAMPLE...
BE PASSIONATE, Shop for a cause...

- 100% of the proceeds from your purchase go directly to the charity
- Your purchase is a commitment to help support education, outreach, research and all of our critical programs throughout the country
- By shopping here, you create the opportunity to share information about cancer and promote cancer awareness with others.
- Our gifts and awareness products make a powerful yet thoughtful statement.

Featured Products

- Hope, Courage, Bravery Endurance Pink Wristbands
- Precious Cancer Awareness Angel Pin
- Elegant Breast Cancer Awareness Charm Bracelet
- Together We Can Make A Difference" Bracelet
- Pink Ribbon/ Breast Cancer Awareness Car Magnets
- Breast Cancer Awareness Bear
- Cancer Awareness Bookmark
- Inspirational, Aroma Therapy Candles
Information Architecture

Navigation menus

- Give visitors a sense of security... so don’t take the baby blanket- in other words BE CONSISTENT
- There’s no place like HOME
User Interface

- A website is a piece of software
- Users are active
User Interface

Good UI

- Intuitive – don’t make your visitors think
- Information is broken into sections and uses a hierarchy of placement, type size, etc.
- Adhere to accepted conventions
- Keep the “noise” down
- It’s not the number of clicks… it’s how much thought it takes to decide what clicks I want.
Examples of Bad Website Design

Use of Color -
  http://www.epluribusmedia.org/press.html

Use of Flash
  – http://www.leoburnett.ca/

Distracting elements and use of space
  – http://www.womenkickboxing.com/

Unintelligible Links
  – http://www.epluribusmedia.org/diaries.html
More...

No explanation needed..
- http://www.swanseahistoryweb.org.uk/

Navigational Nightmare
- http://www.showcaves.co.uk/
Promoting Your Site

Search Engine Optimization

- Text
- Images
  - Alternate text tags
- Links
- Keywords
- Page Titles

SEO Services

- How they work
Promoting Your Site

Keyword Buying Programs
- Google Adwords
- Yahoo Search Marketing

Print Advertising

Newletters – sponsor ads

Remember to include your URL on all print material