

Elements of a Web Plan

Make sure to have a great website project by considering these elements before you begin building your site.

Executive Summary

Identify your organization mission, the mission and goals of the new web site, what kind of website you already have, members of the planning team and their roles. Identify which organization mission goals your website targets.

Research and Evaluation

Research your sector for web projects of similar scope and intent. Look for duplication of content/services. Ask questions related to their planning process and site implementation. Provide examples of sites that exhibit features you require and those that do not work well, and explain why.

Target Audience

Who is your audience and how do they interface with your organization? What is the estimated size of your audience? How do they use technology? What do they want from your organization? What will these audiences gain from the new website? List off the various segments of your target audience and describe.

Content

Identify content to be included on the site, and the related audience/strategy. Describe the content type, are these short text, documents of many pages, pdf files, powerpoint, videos, audio, etc. Also describe generally what the content will be about, and which audience segment(s) the content is directed to.

Structure

Using your list of content, identify categories for your content and build a structure for your website content. Consider how your audience will best find this information.

Interactivity/community tools

How should audiences interact with staff, with one another, and with your content? Should your audience have the capacity to find each other through the site? Should your entire audience be able to contribute content, or just organization staff? Be sure to specify which segment of your audience should have which interactive features available to them.

Design

What is your color palette, usability requirements (how much do we compromise on fancy design vis-a-vis universal accessibility). Identify themes, logo, and images that describe your mission (practical? fun? professional? etc). If available, provide the highest quality logo files you have available. Provide examples of sites with designs you like and don't like.

Measurements of Success

Identify what constitutes success for this website, benchmarks, and how this will be measured. Derive success metrics from organizational goals, and use simple sentences to describe them, ie "We will increase our Facebook subscribers by 100% in the first year in order to increase our outreach".

Staffing and Training

Identify current IT and web staff. Describe their new roles (if any) and plan for new job descriptions and salaries. Who will update the site? How much time will they devote to this work a week? Identify staff training needs and plan.

Budget and Timeline

Identify the resources you have available, and the timeline for completion of this project. Allow for project expansion when budgeting, and know the maximum resources available.