

# Introduction to Website Building (WordPress and Wix)

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**Taught by** Claire Tratnyek and Tieanna Graphenreed  
German Program  
Carolyn Fuchs  
Fall 2021



Northeastern University  
*NULab for Texts, Maps, and Networks*

*Feel free to ask questions at any point  
during the presentation!*

# Workshop Agenda

- Understand the strengths of WordPress and Wix as website builders
- Understand best practices in website building
- Discuss the merits of a variety of Wix and WordPress website examples
- Begin planning your website through the creation of a wireframe

Slides and handout available at:

<https://bit.ly/diti-fa21-fuchs-websites>



# Today's Activity: Planning a Website

- Your goal is to learn how to create your own website wireframe in preparation for building your website later this semester
- DITI members will work alongside you to demo the creation of a wireframe
- This wireframe will serve as a roadmap and help as you make your WordPress or Wix website this semester for this class. It remains a useful skill for making professional websites in the future



# What are WordPress and Wix?

- WordPress and Wix are professional **website-building tools** that allow you to build your own website
- They provide a free **domain name** with “WordPress” or “wixsite” in the URL, but both have paid versions
- They both support **themes** (both), **widgets** (WordPress), and **apps** (Wix) to customize your website



# Why choose WordPress?



- Better for websites with a blog component (features for tagging and categorizing)
- Often used for academic websites
- Template-based design
  - You can change your theme at any time, regardless of when the site was created
- Better Longevity



# WordPress Examples

Look through websites to see how Northeastern students use WordPress to present their professional identities.

- <https://madisonwaldron.WordPress.com/>
- <https://jordanwlai.WordPress.com/>

Professional examples of WordPress sites include:

- <https://web.northeastern.edu/nulab/>
- <https://dsg.northeastern.edu/>



# Why choose Wix?

- Often used for businesses and artistic websites
- Customizable design that is less template-bound
  - You cannot change your theme on an existing site
- AI Design feature—recommends features to you



# Wix Examples

Look through websites to see how Northeastern students use Wix to present their professional identities.

- <https://bellama9.wixsite.com/website>
- <https://johnsonmaryb.wixsite.com/firstyearwriting2020>

Professional examples of Wix sites include:

- <https://www.helenakruger.com/>
- <https://www.laurabaross.com/>





# Planning a website



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# Website Building Vocabulary

- **Pages:** These are the main areas of your website that your audience will be able to navigate in your site's menu
- **Domain:** Your domain name is the unique URL that leads to your website
- **Design:** The aesthetic choices for your website, including colors, font, embedded media content, and more.
- **Navigation:** The way a user moves through your website using menus, buttons, and links
- **Menus:** Collection of hyperlinked pages used to navigate through a website. Menus are usually located at the top of a website or on the left or right side of the webpage.



# Wireframing: Planning your Site

- Before most people create websites, they create **wireframes**. Wireframes are rough outlines for the design and placement of a website's content. They also help us imagine how we envision users interacting on our site. Some questions to consider as you make a wireframe are:
  - What is the **purpose** of this site?
  - What are the **essential components** I need to get this point across?
  - Who is my **audience**?
  - What **site features** will best support my goals and audience?
  - How can I make my site **easy to use**?
- Wireframing tools:
  - MockFlow: <https://www.mockflow.com/>
  - Wireframe CC: <https://wireframe.cc/>



# Wireframe Examples:

Wireframes help us plan and anticipate:

- **The Design**
  - the *aesthetic choices* (colors, font, etc.)
- **Layout of Individual Pages**
- **Site Navigation**
  - *The menu organization and hierarchy*
- **User experience**



Wireframe examples sourced from [Professor Julia Flanders](#), Northeastern University; slidedeck: "Wireframing and Project Design Processes"

**Both fine!**



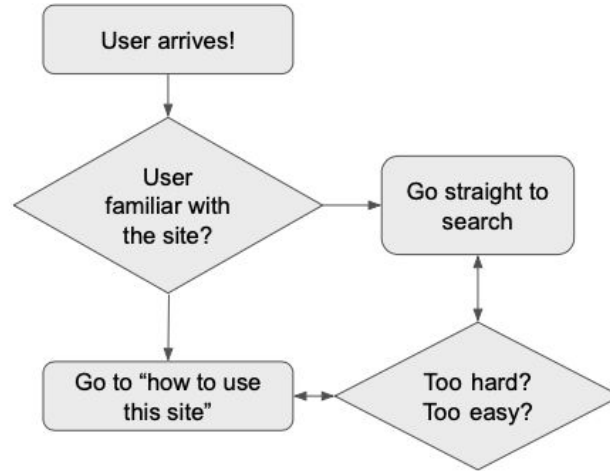
# Interpreting Wireframes

## Let's Discuss!

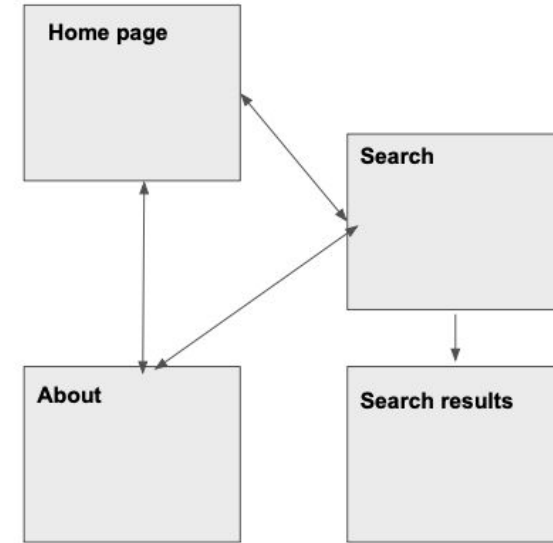
Take a look at the image.

- What's going on here?
- How do these two illustrations relate to one another?
- What do they have to do with design, usability, and user experience?

Flowchart



Wireframe



Wireframe examples sourced from [Professor Julia Flanders](#), Northeastern University; slidedeck: "Wireframing and Project Design Processes"



# Activity: Create a wireframe

- Pull out a sheet of paper and pen/pencil
- Take **five minutes** to sketch out a wireframe. Where possible, think about how you imagine users moving through your site. Draw arrows or other indicators.
- Try to include the following elements in your wireframe:
  - Multiple pages
  - Navigation
  - Menus
  - Page layouts (content, images, etc.)



# Preparing for Our Next Session

- **Review the sample websites** (Wix and WordPress) included in this presentation
- **Choose a website platform** (WordPress or Wix) and *notify your instructor of your choice*
- **Create an account** on your chosen platform
- In accordance with upcoming course assignments from your instructor, **prepare content** that will go on your website



# Thank you!

If you have any questions, contact DITI at [nulab.info@gmail.com](mailto:nulab.info@gmail.com)

Sign up for DITI office hours! <https://calendly.com/diti-nu>

## Developed and Taught by

**Colleen Nugent**

Digital Integration Teaching Initiative  
DITI Research Fellow

**Talia Brenner**

Digital Integration Teaching Initiative  
NULab Co-coordinator

**Claire Tratnyek**

Digital Integration Teaching Initiative  
DITI Research Fellow

**and**

**Tieanna Graphenreed**

Digital Integration Teaching Initiative  
DITI Research Fellow

*A special thanks to Professor Julia Flanders for the wireframe examples used in this presentation.*

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