SharePoint Site Design & Implementation: "Online Manual"

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I am looking to create an "Online Manual" site template in MOSS 2007, in order to create a number of sites that will hold static information on an array of topics.

- What site template should I use, I am currently thinking Publishing Site, but a Wiki might work?

- How should I show the navigation for the different "Chapters" (in the left side panel)? I could use the "Table of Contents" webpart, a custom view on a list, or something else.

- How should I store the created "Pages", 1 large Page Library, or separate Lists for each "Chapter"

- Lastly, Should I just hard-code the navigation webpart to the master page so it appears on every page?

EDIT:

My real issue is "*How I am going to create the left side navigation, to be shown on every page?*"

It should be a Table of Contents type of view that has all of the pages grouped by chapters.

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Thank you everyone for your help! I just wanted to let you know what I ended up doing to create the "Online Manual".

I created a custom

1) Master Page to allow for the desired 2-column layout.

2) Page Layout to persist the navigation control on all pages.

3) Document Library with "Chapter" and "Sort Order" custom columns

4) Web Part (in C#) that uses the object model to retrieve all pages from a document library and display them in a list grouped by "Chapter" and sorted by "Sort Order"

I used the Publishing site template to allow the contributors more freedom to create content.

Thanks again!

1

Keep the site as a publishing site template, as you will need to be able to publish pages. You can always add a wiki to the publishing site template if necessary.

A wiki is not appropriate for the static online manual contents as it is essentially a list that allows users to add/edit on the fly. The wiki could make sense as an adjunct to the manual allowing users to add supporting information.

The tricky part of a manual is the ordering of the pages, as at each stage you will need to have a next/back and a list of each page in the correct order.

We have created a custom navigation provider that generates information based on values within the pages. The pages weren't ordered however.

Storing the "Pages" in different lists is going to be more pain than pleasure unless you are dealing with more than 2000 pages per list..

Keep it as simple as possible I think.

Have a couple of page layouts, one for the "contents page" and one for a normal "page". Create a new content type for each of the layouts so you can store specific information on each page (e.g. the next/previous page url).

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answered Jan 22, 2009 at 20:25

Nat
14.3k ● 5 ● 43 ● 64

Must the site be in Sharepoint? There are a number of wiki engines/frameworks out there that are really great at this.

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answered Jan 26, 2009 at 20:39

Ben Collins
20.7k ● 18 ● 128 ● 190

Yup, has to be in SharePoint. – JWD Jan 26, 2009 at 20:43

I'd think that a list view web part would be the way to go. Assuming your documents are sorted inside of chapters, you'd need to set the view type to recursive, and then group by the folder name (I think you can do that, don't have a SP installation accessible to me at the moment to verify).

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answered Jan 27, 2009 at 15:57

Yuliy

17.7k ● 6 ● 43 ● 47
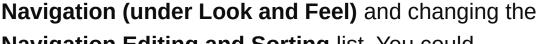

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I've built user guide using a Sharepoint wiki in the past with some success.

The left-hand navigation can be done by changing Sharepoint's standard left-hand menu to be a list of links to wiki pages. This is done by going to **Site Settings -> Navigation (under Look and Feel)** and changing the **Navigation Editing and Sorting** list. You could theoretically add every page there, but for readability I'd stick to only the chapter headings.

You can also change the site's permissions so that only you (or your documentation person) have permission to edit the pages.

answered Feb 17, 2009 at 3:04

Fuzzy Purple Monkey

1,940 ● 3 ● 15 ● 23