

WIREFRAMES

A wireframe is a simple sketch of the key information that needs to go on each page of a site. It shows the hierarchy of the information and how much space it might require.

A lot of designers will take the elements that need to appear on each page and start by creating wireframes. This involves sketching or shading areas where each element of the page will go (such as the logo, primary navigation, headings and main bodies of text, user logins etc).

By creating a wireframe you can ensure that all of the information that needs to be on a page is included.

You should not include the color scheme, font choices, backgrounds or images for the website in the wireframe. It should focus on what information needs to be on each page and create a visual hierarchy to indicate the most important parts of each page.

The wireframes make design easier because you know what information needs to appear on which page before considering

how the the page should look. It can be very helpful to show the wireframes of a site to a client before showing them a design. It enables the client to ensure the site has all the functions and information it needs to offer.

If you just present a site design to a client, it is common for them to focus on how the site looks, which means they may not raise issues about its function after the site has been built.

The example on the right was created in Photoshop using the templates that come with the 960.gs grid system.

You can sketch wireframes on paper or use a graphics application on your computer (such as Illustrator or InDesign).

There are also online wireframe tools such as those at:
<http://gomockingbird.com>
<http://lovelycharts.com>

EXAMPLE WIREFRAME

