Web Site Survey

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Introduction

Nobody knows more about your web site than you do. But, like most people who aren't experienced web developers, you may not realize how much you already know about what you want your web site to be. This survey will help you clarify the requirements of your web endeavor so that we can more effectively make your vision a reality.

Please fill out the survey on the following pages. You'll be surprised to find out how much you already know about your web site.

A. Goals

All web sites are created to accomplish meaningful goals, which may vary from effectively disseminating information on a particular topic to generating significant ecommerce income. One of the keys for a successful web site is recognizing what the goals are so that the web site features can be properly focused to support those goals.

1 What is the mission statement for this web site? The mission statement is a description, in one or two sentences, of what you want to accomplish with the web site.

2 What are the primary and secondary goals for this web site? Which goals can be described as short-term goals and which represent long-term goals? How would you prioritize the goals?

3 What would constitute a "successful" implementation for this web site?

4 How will success be measured?

5 How will this web site support you and your organization? Examples include making processes more efficient, making information widely available, enhancing the organization's reputation, generating income, etc.

B. Audience

Web sites are created in order to achieve some effect on a defined group of people. The desired effect might be to leave audience members more informed about a particular topic or to convince them to spend money on products/services. An important success factor for web sites is understanding who the audience of the web site is, so that features and content can be tailored to appeal to that audience.

1   What is the intended audience for the web site?

2   Why will people want to come to the web site?

3   What feeling should the web site evoke in a user when they first view the site? Examples might include reactions such as cool, zany, educational, conservative or informative.

4   After using the site, what impression should the user be left with?

C. Content

Simply put, people visit web sites because they're looking for something. What they're looking for is content, and they're usually looking for a particular type of content for a reason. They might be looking to enhance their knowledge of a certain topic, such as carpentry; they might be searching for the cheapest price for a new iPod; or they could be looking for a local locksmith to help them get their car keys out of their locked car. Your site needs to provide content that will be meaningful and compelling for your target audience.

1   Where will the content for the site come from? Will it be created specifically for the web site, repurposed from another source, or both?

2   What is the anticipated schedule for updating the site's content? Or, how frequently will the site's content be updated?

3   Who should be responsible for updating the content of the web site?

D. Functional Requirements

While some web sites simply provide content for users to view, other web sites provide dynamic features that allow users to perform actions such as creating a login account, logging in, downloading files, uploading files, subscribing to newsletters, ordering products, processing credit card payments, etc.

1 What activities should a user be able to accomplish by using the site? Examples include viewing articles, creating a login account, ordering products, subscribing to a newsletter, etc.

2 Will the web site include a requirement for some sort of search capability?

3 Will the web site need to interact in some manner with other systems? Examples of other systems include credit card authorization gateways, accounts receivable systems, billing systems, etc.

4 Are there any security issues associated with the project? For example, will there be particular features of the site that only designated users should have access to?

5 If a version of the web site already exists, are there currently areas of the site that could be improved? If so, how?

E. Internet Research

The Internet is one of the most effective research tools ever created. It should come as no surprise that it's one of the prime tools to use when formulating requirements for a new web site or enhancements to an existing web site. The best way to get ideas for your web site is to look at other web sites, particularly competitor web sites.

1   List three web sites that have a look and feel something like what you envision for this web site.

2   List three web sites that emphatically do not represent the look and feel that you would like to see.

3   Are there particular color schemes or themes that you have come across that appear to be desirable for the web site?

4   List any features that you have discovered on other sites that you feel might be a valuable part of the web site.