Web Design Basics

Class 2 Assignment

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Your assignment this week is to create a web site specification for your first website for this course: an online portfolio of work.

A specification document, in the broadest sense, usually does the following:

It explains the scope of the project.

It establishes the main goals.

It organizes and prioritizes the information to be shared with the intended audience.

There isn’t really a strict bullet list of items that must be covered in a site spec. A quick search for the keyword phrase “[web project specification](https://www.google.com/search?q=web+project+specification&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&aq=t&rls=org.mozilla:en-US:official&client=firefox-a&channel=nts)” will show you that [many](http://www.vordweb.co.uk/specification.htm), [many](http://wemakewebsites.com/blog/website-specification-template) designers have [their own opinions](http://www.techfounder.net/2009/07/03/writing-specifications-for-web-applications/) on the [best way](http://www.pixelearth.net/pages/project-specification) to assemble an effective spec document. Some even suggest a specification is [actually counter-productive.](http://boagworld.com/digital-strategy/website-spec/)

For our purposes, given you’re both designer and client on this project, it seemed useful to frame the assignment as answers to a series of questions.

**Answer the following:**

***What is the purpose of the website?***

Define at least one goal that the website should help you achieve (beyond fulfilling the course requirements, of course).

## *Who is the intended audience?*

## Is the portfolio aimed primarily at your peers? At potential employers?

## *What tone do you want for the site’s written content?*

Will the content be with an informal, conversational tone? Will it be more formal, as say the content in a resume? The intended audience will help determine the right tone.

## *What will be the primary content of your site?*

## Here you would include detailed descriptions of the landing page and pages specific to work you want to share and discuss. Include any supporting images as appropriate.

## *What will be the secondary content?*

## Here you’d include descriptions of such pages as *about*, *resources*, *contact me,* and so on. Include any supporting images as appropriate.

## *How will users navigate through your site?*

## The online version of the [Web Style Guide, by Patrick J. Lynch and Sarah Horton](http://www.webstyleguide.com/index.html), has a superb chapter on [Interface Design](http://www.webstyleguide.com/wsg3/4-interface-design/index.html). I recommend reading the section titled [Navigation and Wayfinding](http://www.webstyleguide.com/wsg3/4-interface-design/2-navigation.html) prior to working out your site navigation. Yes, it’s certainly more than you need to know for your first project, but its’ main points about site usability apply to every site.

Once you’ve answered the questions create a diagram of site pages that describes clearly how they are linked together. This is also known as a tree diagram. This can be a simple image with page titles arranged in a flowchart. Illustrator, Photoshop or even MS Word would be suitable for this task. Just be sure to save out the image in a web friendly format like png or jpg. For the more ambitious among you,  [91digital.net](http://91digital.net/) has a good piece on [designing site trees](https://91digital.net/blog/sitemap-design/).

Finally, create a new HTML document that contains your answers and the site diagram. Use last weeks’ or this weeks’ template HTML file to help you design the page. Please place your files in a folder with your name on it, archive it as a zip file and send it to me through Canvas.

As always, please send me note if you have any questions.

For Section D, Assignment 2 is due 09/12/17 by 12 Noon.

For Section C, Assignment 2 is due 09/13/17 by 9 AM.

Reading for next Class:

HTML and CSS: Visual QuickStart Guide (8th Edition)

Chapter 4: Text

Chapter 7: CSS Building Blocks