

# FINAL PROJECT PROPOSAL

CMST 386 | John Doe

## CLIENT AND TOPIC

This proposal outlines the details for the creation of the website for my freelance business (to be launched upon completion of my DMWT degree). This website will showcase my portfolio of work as well as include information about me and my business. A contact page and blog will also be featured.

## Development Process + Engagement DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

To make this website successful, a good amount of research will be conducted including analytics and data of similar websites using a variety of SEO tools including Moz Keyword Explorer. An exploration of other websites and design textbook will be conducted to help create a user-friendly and engaging layout using best design practices while still incorporating my own personality.

## TESTING

Website design testing will be conducted to ensure both proper design layout and user functionality. Design layout will be tested using Safari, Firefox, Chrome, and Edge browsers. In addition, Browser Shots will also be used to ensure cross-platform compatibility. The website will also be tested on a variety of screen sizes and devices including at least two models of iPhone, iPad, and two desktop computers.

User testing will be conducted by sending the site to a variety of users from differing backgrounds and technical levels for a complete review. This will also allow for an even greater variety of browsers, devices, and screen size testing.

## BUSINESS AND WEBSITE DESCRIPTION

### Mission Statement

To help individuals, entrepreneurs, start-ups, and small businesses grow by creating unique, branded, & interactive digital design for web and print.

### Business Goals

As this is a startup business that will be launched in July 2020, the first year goal of the business is focused on brand awareness and growth. First year goals are to:

- Create additional revenues of \$35,000 (approximately \$2,900 per month).
- Obtain 7 new web design clients.
- Grow website traffic to 1,000 unique visitors per month.

### Target Audience

The typical customer for this business is an entrepreneurial spirit with an appreciation for modern design looking to grow a business or personal brand. The geographic focus of marketing efforts will be between the I-795/I-83 corridors, mainly in the Northern

Baltimore County, Carroll County, and South Hanover, PA areas. Efforts will be focused on users aged 35-55 with household incomes of 80,000 - 120,000 owning or working for small businesses. Such users will generally access and search for information digitally using either a mobile device or desktop computer.

## **Impact of Target Audience on Design**

As the target audience of this site will be of the younger entrepreneurs, a more casual and bright appearance will be eye-catching, yet professional in order to establish a sense of trust. A less "corporate" feel to the site showcases creativity, openness, and familiarity often sought by those with small, start-up businesses. I'm looking to work with like-minded people in the area (and some virtually out of the targeted geographic location) so the design of this website will let my personality show through while remaining professional.

## **Content**

All web copy will be written by me, including descriptions of each service, a short biography, and main page content. Blog content will also be written and maintained by me. Most images will showcase my own work and will be created by me, however, the "hero image" on the main page will be a stock image. A new headshot will be done by a local photographer.

## **Updates**

Once up and running, the main section of the website will be updated as new portfolio pieces are created or new testimonials are received. In addition, the blog will be updated at least every 2 weeks as new articles are composed and published.

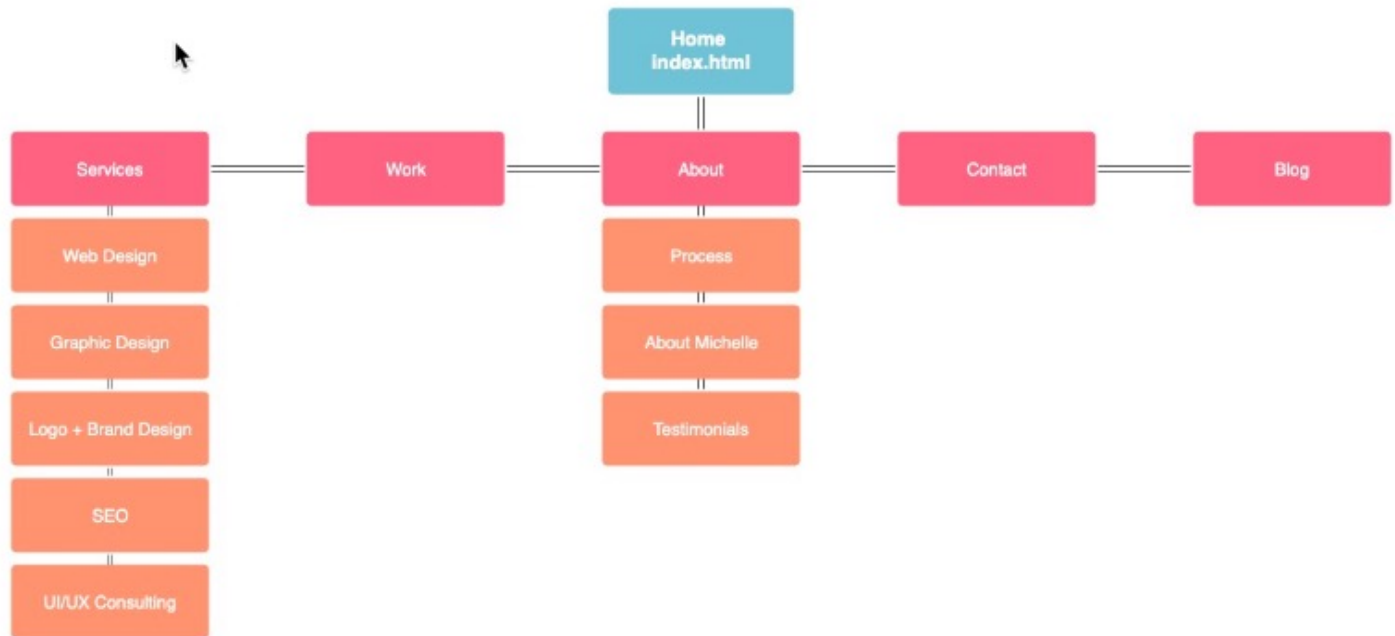
## **GROWTH**

This website will grow with the addition of services as new skillsets are acquired. By setting up an interactive portfolio in a photo grid style, new work can easily be added as needed. Each service offered (such as web design, SEO, graphic design, etc.) will be detailed on individual pages, making the addition of new services easy to add. I don't anticipate that this will be something updated very frequently.

The blog portion will take more work and will have much more growth over time. New blogs will be added at least bi-monthly. Each individual blog will be easily added by creating a new web page, however, the blog index may take a little more work to maintain when adding new articles. This will be a research point when developing my site.

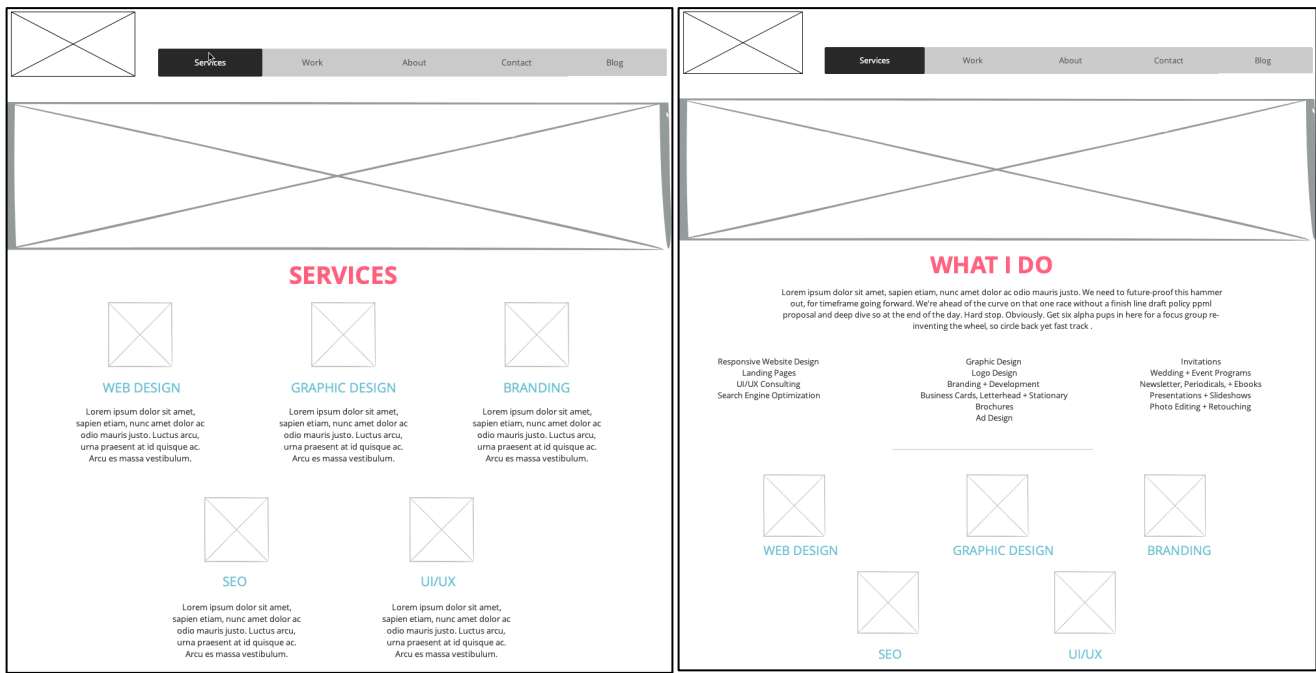
## **ORGANIZATION**

The diagram below details the hybrid layout of the website. A simple navigation bar helps guide the user to the topic of interest.



Topics included in the website are an overview of the services provided, then detailed sub-topics for each service rendered. The main page and services page will outline all services provided with brief descriptions of each. Users can navigate via drop-down menu or by clicking on the title or icon for each individual service to learn more in-depth about the service provided and its benefits. In addition, users can also navigate to a gallery of work that can be filtered by type. A brief biography and list of qualifications can be read on the About page.

Wireframes below show the anticipated layout of each page.



**Not all wireframes are shown in this sample.**

## WEB HOSTING

Several factors will be considered when choosing web hosting including site security, site speed, and customer support. Pricing, too, will play a factor in this decision. This website will be smaller at the start without any downloadables or large files, so to start not much bandwidth will be needed. However, depending upon the direction the business grows, the option for additional bandwidth in the future will be a must to ensure that the site can grow without being migrated to a new host.

As I am not well versed in hosting and managing websites, a host offering management services such as security, updates, and backups will be selected. According to CNet, a Virtual Private Server or cloud server would likely be my best option.

For right now, SSL will be the only special technology required by this website. SSL will not only help secure data, but also help assist the site with SEO rankings. In the future, it is possible that Amazon Web Services will be used to help with downloadable items for purchase, or an e-commerce platform such as WooCommerce. For the time being, at initial launch, the site will be very simple.

Bluehost and Dreamhost both have well-priced options, are highly rated, and offer SSL certificates and daily backups. One of these two hosting companies will likely be selected.

This website will require HTML, CSS, JavaScript, and possibly PHP. HTML and CSS will create the structure and style of the site itself. Additional functionality such as form submission will require JavaScript and possibly PHP for form submission and user-access areas in the future.

I own the domain michellezahn.net currently and this will be used for this website as an alias. The domain michellezahndesign.com is also available and may be the primary domain for SEO purposes (with the keyword "design" in the URL) with michellezahn.net redirecting. Michellezahndesign.com is available through GoDaddy as of the date of this proposal.

## MARKETING

This website will be promoted through a variety of channels. Search engine optimization will be a primary marketing tactic. Keyword research will be conducted using Google Keyword Planner and similar tools to find the best long-chain keyword to rank for. Competitor backlinks will be researched to find opportunities for directory listings and other advertising avenues.

Meta data (including title, author, keywords, and description at a minimum) will be inserted into the head of each web page on the site, with appropriate alt tags defined for all links, images, and media. Google Search Console will be used and a sitemap will be submitted for indexing. Schema.org and Google Data Highlighter will be used for additional markup.

Social media marketing will also be conducted on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Pinterest to help generate site traffic. Freelance marketing websites such as Upwork and Behance will also be used to promote this website. Business cards and printed marketing materials will also be used. A Google My Business listing and Bing Places listing will be created with links to the website.

## SECURITY

The website will not use e-commerce or any type of payment acceptance, nor will any area of the site be password protected. The website will be used, at least initially, solely as an informative and portfolio display website for potential customers to view work. I would like to keep the site open to growth where downloadable designs are available through ecommerce in the future and at that point more security measures will be added.

When setting up this site, I will choose a host offering SSL. Multiple backups of this site will also be kept on my end, both on cloud servers and external hard drives.

## REFERENCES

[References have been removed. PLEASE include references in your project.]