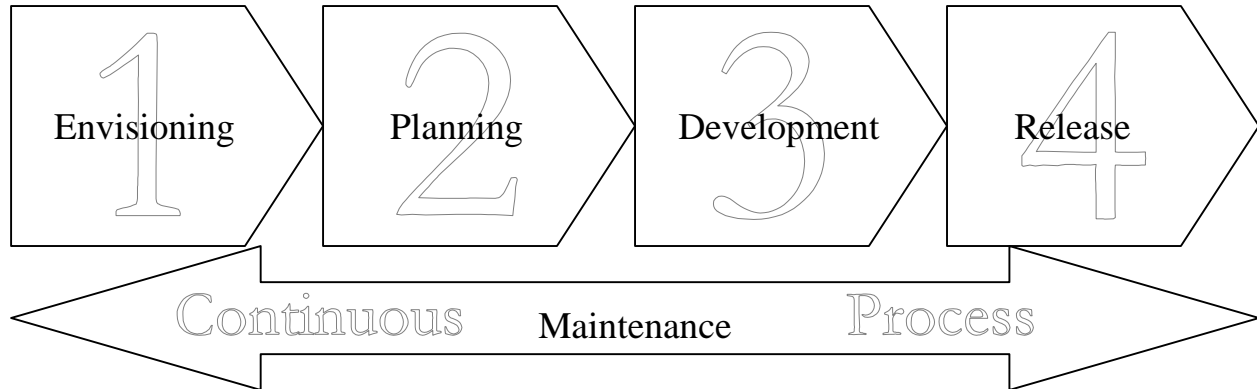


Generic Guide to Building a Web site

This process has been developed from the experience of Web producers at the McCombs School of Business, based on models used by professional Web site developers. If you are developing a site on your own, this guide can take you through the process. If you are working with the McCombs Web team, this guide will walk you through the steps necessary to create your site.

Overview of Development Process



**Note: It is recommended that each of these steps be followed in the following order and completed before moving on to the next phase.

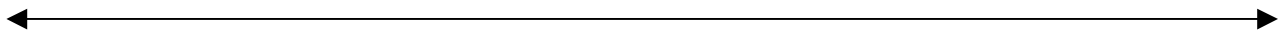
Defining Who is Involved

Client: Who the site is built for, generally a McCombs School department or organization.

Client Representative: The *one person* charged with representing the client, generally an individual from the department or organization.

Project Manager: The person overseeing development of the site, generally a Web team member or yourself (if you are not being assisted by the Web team).

Customer: The intended audience of the finished web site.





Step 1 – Envisioning

Duration: 2-3 days average

Description: Process of determining the site’s audience and purpose.

Questions to be answered by the client:

1. Who is the client?
2. Who is the client representative?

-
3. Who is the project manager? _____
 4. Who needs to sign off on key steps in this project (Dean, Dept. Chair, Dir. Of Communications)? _____
 5. What is the site’s purpose and goal?

Site Purpose: _____

- a. The intention of the site is:
 - Informative (brochure-like)
 - Utility for collecting data (online application)
 - Experiential (photo tour of school)
 - Community-building (discussion boards)
 - Other _____
- b. How often do you anticipate the page will need to be updated?
 - Infrequently (<4 times/year)
 - Somewhat frequently (once a month)
 - Frequently (weekly)
 - Very frequently (daily)
- c. What are the goals by which you want to measure the site’s effectiveness?
 - Number of visitors
 - Increased usage over previous site

- Positive comments from users
- Creation of a site, plain & simple
- Other measurements _____

6. Which of the following are the important audiences for the site (check all that apply)?

a. Internal

- Current Students
- Faculty
- Staff
- UT Community
- Other _____

b. External

- Prospective Students
- Alumni and Supporters
- Corporations
- Media
- Outside Academics
- Other _____

7. Now select one, or at most, two of the above as your primary audience.

1. _____
2. _____

Completion of Step 1 – Envisioning, completed jointly by client and project manager

1. What is the intention of the site? _____
2. What is the site’s goal? _____
3. Who is the site’s audience? _____
4. Will this site require a separate scope document? _____

(Scope documents, or specs, are required for complex projects. Your Web team contact can gauge this need.)

5. What goals will you measure the site’s success by?

Goal 1: _____

Goal 2: _____

Goal 3: _____

3. Who will be signing off at key stages of this project?

4. Tentative Deadlines:

a. Completion of envisioning

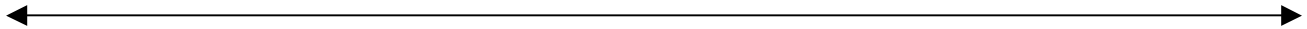
b. Completion of content for your site

c. Completion and publishing of your site

Section 1 Sign-off

Project Manager

Client





Step 2 – Planning

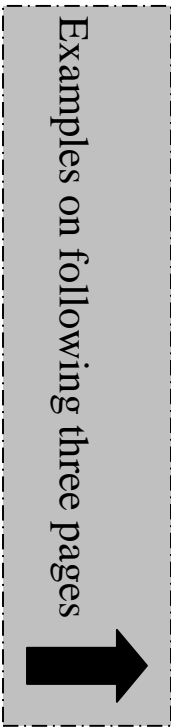
Duration: 2 days – 1 week

Description: The planning stage is still not the “show-me” stage. You will not see a graphically designed site. In this step you outline the site’s “big picture.” Throughout the planning step you will be mapping out each part of the site so that the content can be created then easily transferred to a graphical base.

Questions to be answered jointly by the client and project manager:

1. Relation to the School of Business Web site:
 - a. Will this site be on either the internal (Texas Nexus) or external templates for standard McCombs School sites? _____
**Note: certain sites are required to be standardized. Check with the Web team if you have questions.
 - b. If not on a template, how should the site link back to the MSB and to UT Austin?

2. Information Architecture: How will the site be organized?
 - a. One-level of categories - recommended for most sites at school.
Example A - Marketing Department, organized under four different categories.
 - b. Two-levels of categories – recommended for larger or more complex sites. Example B – News8Austin.com, organized by different news subjects, then by specialized subcategories for each group.
 - c. Two-levels (or more) of intersecting categories – recommended for large sites with multiple audiences. Example C – Microsoft.com which uses several different categories to direct people to the same eventual resources, generally suited for large, complex sites.
****Note: If you are trying to apply this kind of organization to a small site, chances are you should simplify your approach at organization.**



Example A – Single-level of categories - McCombs Marketing Department

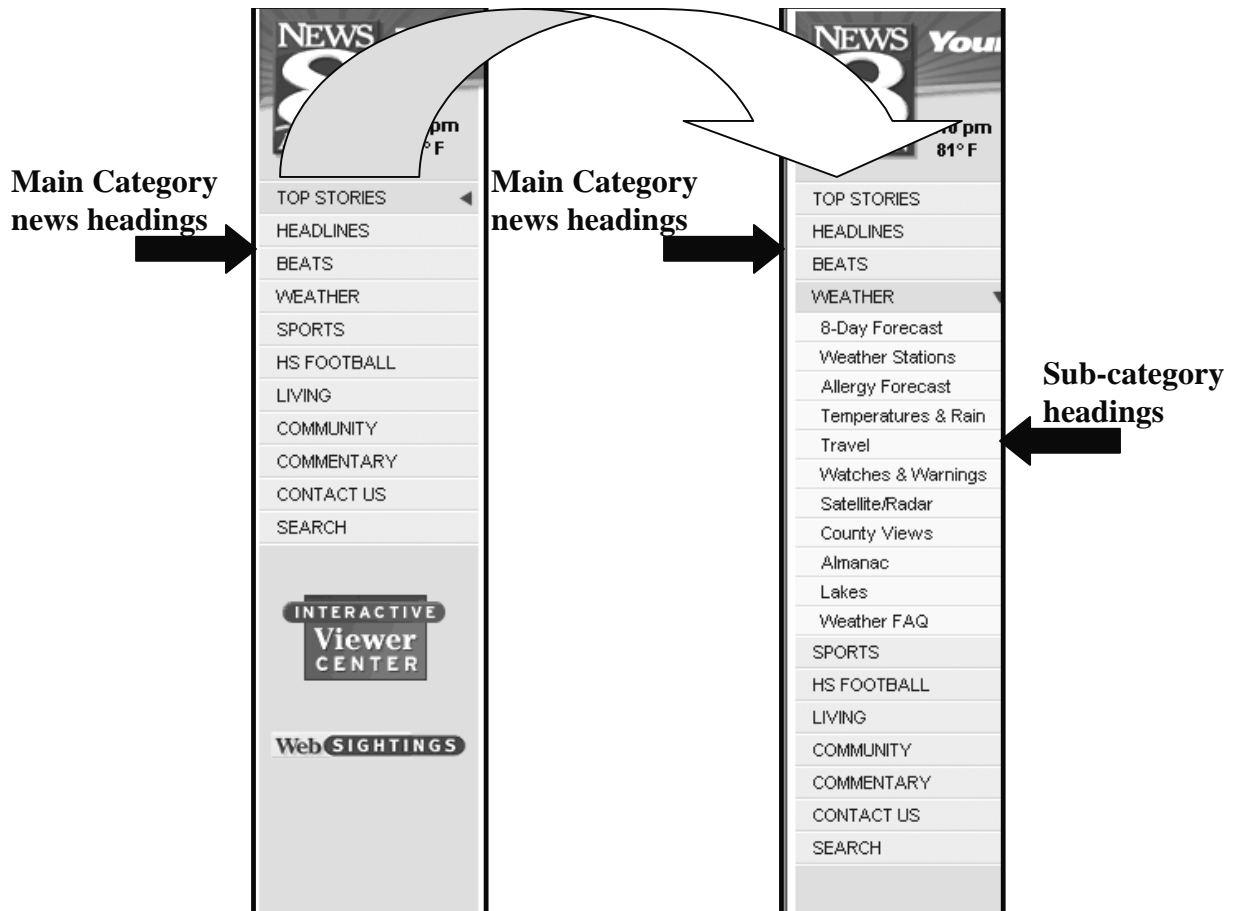


The screenshot displays the McCombs Marketing Department website. The top navigation bar includes links for MSB, Students, Faculty/Staff, Alumni, Research, and Exec Ed. A vertical sidebar menu on the left contains the following items: Marketing Home, Academic Programs, Course Schedules, Marketing Directory, and Marketing Resources. These items are circled in black, and an arrow points to the text "Single-level of categories" next to the circle. Below the menu is a search box with a "Shortcuts for:" dropdown and a "B-SCHOOL SEARCH" button. The main content area features a "Marketing Department" header, a "Spotlight" section with a photo of Asst. Prof. Wendy Moe and a "Journal of Consumer Research" article, a "Marketing Courses Schedule" section with links for Summer 2001 and Fall 2001, and an "Academic Programs" section with links for Undergraduate, MBA, and PhD. The footer includes the date "Last updated Friday, August 03, 2001" and links for SUGGESTIONS, INDEX, SEARCH, and CONTACT U.

Single-level of categories

The McCombs Marketing Department has about 65 pages within the site.

Example B – Two-levels of categories – News8Austin



News8Austin.com has over 600 pages within the site, contained in both the main pages and archives.

Example C – Two-levels or more of intersecting categories - Microsoft

First-category menus →

Varying menu bars

Click through to Second-category menus

Microsoft.com navigation structure:

- Home | Training/Events | Subscribe | About Microsoft | Downloads | Worldwide | MSN
- Search
- Advanced Search
- Product Family**
 - Windows
 - Office
 - Servers
 - Developer Tools
 - Other Products
- Information For**
 - Home/Home Office
 - Businesses
 - IT Professionals
 - Developers
 - Microsoft Partners
 - Educators
 - Investors
 - Journalists
- Resources**
 - Support
 - Windows Update
 - Office Tools
 - bCentral
 - Shop
 - Books
 - Jobs
 - Freedom to Innovate

Windows XP Home Edition | Windows XP Professional | Windows XP Worldwide

Search This Site

Go

Advanced Search

Windows XP

Windows XP Professional

Windows XP Home Edition

Expert Zone Community

Windows Family

Windows Update

Windows XP Countdown: 43 Days | 23 Hours

Highlights

- > [See Why People are Excited to Take the Tour.](#)
- > [Eager to Get Windows XP? Top Retailers Are Taking Pre-orders](#)
- > [The Reviews are Pouring In And We're Pretty Pleased.](#)
- > [Demystify Product Activation: Read the Overview and See the Demo.](#)
- > [Get the Inside Info in the Expert Zone Community](#)

Contact Us | E-Mail This Page | Free Newsletters

Microsoft.com has millions of pages within the site. Thinking of this style of organization? You too will need millions of pages!

3. Content

- a. Will the site have School news or spotlights? _____
- b. News from other sources? _____
- c. Other dynamic content or forums? _____
- d. What kind of process do you anticipate for collecting or generating content?

4. Security

- a. Will the site be processing secure information (credit cards, personal info)?

- b. Will the site need password-protection to exclude public visitors from key content areas?

5. Who will:

- a. Write out the organization of the site as an outline or site tree? _____
- b. Write and edit the copy for all pages? _____
- c. Select images to be used? _____
- d. Produce images or graphics? _____
- e. Make the final edit decisions on all images and copy? _____
- f. Manage the project, including deadlines? _____
- g. Create a maintenance plan? _____

6. Resources:

- a. What resources will be needed to complete this project?
 - i. People _____
 - ii. Technology _____
 - iii. Money _____
 - iv. Advice _____

Completion of Step 2 – Planning

- 1. Do you have a sense of the site’s eventual organization? _____
- 2. Who will draft the site’s final organization? _____

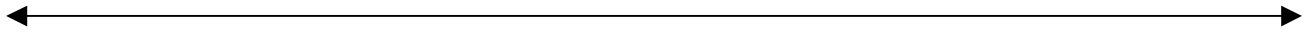
- a. By when? _____
- 3. What are the security specifications? _____
- 4. Has the creation of content been delegated? _____
- 5. Do you have a list of resources necessary? _____

Attach any separate documents– 1) site tree, 2) security specs, 3) list delegating content, 4) resources list.

Section 2 Sign-off

Project Manager

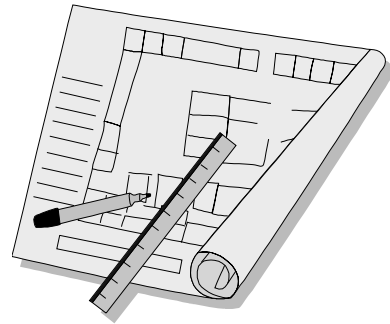
Client



Step 3 – Development

Duration: 2 - 6 weeks

Description: Congrats! Since you have followed this guide to the “T” you are now ready to build a functioning web site. In previous sections you had questions that had to be completed, however, from this point forward you are working on deliverables that must be completed.



Process Flow

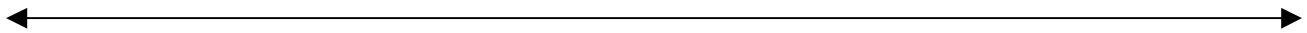
1. Complete final site tree and get sign-off approval from all necessary parties.
2. Initiate drafting of site content, if not started already.
3. Design “comp” version of site (initial, content-free version of site).
 - a. Design layout and menus
 - b. Complete graphics design and creation
 - c. Finish drafts of homepages and subpages
 - d. Get approval of preliminary “comp” design
4. Test “comp” version.
 - a. Run through testing of menus and links
 - b. Receive comments
 - c. Complete changes from comments
 - d. Receive approval of “comp” test
5. Complete content (generally, site cannot be built any further until this is finished).
 - a. Text
 - b. Graphics
6. Develop complete Beta version of site.
 - a. Test site using test users (usually internal office users)
 - b. Document errors and changes
 - c. Complete changes
7. Determine if project is complete.
 - a. Review project scope
 - i. Is it done?
 - ii. Is it overdone?

- b. Establish future maintenance plan
 - i. Who will remain responsible for site
 - c. Update project timeline
 - i. Determine testing schedule
 - d. Project manager and client sign-off on project testing
8. Documentation (with future developers in mind)
- a. Errors
 - b. Future needs/requirements
9. Quality Assurance
- a. Is the client happy?

Section 3 Sign-off

Project Manager

Client





Step 4 – Release

Duration: 2 days to one week

Description: Your project is going to reach its audience! This stage involves documentation for future developers. Although you may remember every detail of this project at this time, what about months down the road or when a new person takes over the reins?

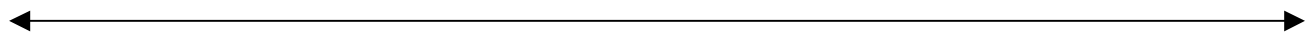
Process Flow

1. Complete documentation on project
 - a. Take notes on any detail which may play a role in the future
 - i. Technical details
 - ii. Personnel details
 - iii. Financials
2. Develop content management plan. Often this task is separated between a content writer and the person who actually posts the new content to the site.
 - a. How often will this site need to be updated? _____
 - b. Who will write and edit the new content? _____
 - c. Who will be in charge of updating content on the site? _____
 - d. How will the content changes reach this individual? _____
 - e. Who is ultimately responsible for the site's content? _____
3. Finalize a schedule for a site review – in order to gauge successfulness of site
4. Create summary and review documents
 - a. Client survey
 - b. Final sign-off from client

Section 4 Sign-off

Project Manager

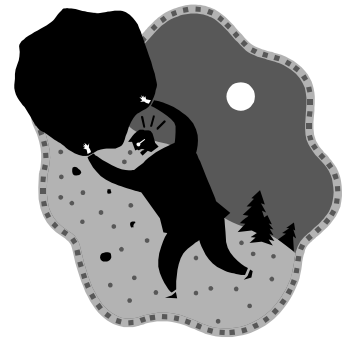
Client



Step 5 – Maintenance

Duration: On-going

Description: Critical step in ensuring the life of your site and hard work.



Process

1. Determine who is responsible for your site’s “life.”

2. Individual must:
 - a. Answer “Webmaster” emails to site
 - b. Collect updates on a periodic basis (as outlined in your purpose)
 - c. Test site frequently to ensure its health

Section 5 Sign-off

Project Manager

Client

