

Building an IR Website


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 Upper Midwest
 October 2011

University of North Dakota
 Office of Institutional Research

Overview


Where do I begin?

- A new website or “redesign”
- Utilize experience or me(?)
- Use available resources
- Preparation and design



Creating and maintaining the website


- Principles/Content
- Suggestions
- Before and After


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Where do I begin?

Reasons for a new website or “redesign”

- Provide useful information to key users
- Rebranding
- Update visual design – a fresh new consistent look
- Technical upgrades
- Changing the way information is grouped
- Create a good user experience



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Where do I begin?

Determine what you wish to accomplish with your website, measures of success

- Easy to use
- Encourage visitors – search engine ranking
- Webpages load faster
- Website updates made easier
- Making the website compliant to meet accessibility requirements

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Where do I begin?

Who is the intended / target audience?

- Internal – External
- Secure or IP protected site
- Speak their language
- Ideal words your audience will use in conducting a web search



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Utilize experience?

Have someone with experience create the site?

- Campus webmaster
- Student worker
- Website designer

Pros: Professional job

Cons: Dependent on creator
 Making simple changes could take time and can be expensive.



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Me(?)

Me(?)

Training

- On-campus training opportunities
- Web tutorials

Pros: I can make updates myself

Less cost involved

Cons: learning curve
time involved



Utilize Resources

Check with your IT department
No need to reinvent the wheel
Policies may already be in place



- Uniformity required with rest of campus?
- Templates available from your Webmaster?

Ensure initial template is complete and correct
before creating other pages from it

Utilize Resources – UND's Project

UND's new web development tool is called a
content management system

- Omni Update
- A better marketing tool for external audiences
- All tools are located on the web and can be accessed from anywhere.

Utilize Resources

Pros – UND website has more consistency

- Same navigation structure among all pages
- The templates are provided and key information is "locked down"!!
- Fonts and colors are the same throughout
- Data and image files can be shared
- All pages follow Web Standard Content guidelines
- Proper terminology, grammar and punctuation to be used on all sites.
- Logon and make changes from any computer

Utilize Resources

Cons -

- Previously we had the flexibility to modify the template on our own – now limitations.
- Could use and upload all file types, now only certain files can be used.
- Web development team maintains control, ex: if locked out need to contact them for assistance.

Preparation and Design

Look at other websites for ideas.

Determine the design and layout before you begin – it will save time.

Determine what you like or dislike about your current site.

Preparation and Design

Prepare in phases - start small

What documents do you want available immediately?

General & Commonly Requested Information

- Student Profile
- Common Data Set
- Fact Book
- Survey Results

Creating & Maintaining the website

Content & Structure

- Keep it simple, clear, concise – doesn't have to be flashy. That takes up resources and the page may take additional time to load
- Different browsers display things differently
- Use commonly used file types ex: html, pdf, xls.
- Keep the information current
- Information is relevant and accurate

Creating & Maintaining the website

Consistency & design - a key sign of a well planned website

- Keep uniformity to the pages
- Arrange information in silos
- Don't continually move items around
- Main navigation bar links to primary pages

Creating & Maintaining the website

Consistency & design - Text

- Keep text a consistent size
- Stay with a normal color palette - no more than five colors
- Use light backgrounds with dark text fonts
- Blinking and rainbow text a thing of the past

Creating & Maintaining the website

What is frustrating to your users?

- broken links
- hard to find information
- missing a link that returns to main page

(logo should be a clickable link to your homepage and placed in the upper left corner of the page)



Creating & Maintaining the website

What is frustrating to your users?

- opening links in new window/same window
- minimize scrolling vertically or horizontally
- spellcheck and proofread
- slow load times – stay away from:
 - animated/blinking images
 - html tables/frames
 - bells and whistles that reduce load time



Thank you for attending!

**Questions
Comments
Suggestions**

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Presented at the 2011 AIRUM Conference

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<http://und.edu/research/institutional-research/presentations.cfm>

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