



# CML's SoftDev

Web  
Development

## Web Development Blueprint -



If you have downloaded this blueprint and are reading it, then we have something in common. Essentially, we are both serious about one thing: Your Website.

Why do a **Website**, you may ask?

An internet presence is one of the most effective and least expensive marketing tools in use today. Your business is available 365 days a year to all, giving users instant access to your products and/or services. The geographical boundaries are no more and your exposure becomes ultimately one of international scope. Web Sites are also quick and cost effective to maintain, so all in all it adds to a logical investment of paramount importance and not just an image factor.

Developing Web content involves shaping and negotiating meaning and making many choices involving technical, aesthetic, and usability concerns. And, as technical communicators know, developing information requires keen skills in planning, analysis, and design in addition to Web-oriented skills in representing information in a particular medium.

In order to develop a broader perspective of Web, developers can draw on many existing concepts from technical communication and software engineering practices. This article briefly describes CML Softdev's Solution for Web information development, in itself a process-oriented formula, and which takes into account the unique characteristics and qualities of the World Wide Web.

With the expanding technical options for communication on the Web, developers are tempted to focus only on issues such as coding syntax, page layout, or the latest and flashiest technologies. We prefer to address the issue in a broader, more process-oriented approach in order to articulate the information content in a professional way as to favour the client's objective. This starts well before the actual designing structures are applied, as evidently they are affected entirely or to some degree by the initial study.

## Planning for the Audience and Purpose

In the first stages of the lifecycle of a web, our focus will be on the processes of planning and analysis. In particular, we define the purpose of your web and develop audience information. Audience analysis is key in many technical communication tasks. This planning and analysis requires that you ask and answer questions such as: *Who will use this web? What will they gain from it?*



A useful method to generate audience information is to make a list of information about the audience's background, characteristics, and concerns. This information may not ever be complete, but we as developers and you as the client can create and maintain a store of information that can grow over time.

Initially, we aim at the niche and not the broad audience (e.g., "everyone using the Web"), instead focusing on a subset related to your purpose. For example, if you are preparing a web for a company selling cameras, you might define your audience as "potential, current, and past purchasers of the modems." You may have several audiences for the web. For example, in addition to individual camera buyers, you could be also be communicating to Photo Art company buyers, employees, or resellers. One useful technique we use, is by creating a visual diagram showing the audiences you will reach in your web niche.

Another focus in this early phase of web development is to define your purpose. We elaborate a written purpose statement available at all times during web development. This we use as a guideline project overview. We begin by stating the purpose in general terms, such as "to create a presence for X company in Web-space." However, this soon develops into a more specific purpose statement, such as "to provide information about our company's products." The purpose statement and audience information together go a long way toward articulating what the web-project is about and are the key pieces of information to develop early in the web's lifecycle.



### Setting Objectives and Gathering Domain Information

Given an audience and a purpose, We next focus on forming a list of specific objectives, or goals, for the web to accomplish as well as ascertain the first financial aspects of the project. A web's purpose statement might be "to provide information about our company's line of Cameras" and this web's audience definition might be "prospective customers." This impacts on the actual Domain name and serves the later purpose of Marketing implementation.

We embark on a close-up study of Domain names suitable, as well as its serving logistics and legal parameters.

We follow this with an objective listing, such as (in the example scenario):

List the pictures, prices, schematics of all of your Cameras/Products.

Provide ordering and service information.

Provide background (domain) information about cameras to interest prospective customers and help them use your products.

We gather domain information that supports these objectives. The domain information is a collection of knowledge and information about the subject domain the web covers. This includes information that the users of the web will encounter and information the web developers need to design or implement the web.

For example, a web offering cameras for sale might draw on a variety of information about the use, mechanics, principles, and specifications for cameras. While not all this information would necessarily be made available to the users of the web, this domain knowledge may be helpful for the web developers so that they can understand the vocabulary and concepts associated with the products.

Often, this domain information makes a good complement to the information the web offers. For example, a Camera manufacturer with a good collection of camera facts might find that interested buyers visit that web for technical information about cameras and, in the course of this visit, be informed of a company's products. This ultimately works in tandem with our conventions for Website Optimizing and once in place, presents itself as a tool for analysis and integration at that later stage.

## Designing the Website

Domain secured and all initial attributes in place, We start designing the actual Web site. By creating a coherent and consistent "look and feel" for the entire website through the use of principles of page layout and design and by providing the user with a variety of visual cues. These cues, consistently placed on pages of the web, help users navigate and use the web's information. Because a website is characteristically bound in its use context, these cues should help reveal that context, so that the user can find related information with ease.



In designing a website we take into account the web's purpose and audience. A good designer knows how to achieve the effects called for in the most flexible, efficient, and elegant way. As such, we design a website taking into account well structured and researched hypertext coding, multimedia, JavaScript, and other programming possibilities such as Flash, as well as knowledge about how particular website structures affect an audience.

Because of the porous quality of a web, one needs to consider how a variety of audiences might find different "ways into" your information. Hypertext can provide alternate views of information and alternative routes for users to follow based on their needs and interests. A good way to provide this flexibility is to separate information into manageable page-sized chunks and then provide cues for the reader about the web's information structure and contents, context, and navigation. This way, we create an overall link architecture for a website, by specifying page contents and the hyperlinks among these pages to connect information along the routes of user needs.

Your information, as to be able to reach all or most web browsers and under various platforms in a blind form, as your client may originate the search or visit from any of these. Likewise, the visual greeting the client or visitor must be of uniform layout.

## Implementing a Website

After we've completed a website design, the next step is to implement the web within the limitations on its technical makeup you may have defined in its specifications. The initial implementation might be a prototype which is not released publicly, but available for analysis as used by a set of representative users.

The implementation process resembles software development because it involves using a specific syntax for creating hypertext structures in HTML or writing programming language code statements in computer files.

```
--- src="/home/images/d_photo.gif" width="150" height="100" title="Photo"
</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td width="150" height="35">

</tr>
<tr>
<td width="150" height="10">
<div class="note_n">
Dreams come true when technology meets tradition.
<a href="#" class="brick" alt="Plans for future" title="Plans for
</div>
</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td width="150" height="10">
</td>
</tr>
</table>
```

At the outset, we create a stable, extendible directory and file structure to manage the web's files and/or software components (including CGI , PHP or JavaScript programs).

We use generic to standards HTML as a language tool and insert the other complementary coding aspects therein.

We check the website's implementation in various browsers to ensure that the HTML can be interpreted properly. We create and use templates for supporting the consistent look and feel defined in the Website's design.

Its during this phase that we also enable all complementary protocols to the server, particularly if the requirement is one involving a database or e-commerce shopping cart. By association, LAMP or WAMP solutions are tailored to assist all browser protocols so a uniform look is attained.

We then upload the Website files to the server and render the project complete as implemented.

During this critical phase we already pre-prepare the analysis of post production solutions we offer as extra curriculum or as a continuance of initial requirements.



## Promotion - Analysis - Maintenance

### Promotion of a Website

The Website was having been done in an optimized fashion during the course of "Design" and "Implementation" phases, is ready for its initial intake into the Search engines and to be picked up by the robots sent by engines regularly. This is tailored so it aims at a high placing on rankings and within the standard legalities used by the engines in question.

The decision to publicly announce the release of your website should not be made lightly. During the time immediately following its public availability, your web will receive a great deal of attention from not only the audience members it attempts to reach, but people involved in web resource indexing as well as automated indexing software.

Once your web is ready, you can make its existence known to online communities through publicity. You can also form relationships with other webs which reach a similar audience or have been prepared for a similar purpose. Another way to further promote a web is to use specific marketing strategies or business models customized for the environment of the Web.

In doing this promotion, it is important that one follows online community norms. One should avoid "spamming" (indiscriminately sending messages to large numbers of mostly uninterested people) any communication forum with news of your web's release. Instead, you should aim publicity to appropriate online (and offline) mailing lists and promotion services.

## Analyzing a Website

During analysis, we examine website's components to see if it is accomplishing its objectives, to see if it is implemented correctly, and its domain information is correct and up-to-date. The goal of this evaluation is to identify problem areas.

In this part of the post production final phase we set to:

Observing representative audience members using your website (usability analysis).

Evaluating the consistency and verify the correctness of the domain information.

Checking the technical implementation of the web with HTML validation tools.

## Maintenance of a Website

Despite the linear description of the processes of Web development We've described here, the work of a Web is never complete. Because a web is a round-the-clock, interactive service, developers should expect feedback from users and anticipate their changing needs.

Our ongoing key innovation practices are:

Continuously and creatively work for improvement to meet user needs.

Based on analysis, user testing, and focus groups, identify new user needs.

Identify new technologies that may help you meet user needs better.

Ultimately the goal of innovation is to continuously improve the quality of a website by making sure that the processes of planning, analysis, design, implementation, promotion, and innovation are ongoing. We share this information about the website's elements and ensure that the information in the website meets user needs in terms of both content and interface. This a process called Optimization.

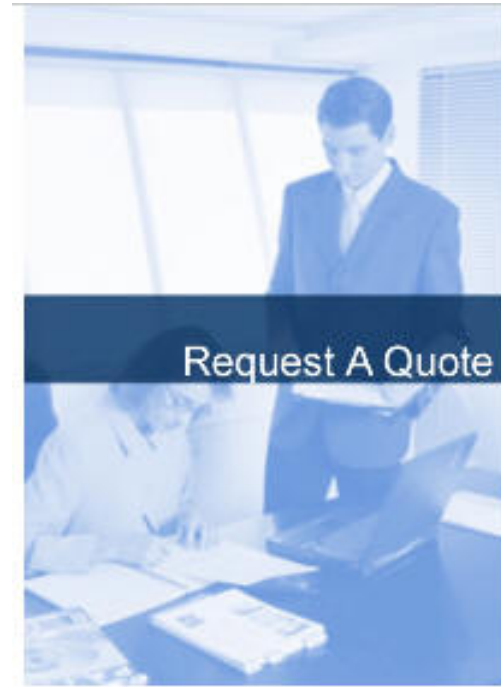


To a casual Web user, this formal process structure might seem an encumbering amount of complication on what may seem to be only the task of "writing HTML" or creating a "home page." However, identifying processes and elements and focusing on them need not stifle creativity. In fact, a process approach is an emphasis of many quality improvement programs. And, as many Web users might attest, a well-developed website usually has a far greater value than one that is hastily put together. In particular, a web intended for business or professional communication needs to not only reflect a consensus of meaning among the sponsors and originators of the information, but it must reach a diverse

audience and continuously change as user needs change. Much like Life is a set of choices, in a more pragmatic form, your Website is ultimately your choice as you are the e-customer and call the shots, we just advise and comply.

**Our final message:**

Customer-effective design is inherently contextual; it is based on an understanding of, and response to, an e-customer's context. The e-customer's context is the story behind why they are on your Web site, how they came to be there, what they're trying to do and why, and what they're likely to do as a result of being there. So if you're serious about your project, you know who to call without delay.



Thank you for reading CML Softdev Web-Development-blueprint

