The Compleat Lifecycle Story

From database table to final launch, and every step along the way. Notes that will help you determine time (and therefore costs) are included.

(Historical edits and changes are noted to better explain how the process evolved. Those notes are boxed and in color) This edition covers both static and dynamic sites, and CMS'. **Exercises in sidebar to help you learn.** Notes in sidebar where process changes for platform and/or site type.

Website Lifecycle based on Small Teams, Rapid Prototype

Top Level
- Initial Idea Tested
- Develop Concept
- Check Availability of Resources for Subject
  ▶ Where will you get photos and original information?
- Check Domain Availability

Site Strategy
- Site Goals
  ▶ What do you want to achieve with your website? What is your objective?
- Profile Audience
  ▶ Who do you want to reach with your site? Describe the average visitor you want to attract. The

Requirements
- Goal-dependent Functions
  ▶ What functions are vital? (reply form, member area, registration, etc..)
- Site-Enhancing Functions
  ▶ What functions would improve your site's capabilities?

Admin
- Reserve Domain
  ▶ After completing your web strategy, review domain name choices, choose the best you can. It is usually best to reserve it for at least 2 years.
- Choose Hosting Company based on Requirements

Visual
- Branding (colors, logo)
  ▶ Your banner will be on every page. Within the banner, create a memorable graphic that will be easy to recognize
- Call to action
  ▶ How are you going to "drive" people through your site to achieve your nal). Putting calls

Layout
- Site Map
  ▶ Create an org chart-type of map that will visually demonstrate the flow of visitors through your site
- Navigation
  ▶ Find easy-to understand words to appear in your navigation menu
- Repeating areas for feeds, shortcuts or

Build
- Install & Configure Dependencies
  ▶ Server's database connection, server-side software, identify correct versions
- Install & Configure: For CMS Platform, for others, start creating server directories
  ▶ Database hook for CMS platforms is used in initial

Welcome to our Comprehensive Guide Everything you should know about web development but didn't know to ask

Yes there really is more to developing a successful website than just code

We've developed a "best practices" set of tasks, decisions and processes that have reduced development time and improved client relations. A comprehensive list takes you from concept to launch- with time saving details. Emphasis on understanding requirements and functionality.

Website Lifecycle based on Small Teams, Rapid Prototype

Top Level

- Initial Idea Tested
- Develop Concept
- Check Availability of Resources for Subject
  - Where will you get photos and original information?
- Check Domain Availability
  - Check to see what domain names are available
- Hosting Capabilities
  - What capabilities do you want your ISP to have?

Site Strategy

- Site Goals
  - What do you want to achieve with your website? What is your objective?
- Profile Audience
  - Who do you want to reach with your site? Describe the average visitor you want to attract. The more you know about who you want to reach, the better you can target your site to reach them.
- Keyword Research
  - List words and phrases that best describe your site. What you'd use if you were doing a search. Check keywords for targeted use
- Competitive Analysis
  - Who are your competitors? How many are there? What are they offering? What do their website look like?
- Create strategy & USP
  - Using your research, how can you position your website to make it unique, fill a needed niche, address a specific audience, take advantage of badly positioned competitors?
- Landing Zones
  - Do you need special pages for links to/from blogs, articles, other sites?
- Analytics
  - Get an analytics account so you can track your website's progress.
- Integration?
  - Does this website need to integrate (use automation) with any other site?

Requirements

- Goal-dependent Functions
  - What functions are vital? (reply form, member area, registration, etc..)
- Site-Enhancing Functions
  - What functions would improve your site's capabilities?
- Payment Processing?
  - If you are accepting payment online, who are you processing payments through?
- Identify the application, script, program, or plugin necessary for each application
  - In order for forms to process, items to be purchased, passwords to be remembered, data to be gathered, you will need an extra bit of code that will perform that task. You can find scripts, programs, plugins for almost any type of function by searching on the web, but choosing the right one for each function gets tricky. Some people prefer an integrated platform approach (like a CMS) which has plugins designed for it, but even there, you can encounter incompatibilities, or be required to pay for use.
- Choose script, language application or integrated platform for build
  - Make sure that the scripts, coding languages, extensions, programs or plugins you will be using are compatible with each other. Make sure that the hosting company you choose has the necessary server-based programs and is the correct version.

Admin

- Reserve Domain
  - After completing your web strategy, review domain name choices, choose the best you can. It is usually best to reserve it for at least 2 years.
- Choose Hosting Company based on Requirements
  - After reviewing your requirements, make sure that the ISP you choose has the correct software and version you need. I prefer a host with 24/7 support who knows the type of application you will be running.
- Platform Requirements (installation on server, database connection)
  - Do you need to install the platform on the server? Do you need to create a database table for the installation? Do you know how to do it, or can you pay your ISP to do it for you?
- Fulfillment (if sales)
  - If you're selling of your site, who will do the shipping?
- Affiliate Accounts
  - If you're planning to generate revenue through ads, it is time to set up your affiliate accounts.
- Social Media Accounts
  - Have you created all the social media accounts you'll be using with your site?
- Assemble Team
- Assign Roles

Visual

- Branding (colors, logo)
  - Your banner will be on every page. Within the banner, create a memorable graphic that will be easy to recognize
- Call to action
  - How are you going to "drive" people through your site (to achieve your goal). Putting calls to action on each page will tell them where to go next
- Layout (Template development)
  - Determine the best layout for your site.
- Assemble photos
  - Make sure your photos are either from a copyright-free resource or ones you have taken yourself.
- Write initial content
  - Concentrate on using your keywords throughout the site. Your search ranking does depend on a decent amount of content, relevant to your keywords, but not repeating them.
- Map content and images to pages
  - What images and what content go on which pages
- Growth Areas
  - Be sure to allow room for areas that you know will expand quickly.
- Social Media Integration
  - Mirror or excerpt from any/all of the social media apps?
- Hooks to outside apps?
  - Does something have to happen on an external site when activated on yours?

Layout

- Site Map
  - Create an org chart-type of map that will visually demonstrate the flow of visitors through your site
- Navigation
  - Find easy-to-understand words to appear in your navigation menu
- Repeating areas for feeds, shortcuts or updates
  - Called sidebars in most CMS templates, it is a section that repeats on every page. Many people have found that it is a great place for excerpts, tweets, information that might get lost within your website.
- Footer Contents
  - Repeat your navigation at the bottom of the page, or concentrate on one particular element.
- Social Media Links
  - Most of the social media apps have code so that you can mirror a page on your website or just list excerpts.
- External Links
  - Link popularity is a great way to increase your search ranking, and trading links with many other similar sites will increase traffic.
- Create content map
- Review the functionality and compatibility you will be using for each requirement.
  - Make sure that they are appropriate for what you require, function as needed, look inviting to visitors, and will not interfere with your page layout.

Build

- Install & Configure Dependencies
  - Server's database connection, server-side software, identify correct versions
- Install & Configure: For CMS Platform, for others, start creating server directories
  - Database hook for CMS platforms is used in initial configuration. For other scripting or applications, load your scripts, styles, includes in their own directories
- Add users
  - If you are working as a team, give each user their own account (as administrator) so you can track changes.
- IF CMS: Load Template, set options, customize elements
  - Check template options (the template description will help). To customize templates you'll need to know some basic php and css. Most customization on this level requires hand-coding.
- IF OTHER For database-driven applications load template elements in their own directories
  - Most data-base driven applications create a web page using several coded templates: A wrapper, footer, and several subject based internal templates.
- Load, configure and customize applications for each requirement
  - For individual coded sites, hooks are usually found within the template base to add your script. You'll be using the site's templates, so tweak the code to make it work well.
- Create Pages
- Add calls to action and repeating content
- Review entire site. Websites are never totally done, so you can easily go back and edit what you don't like.

Task List For Web Development Circa 1998-2003

1. Choose ISP and register domain name.

2. Determine special scripting requirements for site and locate providers/programmers

3. Determine the look and feel of site (choosing graphic style/color/fonts and layout grid)

4. Develop a theme visual as well as keywords to be carried throughout the site

5. Write copy and review existing text from contributors

6. Develop graphics

7. Determine site map and desired flow of visitors throughout the site

8. Determine linking, "marketing" and PR strategies for site

9. Develop or post links to any information for download and print as needed (requests for information, resources, publications)

10. Plan for future growth of site, utilize ISP-provided extras

11. Produce and upload pages*

12. Provide template pages and maintenance strategy*

13. Entire site will also be supplied on CD-ROM as a back up*

* tasks that are not essential for today's websites.

Introduction

This tutorial attempts to cover all the steps involved in creating a website, from a project manager's point of view. Some professional web developers do understand the entire scope of the process, but most do not.

Scope

Starting from the intitial concept, covering all the tasks (technical, administrative, graphic and marketing) that come into play when a website is created. Some of these have spawned entire industries that specialize in an area (like search engine marketing, keyword research, design/layout, or template customization), so our coverage of tasks will give you an understanding of the elements, and indicate the availability of resources.

Development Tools

We've tried to make this as general as we can. The author has experience in all levels of coding and a wide variety of languages and platforms. Where tasks are specific to a certain type of website, it will be indicated.

Time Estimates

Whether the website is for your own use, or you're acting as a consultant, the first thing you want to know (or are asked) is some idea of the time necessary to build it. And you do have to be pretty accurate on every step so you can give a price you can live with.

Our time estimates are very rough, but by detailing what each step involves, you'll be able to add or deduct hours depending on your configuration.

The First Step

You've got an idea, or someone comes to you with an idea that you're sure will make a killer site. It's a hot subject, or a new trend. Whatever it may be, before you begin anything....

Test the idea

How long will the trend/concept last? Long enough that it is worth building a site?

Do a bit of searching on the web for items related to your idea and see what comes up. In fact, search on ebay first, (in the sold items category) that's usually where you'll see what is selling, or find an item close to your idea that is.

Next, ask some folks (not your immediate friends) about it. Make sure they are in your target demographic (age range) for the best results. If the respond positively, ask how much they'd pay for it (or how far they'd travel to attend, in other words.. how much is it worth to them?)

Develop Your Concept

How are you going to (sell the item, set up an organization, promote your services) We'll get into the strategy later, but this is where you have to get serious. What does the success of your venture need, outside of a website? Does it depend on a location being available, a gallery or show being in town, the success of a team... does it's success require other factors that you can count on?

Availability of Resources

Most people would rather buy, hire or become part of a group where there's knowledgeable people and lots of resources. How much do you know about your subject? Do you have access to historical information or experts nearby? You need to make sure that you have enough depth to your knowledge that people will trust you.

Domain Availability/Hosting Capabilities

You may not be ready yet, but it is not a bad idea to check and see what domains are available in your subject area. At this time you also might start checking out internet service providers, and comparing service, value and price.

- Initial Idea Tested
- Develop Concept
- Check Availability of Resources for Subject
- Check Domain Availability
- Hosting Capabilities

Exercise: Hands-on critique Choose a product/service you might visit on the web. Using search, find 3 websites that seem to answer your search. Answer the following questions for each website.

- Entering the site, is it clear what you should do?
- What does this site tell you about the company?
- How is the visitor expected to interact with the site?
- Who is the expected user?, what do they visit the site for?
- What does this site tell you about the user?
- Does the site have a blog? A links page, a webring? Some connection to the outside for referrals?

After doing this 3 times, you may notice differences in the way the sites are approached, designed and how customer-friendly they are.

Understanding The Process

The basics of developing a strategic plan. Balancing theory, research and practice, you will approach site development from first concept through strategy.

Elements of Website Planning

1. Holistic decision making
2. Best result for:
   - Users/viewers (human factors)
   - Owners/businesses (cost/benefit analysis)
3. Planning process
   - Website Goals
   - Keyword Research
   - Audience Profile
   - Competitive Analysis
   - Developing Strategy-USP

Content/Display Concepts:

- Information display: overcoming the "so what" barrier
- The visitor experience
- Location: Search Engines, Cross Links and Referrals
- Keys for a successful search engine ranking
- Can link trades, web rings, & blogs bring customers?

Is it an active or passive website?

Examples of an Active Site

Make a purchase

Register for an event

Contact Sales staff/Lead generation

Drive traffic to your show

Examples of a Passive Site

Portfolio or virtual catalog site

Knowledge base or Reference materials

Software updates or support bulletins

Planning-Step 1: Goals

Define what you hope to achieve with your website. (other than make money) The more specific you are with your goals, the easier it will be to create a plan to achieve them. What is your objective? Be specific. "Build and grow my customer database in order to increase repeat sales by 30%." Not, "get more customer sales".

Some common website goals:

- To establish a Web presence for an existing business
- To provide an online "portfolio" for Seasonal or Show Vendors
- To sell a product or service to a global market
- To improve (or streamline) customer/member service
- To keep existing customers/ members informed of new products and services
- To make product or price information and updates available 24/7
- To provide a community service, advocate a cause or position
- To sell advertising, affiliate links and 3rd party offers
- To generate sales leads or contact lists
- To drive retail or other traffic to a physical location

Goals List

Quite often, we have an idea of what we'd like to do, but have never really defined an actual goal. Make a list of all the goals that you see for your site, and review your list often as we go through the planning process. It will soon become evident which goal is the most practical.

Goal Achievement

How do you plan to achieve your goal(s)?

What is your site's purpose?

- Product, Purpose, Subject

- What makes it unique?

- Goal-driven Benefits

- How do you see the website being used?

- Site Goals
- Profile Audience
- Keyword Research
- Competitive Analysis
- Create strategy & USP
- Integration?

Sample of Goals (based on site type):

If sales:
- List product category
- Benefits of purchasing from website
- How will you use the website (other than processing payments)?

If membership organization:
- List purpose
- List benefits of membership
- How will your members use the website?

Site-defining questions.

What problem will they be looking to solve when they arrive at your site? A good profile will guide your focus: as each aspect of your site is planned ask yourself "Would my profile audience respond favorably?".

What image do you want to communicate?

Your audience will determine the look that you want to give your website. Calming colors with smooth transitions, eye-popping images that build excitement, creating a welcoming feel is vital to your success.

Note: contact info needs to be obvious, FAQ needs to be comprehensive

Audience Profile

Determine the age, gender, values, special needs (if any) and characteristics of the type of person you are creating this site to reach. There may be more than one type, so list variables. (create 3 profiles)

Basic Profile

Age Range:

Gender (if gender-specific):

Interests in common:

Location:

Education/Job:

Special Needs?:

Interview people who share characteristics of your profile.

 Ask questions similar to these:

1. What do I expect to find when I go online to (insert your purpose here)

2. Where do I do most of my online (insert purpose), at home or work?

3. Do I return to the same website, or do I search for others?

4. What really annoys me when I visit a website?

5. What other websites, online communities, or resources do I visit? (important information to increase your traffic. Link trades with similar websites often get you far more "referrals" than you get in a search.)

Impression

What impression do you want your site to give visitors? (example: we value your time and quickly get you what you want, we consider our customers/members family, we'll go all out to satisfy our customers/members needs, we're the cheapest, we're experts…etc…

Test your results

Go visit a website that has the same goals, but not a competitor and assess your conclusions: Ask yourself the same 5 questions.

Critical Assessment: Does the page give me any reason to continue or am I wasting my time?

Critical Assessment: If I have a question/problem, and need to contact owner, what are my options?

Keywords help people find you and define your website's purpose.

Keyword selection is critical to your online success. To show up in a search, your web site must include the right words and phrases.

The right keyword phrases are popular, relevant to your offering and face appropriate competition. What is appropriate competition? If you target a keyword phrase that 200 million other Web sites also target, showing up near the top in a search engine is not easy.

List Keywords That You'd Use

Make a list of every word, phrase, synonym and word cluster that could be used to describe your product/service. (or list words and phrases (search terms) you'd use if you were searching for this type of site)

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.
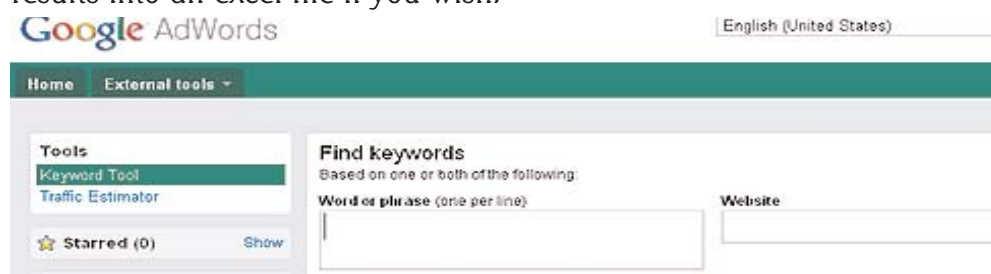
Test Your Keywords

You can start by performing a search using your list of words and phrases. See what kind of websites show up in a search and what they are offering. Are they competitors? Or is the word or phrase giving you websites that offer something wildly different. People use a wide variety of search terms, and you want to find the words someone would use to find you.

Use Google's Keyword Tool to test keywords

Go to Google's Keyword Tool,
https://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal

This tool lets you enter a list of words and phrases, (usually 3 or 4 at a time) and will return with the number of people who searched using that keyword in the last month. It will also give you a list of alternative words and phrases and their ranking as well. You can download the results into an excel file if you wish.

Use EBay as an example of how important good keywords can be.

Sellers have just 55 characters in an eBay title to describe the listing. Most buyers look for items using the search function.

The advanced search will let buyers filter out certain words from the search, choose category, listing type and price range. About 30-40% of the buyers don't use the advanced search, and 60-70% don't use all the filters available.

That means sellers need to find the right combination of keywords that the majority of potential buyers will use that does not exceed 55 characters.

Go to eBay and choose advanced search. Pick a familiar item (but not one with an actual model number) and enter keywords that you are likely to use. You might want to exclude words to narrow your result. Run the search and note the number of listing pages.

Now, go back to the advanced search and keep all information the same, but check the box next to Completed Listings. Look at the listings and compare the items that are sold and those that are not. Quite often the words used in the title keep the item from showing up in a search. (You might play around with more general search terms; you'll often find unsold items missing the keywords necessary to show up in a search.)

Other than model/part numbers or style names, how do keywords in titles impact sales?

Did you see any obvious errors in the titles? Did it effect bidding?

How are keywords abbreviated in title? Does that impact results?

So, once at google's keyword tool site, type in 5 different combinations of the words and phrases you chose. Remember to put each word or phrase on a line by itself. Run the program. Record results of each combination.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

What single word or phrase ranked the highest?

What words came up in results that you had not anticipated?

Create keyword vocabulary

Use the keyword tool, search terms and your initial choices until you have 10-15 words/phrases with high search results.

Identify Your Competitors

Who are your competitors? How many are there? What are they offering? How successful are they? Where do they show up in a search? What do their websites look like?

It is now time for a competitive analysis

List at least 5 competitors that you are aware of: (both online and storefront)

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Run a google search using each of your keywords. Do you see any of your competitors on the first results page? List competitors in order of their ranking:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Visit the websites of your top 5 competitors. This will show you what you are up against, or what is missing.

For each competitor, answer the following questions:

1.   Do they offer exactly what you offer?

2.   Look at the page for 15 seconds. What do you remember?

3.   Can you tell immediately what the site's purpose is?

4.   From the landing page, how easy is it to determine what to do next?

5.   How many clicks does it take to achieve the site's goal?

This is where you determine just exactly what you can offer that your competitors don't, or offer a service that is not available... this is where you find the hidden niche that will make you flourish.

The entire strategy process can take as little as a day or as much as a few weeks to complete depending on the user. It is also something that each website owner should do by themselves.

Conclusion Scenario 1:

(list and rank):

Competitors

Services they offer

How their website looks

The variety of items they have

and any specifics

Strategy Log: Scenario 1

We've created several scenarios to help you define the strategy statement that will work best for you.

Use your goals as filter

Using your goals list from page 4, find the best definition of your site's goal and write it here:

What other companies share these goals? Who amongst your Competition? How many of the companies are part of a larger organization or franchise? As you review their websites in your competitive analysis, , put them into categories. This reveals underserved markets, niche areas that have been ignored, and just how much business is waiting for your unique approach.

Rank competitors. How many seem to have a very similar goal, audience and approach as the one you are considering? Are they big and impersonal, small and slow? Do they present a professional appearance and encourage confidence (maybe with testimonials, certificates, guarantees) Are their prices prominently displayed, if so, do they offer discounts, scheduled billing, and many forms of payment? Do they offer a wide variety of sizes, styles, colors and even custom work?   Are the companies mainly local, national, franchises, or individuals? Try and assign a risk factor for success.

Your Audience:

There's a good chance your goals already include a specific group of people. What ethnicity, age group, gender, or special needs sector do you want to attract?

Are your competitors going after the same group? Are they narrowly focused in what they offer, or have they extended their products/services in an attempt to be a "one stop shop"? Have they expanded so much that they're lost sight of their core business? Is there room for you?

Competitors Demographic:

For each company, try to determine what demographic they are trying to reach. Who are they targeting, what age, gender, ethnicity, occupation, etc. Is their site so broad-based that you can get traction offering special-interest, private-label, or loyalty-based products? Are there demographics that have been ignored? How closely does this match the audience you were considering?

Rank (in order of importance to your goal) each of them, and you will have a set of statements and descriptions that are important to your goal and what your competition lacks.

Strategy Log: Scenario 2

Use your competition as a filter

Using your competitive analysis from page 8, list the top 3 companies you feel will give you the most competition, and what you've learned from looking at their website:

1.

2.

3.

Now we'll refine our analysis so you can find if and where you can position your own business.

Delivery System:

Your goal can be in the form of a product or service, but if you want to create income, you'll have to determine the best way to get the "revenue generator" to the customer. A physical product incurs packing time and delivery fees, a virtual product (like an e-book) requires software for e-delivery, and a service (like consulting) requires either phone time or travel and on-site time. You'll have to compare your system to the one your competitor is offering.

Operations/Business Model:

Is the company web-based only, or do they have physical locations. Are they nationwide? Worldwide? Does the delivery of their product or service benefit from their business model, or is their site a natural extension of their physical location? (overhead costs like rent, employees, utilities all lower profit potential)

Cost, Risk and Control

Analyze. What can be done quickly or handed off to a temp? Are there scheduling arrangements or special instructions to consider? How much production/execution is under your control? What % of your payment goes to fees? Will these tasks be done by you/your company or by a vendor? Overall, is there a substantial risk associated with this?

Things like Preparation,Production,Payment, Work done internally and what comes from a vendor.. all go into creating a risk potential.

Your Unique Selling Point

Each one of your competitors shares your goals, but if they're successful they have different approaches to achieve that goal. They might target similar demographics, but leave room for a smart, savvy entrepreneur to clean up. What can you offer that would make your company unique?

Finding Your Unique Selling Point (USP)

You may have competitors that initially seem to share your goals, but when examined, only share a purpose. (**example** selling items: purpose-sell and make money but goal-develop customer base and cultivate return business.)

Audience orientation may not appear very targeted. quite often when you try to be all things to all people, you lose the loyalty and interest of specific niche markets.

Your keywords and your content can give your site an appeal that the other competitors don't have. Better customer service, a community-developing forum or interactive application, creative and constantly changing content that gives tips and tidbits for return visitors, and so on.

It is all about what makes your site unique!

Strategy Notes:

What niche market did you discover that has little representation?

Is there any theme, layout, or app that all your competitors have in common (or lack) that you can use for your advantage? (remember, by positioning yourself, you position your competition)

Is there a potential community of people that you can appeal to that are not well targeted? (example: handicapped, stay-at-home moms, people with specific allergies or conditions, environmentally active, etc.)

A website IS global. So think on a global scale. Be prepared to get email and/or visitors from other countries. You can take advantage of that by making your site very attractive to those outside of your own country. When i started my e-commerce website in 2000, for the first 4 years the bulk of my orders came from the U.K. and Australia. By offering a flat rate for international shipping, I encouraged customers to buy more without worrying about increased weight.

Strategy Execution

List primary and secondary strategy statements based on the scenarios:

1.
2.

Now list your top keywords/keyphrases and compare them to the Goals and Competition results: For each keyphrase:

Definition:

Are your key words/phrases easy to understand? Would someone be able to quickly recognize the purpose of your website from a headline using that word/phrase? Does the word or phrase have more than one meaning, requiring more text or an added graphic? Is there a dictionary definition of the word or phrase, is it derived from a product/action, or is it unique to a specific ethnicity?

Results/Competition:

When you run a search using your keyword/phrase, how many results do you get? Check at least the first 4 results pages. How many of the results are for companies providing the same products/services as you? How many UNIQUE companies come up in the results (quite often there will be 4 or 5 companies that dominate a certain market)

Analyze

What keywords have the strongest competition? Can your keywords and phrases be mistaken for another company, an unrelated, but popular item, does it translate well? Can you brand some/any of the keywords and make them uniquely yours? Do you have to purchase rights for the use of anything related to product/service? Are some of your keywords suitable for promotional use?

Development:

As you put your plan into action, your keywords and how you go about marketing your site will need further development. Consider how you'll develop your goal into a long-term strategy that will serve you well as your business matures. Products need to change/get updated and services need to be offered in fresh, new ways. Your business must appear fresh.

Yes, it was a lot of work, but you learned a lot about yourself and your company, and probably came up with even better ideas than you started with!

Is your Website Product/Service Part of a Process?

It isn't usually commonplace, but every once in a while you get involved in a franchise, subcontracting position, or relying on a drop shipper to send out you products. This is the time to consider how you'll want to integrate what they require into your own strategy.

Large companies often integrate their shopping carts into a warehouse fulfillment system so the order goes out without anyone notifying anyone else. It is all "one piece".

This is also true if you are selling through zazzle, cafe press, or any of the other sites that offer you money to sell their products with your own branding on them. In a lot of cases people don't quite understand that you are not creating the final product, so make it clear.

Secondary Sales: Print on Demand

There are a number of sites that will sell your design on their products.. they encourage you to become an affiliate or "associate" so when your t-shirt or mug, or mousepad, or IphoneSkin sell, you get a certain amount of money. With most of them you only get 10-20% and it is up to you to promote the product.

Zazzle

CafePress

VistaPrint

Print Fection

Dropshipping

There are a lot of companies who will let you take orders for their products and they'll drop ship the orders for you. I'm not sure about the profit margin, i imagine it depends on the items.

Requirements

What type of functionality do you need for your website?

For example: If are selling products and/or services on your website and want to accept payment through your website you will need a shopping cart. There are applications offering an auction script for sales, some allow visitors to upload their own images and data like a classified site, feature discussions and forums, and so much more.

Of course, if you require a login with password, you'll need a database-driven script to keep track of the passwords. If you want your website to collect data on your visitors and save it into a database, or have visitors register for seminars and other events, you'll need a data processing script to process their information and collect it into a database... The point is, you need to create a list of applications or tasks your site requires to achieve its goal.

Goal-Dependent Functions

What functions does your site have to perform for your site to succeed? This is always a difficult area for folks to understand. For each type of function (like submitting a form, logging in, buying an item, even uploading a photo) there needs to be a script that performs that function. In the past, most websites paid a programmer to modify a script so it would work with their website. multiply that times 5 and you can see how complex it can get.

Up until the Content Management Systems, each platform (or language) required that you find, modify and configure a script for each type of function. Although there are many scripts available at very low cost, combining all these scripts into one website so they all work and play nice with each other can take an enormous amount of time. So it is the configuration of the whole website that is the key.

And if you are not using a CMS, then you'll be face to face with the same task. There are also many websites that you can hook into that will process your forms and registration, act as your shopping cart and so on, So there's always a way to get functionality into a site.... it is just a matter of budget.

It is still best to limit the amount of scripts and functionality that you need for your website. You don't want too much going on, nothing that takes people away from your goal.

Other Functions and Hooks

Let's take a minute to examine the whole requirements issue. A website that has no functionality is just a pretty screen that you can click from page to page with. And for some folks, that's enough. A web presence, they call it.

But as soon as you add even the tiniest function, like a reply form or a

login section.... you're now requiring scripting. There are many cut and past javascripts that will do some of that for you, so if you keep it small enough, you can get away with a simple html websites with the javascripts and maybe a paypal shopping cart. For many, many years, that's what most websites were using. It has only been since about 2006 that the Content Management System platform with integrated functions made their appearance, and just in the past 3 years they've become quite popular.

That doesn't mean that you can load up a CMS with 10 plugins and have everything work seamlessly... the more functionality you add, the more complex the site becomes and is more prone to problems. (and not all plugins get along).

So once you list the functions you need for your website to work, then you as developer can estimate the amount of time and the cost that the site will incur.

And that is very, very important. The platform and/or language the website will be built using must be compatible with the platform and/or languages that the scripts are.

To fully understand the impact of requirements, It is worth doing the following exercise: List the functions that you'll need. Then go online and google the functions you'll need and take a look at what script is available and in what format for each function. Now think about how you'd integrate them into a website.

Even if you decide on a Content Management System, with "plugins" to add functionality, you still have decisions to make. Some require certain versions of your host's OS to run, some have not been updated while the CMS core has, and some just plain conflict with others due to the way they were written. Luckily, you can usually find 5-25 different plugins for each function, so you have choices, but you'll need to evaluate each plugin you are going to use for its compatibility with your theme, layout and other plugins. There's no getting around it, functionality is the heart and soul of a website.

So at this point, once you've picked your scripts/plugins that you want to use... well your choices for website languages, and platforms narrows down considerably. The functionality determines the site's configuration. Now it is time to pick your hosting company, your domain name and get signed up. You'll know the specifications that you'll need for your site, and just make sure your ISP has it.

And just to make your web development career more interesting, you'll find that each "plugin" functions differently, requires configuration to make it operate, and until you install it, you really don't know what will be involved.

Billable Time?

Time spent researching and gathering scripts can turn into days... and most web developers do not pass this on to their customers, who have no idea what is involved in the process. And there's really no rule of thumb on pricing either. I usually build in an entire day for a site with

---

Goal-dependent Functions

What functions are vital? (reply form, member area, registration, etc..)

Site-Enhancing Functions

What functions would improve your site's capabilities?

Payment Processing?

If you are accepting payment online, who are you processing payments through?

Identify the application, script, program, or plugin necessary for each application

In order for forms to process, items to be purchased, passwords to be remembered, data to be gathered, you will need an extra bit of code that will perform that task. You can find scripts, programs, plugins for almost any type of function by searching on the web, but choosing the right one for each function gets tricky. Some people prefer an integrated platform approach (like a CMS) which has plugins designed for it, but even there, you can encounter incompatibilities, or be required to pay for use.

Choose script, language application or integrated platform for build

Make sure that the scripts, coding languages, extensions, programs or plugins you will be using are compatible with each other. Make sure that the hosting company you choose has the necessary server-based programs and is the correct version.

about 5-6 scripts.But i will not even consider an estimate unless the requirements section has been done. Just to give you an idea of the types of functions that can be found.... I've included a "short list" of the most common ones that are requested.

- Shopping Cart
- Photo Gallery
- lightbox
- Events Calendar
- Register for event & pay on site
- Ads or Affiliate Links
- Custom Search
- Reply/Subscription Form with database
- Members only Section
- Create and email alerts
- Forum/discussion group
- Multiple permissions (editor, author, contributor, subscriber)
- Author/Editor included with article/blogpost
- Bookmark widget
- rss feed
- Like/Follow widget
- Custom map
- Scrolling images or text
- Autorespond with attachment
- Trackable survey
- Quiz with results-defined links
- E-learning ability
- Take tests and store results
- Powerpoint/Docs viewer
- Slideshow creation

... and a whole lot more!

Administrative/Management

Yeah, it's boring, but this is where things slip between the cracks....I mentioned getting a domain name and a hosting account with an internet service provider. It is usually easiest if you do both at the same place, a domain name is around $10-15 a year, pretty much the same around, although many ISPs will do free domain if you get a hosting account. But don't let that make your decision for you.

Choosing ISP and Platform Requirements

You've got your requirements chosen and have figured out what platform you're going to use for your website. Now you take that knowledge and find an ISP that fits your needs.

I've got a screen capture of an ISP's list of features (comparing 3 different plans) and i will indicate on their features list what you need to look for.

Disk Space	You want to make sure your host has enough space and bandwidth for your site. (video & audio files are huge)		ed
Bandwidth			ed
Included Websites	1	Unlimited	Unlimited
MySQL 5 Databases (?)	you need to connect each site to a database		
Emails per Hour	1000	1000	1000
Sub Domains (?)	10	Unlimited	Unlimited
Dedicated SSL Certificate (?)	$33	$33	✓
Continuous Data Protection (CDP) (?)	$3/mo	✓	✓
Dedicated IP (?)	$2/mo	$2/mo	✓
Free File and Database Transfers (?)	You can backup your database files w/out a fee and the cPanel gives you access to server functions		✓
cPanel Control Panel (?)			✓
Toll Free 24/7 US Support	✓	✓	✓
Instant Activation	✓	✓	✓
Network Wide Backups	backups are great if your site goes wonky		
Ad-Free Hosting	✓	✓	✓
WordPress Support	✓	✓	✓
Softaculous Application Installer	✓	✓	✓
SSH Access (?)	✓	✓	✓

Reserve Domain

After completing your web strategy, review domain name choices, choose the best you can. It is usually best to reserve it for at least 2 years.

Choose Hosting Company based on Requirements

After reviewing your requirements, make sure that the ISP you choose has the correct software and version you need. I prefer a host with 24/7 support who knows the type of application you will be running.

Platform Requirements (installation on server, database connection)

Do you need to install the platform on the server? Do you need to create a database table for the installation? Do you know how to do it, or can you pay your ISP to do it for you?

Fulfillment (if sales)

If you're selling of your site, who will do the shipping?

Affiliate Accounts

If you're planning to generate revenue through ads, it is time to set up your affiliate accounts.

Social Media Accounts

Have you created all the social media accounts you'll be using with your site?

Assemble Team

Assign Roles

SMTP Access	✓	✓	✓
POP3/IMAP Support	✓	✓	✓
Mailing Lists	⊗	Unlimited	Unlimited
PHP 5	the latest version of php-for database-scripting		
FTP Accounts	lets you transfer files to and from the server		
Web Database Manager (phpMyAdmin)	this is where you set up your website's database		
Python	✓	✓	✓
Private .htaccess	✓	✓	✓
Supports Custom php.ini Files	✓	✓	✓
Customizable MIME Types	✓	✓	✓
Custom Apache Error Pages	✓	✓	✓
Web-based File Manager	✓	✓	✓
Cron Job Editor	✓	✓	✓
DNS Zone Editor	✓	✓	✓
Perl-CGI	perl is still widely used for framework and application programming		
Personal CGI-BIN	✓	✓	✓
IP Banning Access	✓	✓	✓
File Handlers	✓	✓	✓
GD Graphics Library	both programs are required for instant resizing of uploaded photos. (you upload one size and programs scale them for you		
ImageMagick 5+ Support			
Server Side Includes (SSI)	✓	✓	✓
PHP Nuke	✓	✓	✓
cURL Library	✓	✓	✓
Hotlink Protection	✓	✓	✓

30" Raised Flooring	✓	✓	✓
Shared SSL Certificate	✓	✓	✓
Merchant Account Support	✓	✓	✓
Pay Pal Support	✓	✓	✓
Password Protected Directories	✓	✓	✓
Website Builder	✓	✓	✓
CMS	*they support content management systems*		
FTP Client Support	*perfect for a site with multiple users*		
Instant Blog	✓	✓	✓
Instant Forums	✓	✓	✓

Don't forget to sign up for any affiliate accounts (if you're going to run ads on your site), and any social media accounts (if you're going to mirror or excerpt information from facebook, list recent tweets, and all the rest.)

Branding (colors, logo)

Your banner will be on every page. Within the banner, create a memorable graphic that will be easy to recognize

Call to action

How are you going to "drive" people through your site (to achieve your goal). Putting calls to action on each page will tell them where to go next

Layout (Template development)

Determine the best layout for your site.

Assemble photos

Make sure your photos are either from a copyright-free resource or ones you have taken yourself.

Write initial content

Concentrate on using your keywords throughout the site. Your search ranking does depend on a decent amount of content, relevant to your keywords, but not repeating them.

Map content and images to pages

What images and what content go on which pages

Growth Areas

Be sure to allow room for areas that you know will expand quickly.

Social Media Integration

Mirror or excerpt from any/all of the social media apps?

Hooks to outside apps?

Does something have to happen on an external site when activated on yours?

The Content

(We call anything you put on your site, stories, photos, graphics... all that is content)

There's plenty of websites out there that will help you with color palettes, libraries of images, and there's some that will even lend some advice about writing content for search engine optimization... so we'll just concentrate on the aspects of content that are not easily available. (or, the questions i get when i teach a web class)

The good, the bad and the....

There's a lot to be said about the big honkin' banner that sits on top of your website, page after page. So don't make anyone say it. This is more of a list of what to avoid:

- Please don't have any animation or moving images in your banner. it distracts your readers from the content on the page (and they're seeing it throughout the site)

- Please avoid having your banner graphic take up more than 1/3 of the screen so your visitors don't have to scroll down just to find a link. (a good rule of thumb: banners should not exceed 1040 pixels in width and 200 pixels in depth. (a pixel is a unit of measurement used by web developers and its viewable size depends on the visitor's screen's resolution) Most image editing programs can be set to measure images in pixels to make your life easier.

- Please avoid using a busy background for areas with type. It might look great on your monitor, but you never know how another's might be set. Think CONTRAST. If you can print it out in black and white and be able to read it... you're fine. (also remember the color blind and visually impaired.)

- Thumbnail size (for images) is usually 100-150 pixels square (or some proportion thereof) and if you have diagrams or charts that go with your text, right along side it, then somewhere between 300-500 pixels wide.

- Think of what people see when they first land on your website (before scrolling down). We call that screen real estate. Make the most of it. If someone has to scroll down to even get an idea of what your site is about, they're not going to bother. You have between 3 and 5 seconds to catch their attention before they're off to the next site on their list.

- Use colors that reflect the values your audience has. Soothing, exciting, impressive, corporate, name a type and there's colors associated with it.

- Put a call to action on every page. "Drive" people through your website to your goal. (or as we used to say "sell the click") Avoid anything that distracts people from it, unless they are return visitors... then have something fresh for them to see.

- If you plan to have a regular newsletter or blog, make sure you have at least 6 issues already written. nothing is worse than an old newsletter with the same boring information and a byline that says "Check out our newsletter!"

- Remember copyright laws, and be polite… don't steal photos or text from someone else's site without asking permission. And you might be surprised at how they respond if you credit the article to them…. they may link to your website!

- Create a site map that shows how your navigation is going to look.

SAMPLE SITE MAP
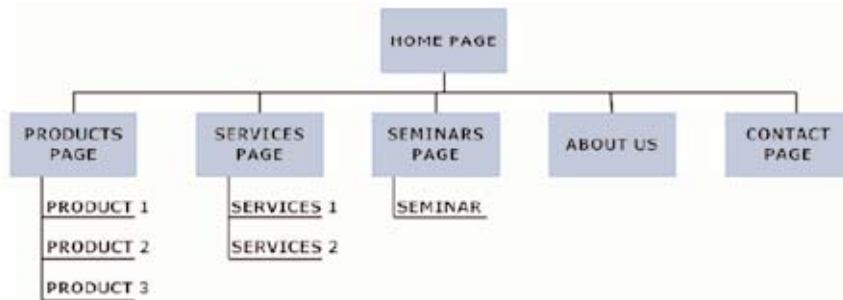
How many top-level pages, and how many in the drop down. Make sure important pages don't get buried.

- As for content… make it interesting, make sure you use those keywords throughout and stay on top of updating your site.

Consider Human Factors

- People will print out a page if it is more than 3 paragraphs

- People returning to sites need to be able to bypass long intros

- More than 3 clicks reduces the chance of a purchase significantly

- Most people use default browser settings.

- A site will look (and probably behave) differently depending on the browser, screen, OS, and location. How do you cope?

What makes a good website?

- The site's purpose is obvious (which should reflect the keywords used to find it)

- If you are new to the site…. Make it obvious where to go

- Easy to navigate

- Know where you are in the site

- Easy to find pages for returning visitors

- Readable text (not only colors, but breaking up text into small chunks). People scan text, so the headlines and subheads tell the story

- Only need to scroll down once (or links to sections further down the

Layout

Site Map

Create an org chart-type of map that will visually demonstrate the flow of visitors through your site

Navigation

Find easy-to understand words to appear in your navigation menu

Fun with site maps:

Using large post-it notes, write a brief description of each page (or just a word) and put it on the wall. Stand back and think about how you'd progress through the site.

The top level is your main navigation. Underneath each main nav page, put your drop down pages. Move the post-its around until you get a sense of flow.

Estimating Content

Don't create your site map and layout until you've got all of your content written (or at least enough for you to estimate how many pages you'll need) and have gathered the majority of images. That will tell you how you want to layout the text. Things like- do you need to break a long narrative up into several sections, do you need diagrams to go with certain content, so they need a separate page…. You'll be in a much better position to determine your layout and site map. Let the content drive your site. Two unknowns are:

Time required to gather photos:

Time required to write content:

But figuring layout and site map won't take more than a few hours if you've got enough text and graphics to determine pages.

Layout

The points below are geared mor towards a Content Management System or template-driven site.

Repeating areas for feeds, short-cuts or updates

Called sidebars in most CMS templates, it is a section that repeats on every page. Many people have found that it is a great place for excerpts, tweets, information that might get lost within your website.

Footer Contents

Repeat your navigation at the bottom of the page, or concentrate on one particular element.

Social Media Links

Most of the social media apps have code so that you can mirror a page on your website or just list excerpts.

Layout and Content Management Systems

Although CMS have come a long way since 2005, there's still a lot less flexibility with a template-driven site than with a hand-coded site. What the CMS does do (and fast) is get you up and running, with decent functionality and a decent design.

I probably should take the time now to explain how a CMS works and why they're popular.

Let's use WordPress, one of the easiest.

After you've installed the core of the site (which we'll get to in the next section) you'll have a selection of over 1500 different "themes" to choose from. Each theme has its own special features, and the trick is to pick the one that is closest to what you want. Once you've installed a theme, you'll be asked to configure some theme options, and you'll notice that each theme has a variety of templates you can use interchangeably. Some themes have 6 templates, some have 3, but all have at least a full-page template and a 2/3 content with 1/3 sidebar.

Each template also comes with its own style sheet (which determines the fonts, sizes, color, text attributes, and margins. Chances are, you'll want to change some aspect of the fonts, margins, colors, and other attributes. In that case, you better brush up on your knowledge of style sheets, because you'll be hand-coding/editing that theme's style sheet.

What, you may ask, is a style sheet? Ok, here's a quickie intro:

Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) are the modern standard for website presentation. When combined with structural markup language like HTML, XHTML, or XML (though not limited to these), CSS provides Internet browsers with the information that enables them to present all the visual aspects and elements of a web document.

CSS applies things like borders, spacing between paragraphs, margins, headings on images, control of font faces or colors, background colors and images, textual effects like underlined or strike-through text, layering, positioning, and a number of other presentational effects.

CSS controls the presentational aspects of a web page's design, whereas HTML, XHTML, or XML control the structure of a webpage, which means more than determining that certain text is a heading, other text is a paragraph, other text os a list of hyperlinks, and so on.

CSS is Easier to Code With

• Using CSS (like class="main-nav") creates far smaller HTML files than writing style into every HTML tags (like border="1? cell-padding="3? cellspacing="1? backgroundcolor="#ffc").

• CSS helps separate style from content

• Keeping your style definitions separate from your content and content-structure makes it possible to re-purpose the same content for different media. This includes styling pages differently for printing, as well as other user agents like voice (text-to-speech) and mobile devices.

Since css3 has been introduced and making its way through the web world, things have become way more complex. Style sheets once took up maybe 2 pages, if that. Style sheets for CMS templates range from 30 to 50 pages when printed out. And they're now divided into sections that relate to where that style is called in the document.

The stylesheet is in the same section as the template files.. buried below all the other options, as most people aren't used to editing them.
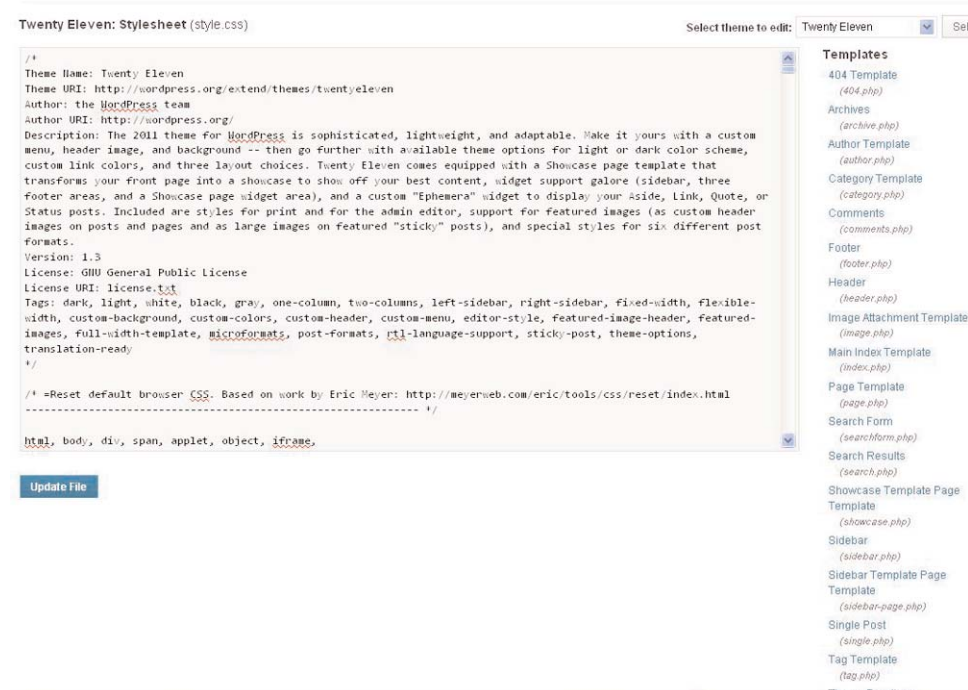
Above is a screenshot of the templates and the window area where you do your editing. It is best to take a quick css3 tutorial at w3schools.com first before you start so you've got some idea of how they work. Below is a snippet from a 25-page stylesheet, showing sections and classes.

```
;
/* Simplify the showcase template */
.one-column .page-template-showcase-php section.recent-posts {
    float: none;
    margin: 0;
    width: 100%;
}
.one-column .page-template-showcase-php #main .widget-area {
    float: none;
    margin: 0;
    width: auto;
}
.one-column .page-template-showcase-php .other-recent-posts {
    border-bottom: 1px solid #ddd;
}
/* Simplify the showcase template when small feature */
.one-column section.featured-post .attachment-small-feature {
    border: none;
    display: block;
    height: auto;
    max-width: 60%;
    position: static;
}
.one-column article.feature-image.small {
    margin: 0 0 1.625em;
    padding: 0;
}
.one-column article.feature-image.small .entry-title {
    font-size: 20px;
    line-height: 1.3em;
}
.one-column article.feature-image.small .entry-summary [
```

Wordpress and its building blocks

Template Files

Template files are the building blocks which come together to create your site. In the WordPress Theme structure, the header, sidebar, content, and footer are all contained within individual files. They join together to create your page. This allows you to customize the building blocks.

Template Tags

Template tags are the bits of code which provide instructions and requests for information stored within the WordPress database. Some of these are highly configurable, allowing you to customize the date, time, lists, and other elements displayed on your website.

Stylesheet

The CSS file is where it all comes together. On every template file within your site there are HTML elements wrapped around your template tags and content. In the stylesheet within each Theme are rules to control the design and layout of each HTML element. With these instructions, you can move the building block structures around, making your header very long and filled with graphics or photographs, or simple and narrow. Your site can "float" in the middle of the viewer's screen with space on the left and right, or stretch across the screen, filling the whole page. Your sidebar can be on the right or left, or even start midway down the page. How you style your page is up to you.

Template files on Webserver

Note that the directory structure is very organized. template files are many directories deep.

- ⊞ 📁 wp-admin
- ⊞ 📁 wp-includes
- ⊟ 📁 wp-content
  - ⊞ 📁 uploads
  - ⊟ 📁 themes
    - ⊞ 📁 admired
    - ⊞ 📁 twentyeleven
    - ⊞ 📁 twentytwelve
    - ⊟ 📁 responsive
      - ⊞ 📁 icons
      - ⊞ 📁 images
      - ⊞ 📁 includes
      - ⊞ 📁 js
      - ⊞ 📁 js-dev
      - ⊞ 📁 languages
      - 404.php
      - archive.php
      - blog-excerpt.php
      - blog.php
      - changelog.txt
      - comments.php
      - content-sidebar-half-page.php
      - content-sidebar-page.php
      - full-width-page.php
      - home.php
      - image.php
      - index.php
      - landing-page.php
      - license.txt
      - page.php
      - readme.txt
      - rtl.css
      - screenshot.png
      - search.php
      - searchform.php
      - sidebar-colophon.php
      - sidebar-content-half-page.php
      - sidebar-content-page.php
      - sidebar-gallery.php
      - sidebar-half-left.php
      - sidebar-home.php
      - sidebar-left-half.php
      - sidebar-left.php
   - sidebar-right-half.php
      - sidebar-right.php
      - sidebar-top.php
      - sidebar.php
      - single.php
      - sitemap.php
      - wpml-config.xml

How Template-Driven Websites Work

Once you click a link, hit a button, basically, navigate to another page things get interesting. Your "click" activates a query (we're using database terms here).... the query travels to the webserver, notes which template files will be necessary, then goes to the database to get the data (images, text, graphics, anything, really) and heads back to the template section of the webserver.

At this point the templates necessary to complete a page are assembled. Most templates will use at least 3 templates, many use more, it depends on the page. You can see in the diagram below how the templates are assembled, then any scripts necessary will execute, and everything gets nicely formatted as the elements on the assembled page are given attributes with css (style sheets), and at that point all page content is checked for browser readability. And seconds later, you
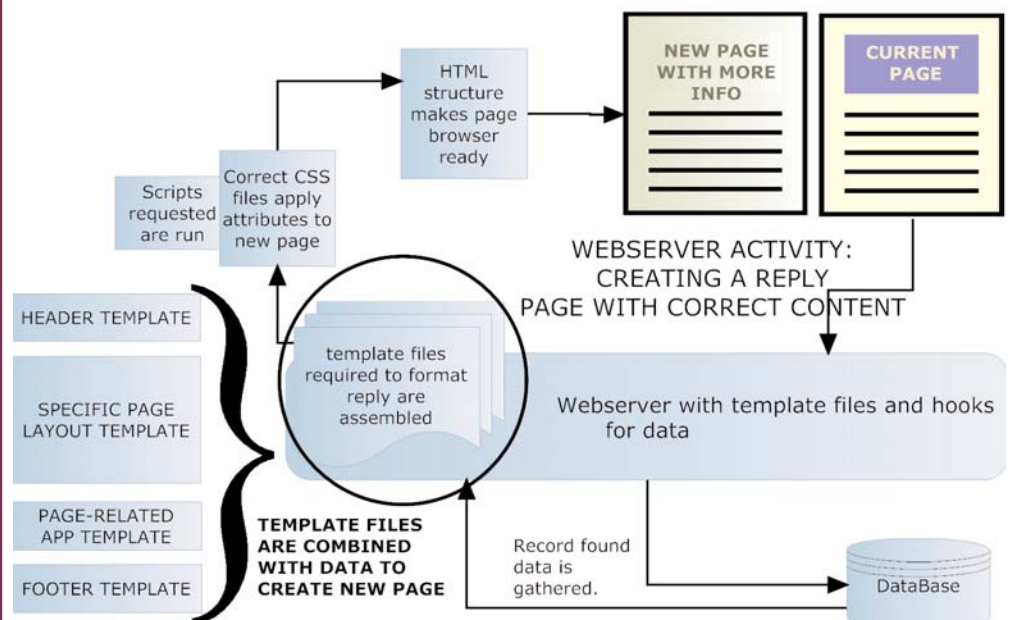
see the page you requested! Isn't it amazing?

And how editing templates might get you in trouble. When you look at the php code of the header template, it can become tempting to edit that code if you want to make a major change. BEWARE. Since the code interacts with the database, all the scripting and css, editing this code is not recommended unless you've seen a recommended edit on the Theme's support forum... and documented as correct. There are a lot of folks who do a great job maintaining the support forums, so any problems you have, just search on the support forum's main page and chances are, it has been answered.

The css file is the main file most people use to "tweak" their templates into shape. Since css determines attributes, you can just update the css file after you make changes, refresh your browser and see the results. Make sure that you document your changes, and save your css file often if you're in development mode. The easiest way to do that is to open the css file in the editor, hit the <control> key and A (the shortcut for "select all") then open a flat text editor like notepad++ and

Template File Codes

Below is a sample of a bit of the header.php code (this is the template that controls the header of your page). As you find the need to edit your css code, you'll often want to check in the template code to see where that particular class or tag is used.

```
?>
<!doctype html>
<!--[if !IE]>      <html class="no-js non-ie" <?php language_attributes(); ?>> <![endif]-->
<!--[if IE 7 ]>    <html class="no-js ie7" <?php language_attributes(); ?>> <![endif]-->
<!--[if IE 8 ]>    <html class="no-js ie8" <?php language_attributes(); ?>> <![endif]-->
<!--[if IE 9 ]>    <html class="no-js ie9" <?php language_attributes(); ?>> <![endif]-->
<!--[if gt IE 9]><!--> <html class="no-js" <?php language_attributes(); ?>> <!--<![endif]-->
<head>

<meta charset="<?php bloginfo('charset'); ?>" />
<meta name="viewport" content="width=device-width, user-scalable=no, initial-scale=1.0, minimum-scale=1.0,
scale=1.0">

<title><?php wp_title('&#124;', true, 'right'); ?></title>

<link rel="profile" href="http://gmpg.org/xfn/11" />
<link rel="pingback" href="<?php bloginfo('pingback_url'); ?>" />

<?php wp_enqueue_style('responsive-style', get_stylesheet...
```

Note the <div id> for "container" and the one for "header". If you want to modify the background color, or change some other attribute, look for one of the two sections in your css file. it will save you a lot of time

```
<?php wp_head(); ?>
</head>

<body <?php body_class(); ?>>

<?php responsive_container(); // before container hook ?>
<div id="container" class="hfeed">

    <?php responsive_header(); // before header hook ?>
    <div id="header">
```

Of course you can always look at the source code at the browser end, and you may see tags and classes noted there. See source code sample below... which shows the outcome of the header template plus the main page template. Note how different it is from the php code that generated it.

```
<body class="home page page-id-110 page-template page-template-full-width-page-php logged-in">
<div id="container" class="hfeed">
```
Here's the same "container" section

```
        <div id="header">

        <div id="logo">
            <a href="http://anson-bowles.com/web/"><img src="http://anson-bowles.com/web/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/cropped-
banner-web-1010x105.png" width="1010" height="104" alt="WebKnowledge" /></a>
        </div><!-- end of #logo -->


                        <ul class="menu"><li class="current_page_item"><a href="http://anson-bowles.com
/web/" title="Home">Home</a></li><li class="page_item page-item-34"><a href="http://anson-bowles.com/web/?page_id=34">Hands-
On</a><ul class='children'><li class="page_item page-item-252"><a href="http://anson-bowles.com/web/?page_id=252">Strategy
/Design/Developer</a></li><li class="page_item page-item-115"><a href="http://anson-bowles.com/web/?page_id=115">Design
/Developer</a></li></ul><li class="page_item page-item-114"><a href="http://anson-bowles.com/web/?page_id=114">Design/Build</a>
</li><li class="page_item page-item-124"><a href="http://anson-bowles.com/web/?page_id=124">Configure/Build</a></li></ul>
</li><li class="page_item page-item-2"><a href="http://anson-bowles.com/web/?page_id=2">Web Coaching</a></li><li
class="page_item page-item-26"><a href="http://anson-bowles.com/web/?page_id=26">Tutorials</a></li><li class="page_item
page-item-75"><a href="http://anson-bowles.com/web/?page_id=75">Custom Services</a><ul class='children'><li class="page_item
page-item-77"><a href="http://anson-bowles.com/web/?page_id=77">Web Rescue</a></li><li class="page_item page-item-300"><a
href="http://anson-bowles.com/web/?page_id=300">Banner/Branding Graphics</a></li></ul></li><li class="page_item page-item-
335"><a href="http://anson-bowles.com/web/?page_id=335">Contact Us</a></li><li class="page_item page-item-5"><a
href="http://anson-bowles.com/web/?page_id=5">Resources</a><ul class='children'><li class="page_item page-item-137"><a
href="http://anson-bowles.com/web/?page_id=137">Lifecycle Chart</a><ul class='children'><li class="page_item page-item-
200"><a href="http://anson-bowles.com/web/?page_id=200"></a></li></ul></li></ul></li><li class="page_item page-item-60"><a
href="http://anson-bowles.com/web/?page_id=60">Checkout</a><ul class='children'><li class="page_item page-item-61"><a
href="http://anson-bowles.com/web/?page_id=61">Purchase Confirmation</a></li><li class="page_item page-item-63"><a
href="http://anson-bowles.com/web/?page_id=63">Purchase History</a></li><li class="page_item page-item-62"><a
href="http://anson-bowles.com/web/?page_id=62">Transaction Failed</a></li></ul></li></ul>

        <div id="search-box">
                <form method="get" id="searchform" action="http://anson-bowles.com/web/">
        <input type="text" class="field" name="s" id="s" placeholder="search here &hellip;" />
        <input type="submit" class="submit" name="submit" id="searchsubmit" value="Go" />
        </form>     </div><!-- end of #search-box -->
</div><!-- end of #header -->
```
And here is where the header template ends and another one begins.

```
        <div id="wrapper" class="clearfix">

        <div id="content-full" class="grid col-940">


        <div id="post-110" class="post-110 page type-page status-publish hentry">
            <h1 class="post-title">Home</h1>
```

CSS Reference Information

If you need a refresher, or just want to learn what's new in css3, there's a number of websites that will help you.

http://w3schools.com/css/ will give you the most up to date info on css and also has a section that tells you which codes are not supported in the most popular browsers. Fabulous resource.

Webmonkey is also a good resource when you want to read a more user friendly explanation. Also good reference sheets.

http://www.webmonkey.com/tag/css/

A list of the history of css and a "property" index can be found at http://www.blooberry.com/index-dot/css/propindex/all.htm

Great design and code advice from a list apart: http://alistapart.com/topic/css

Map content and images to pages

What images and what content go on which pages

Growth Areas

Be sure to allow room for areas that you know will expand quickly.

Social Media Integration

Mirror or excerpt from any/all of the social media apps?

Hooks to outside apps?

Does something have to happen on an external site when activated on yours?

External Links

Link popularity is a great way to increase your search ranking, and trading links with many other similar sites will increase traffic.

Create content map

Review the functionality and compatibility you will be using for each requirement.

Make sure that they are appropriate for what you require, function as needed, look inviting to visitors, and will not interfere with your page layout.

Gather Everything Before the Build

A friendly reminder... we're about ready to begin the build. It is time to make sure you have all the elements you need to start building. It is possible to create "placeholders" for elements that are still not finished, But just make sure you have a place for everything you need.

We created a content map to do just that. On the first page you indicate your global look, theme and template choices, colors and even indicate your requirements.

Global Details

Blog will appear on:
☐ Home Page
☐ Designated Page
☐ No Blog

Theme Requirements:

Template Options:
☐ Full Page
☐ Page with sidebar
☐ Page with 2 sidebars
☐ Multi-column Page
☐ Vertical Split

How many functions on sidebar?

☐ Banner/Logo that repeats on every page

Color Theme that these elements need to match:

☐ Background behind website
☐ Widget or Sidebar boxes
☐ Navigation Buttons
☐ Text or Headline Links

☐ Footer with repeating info

☐ Social Media links on sidebar?

SOCIAL MEDIA:

_ Faceboook

_ Tweets

_ Links

_ Contact

_ Google Plus

_ Pinterest

_ Custom

Functional Requirements

_ Shopping Cart (WordPress e-commerce)

_ Photo Gallery

_ Events Calendar

_ Register for event & pay on site

_ Ads or Affiliate Links

_ Custom Search

_ Reply/Subscription Form with database

_ Members only Section

_ Directory (membership)

_ Forum/discussion group

_ Multiple permissions (editor, author, contributor, subscriber)

_ Author/Editor with article/blogpost

_ Bookmark widget

_ rss feed

_ Like/Follow widget

_ Custom map

_ Scrolling images or text

_ Autorespond with attachment

_ Trackable survey

_ E-learning ability

_ Take tests and store results

_ Autorespond with attachment

_ Pay for Downloads

_ Popup windows

_ Classifieds section

_ Mailing list built into subscriber db

Now we go page by page

As a final check, and to eliminate confusion, we mapped out what would happen on every page and who was responsible for what details. That's often when a seemingly easy site suddenly becomes a nightmare. Below is a screen shot of the planning for the "About Us" page.

Page Title (shows on navigation):	About Us
Page Location-	Column: 2 Child: None
Plugins for this page only:	Contact Form
Plugin Configuration by:	Developer (who will be configuring this form)
Features (shortcode) this page:	Popup Window with map
Features (shortcode) Configuration by:	Developer (who will be coding this popup)
Template:	Full PG 2/3 w/Sidebar: 3 Col:
External or Embedded video/links:	Mirror Facebook Likes (mirror social media)
Content:	3 paragraphs about the history of our company
Content Editor:	Client (who enters the content into the website)
Images:	DCSkyline Photo 300 px
Is this page part of an Index?	Yes (A sidebar box with links to all pages)
Does index box use category tag or page name	(pages can be referenced by name, tag or category)

Last Minute Pieces

We also created a section that noted what was missing, and required us to do some custom work. Putting that on the page made the client aware of all the extra work that needed to take place

Custom Image Work

☐ On pages with text wrapping

☐ Special diagrams that need captions

☐ Used in a photo gallery section

☐ Rotating or sliding on home page

☐ Slideshow/Animation

☐ Photo of products for sale

☐ Embed Video

Y/N

__Banner is created & sized

__Images used for site in digital form, sized

__Need more images related to subject

__Need charts to be created

__Need to modify Images

COLOR PALETTE:

Main color in banner

Highlight color

Alert or info box color

Our Exclusive Content Map

Constantly in development, our content map reflects the choices that a client can make when requesting a website.