Website Planning Worksheet

This planning worksheet is provided to assist you in thinking out the elements of your website. The more you know before you begin, the smoother the design process.

We ask that you take the time to look for 2-3 websites that you generally like, then tell us what you like about them and also what you don't like. This enables us to get a better idea of what you're looking for, and if you see features you'd really like to have, you'll be able to show us a sample of it to clarify.
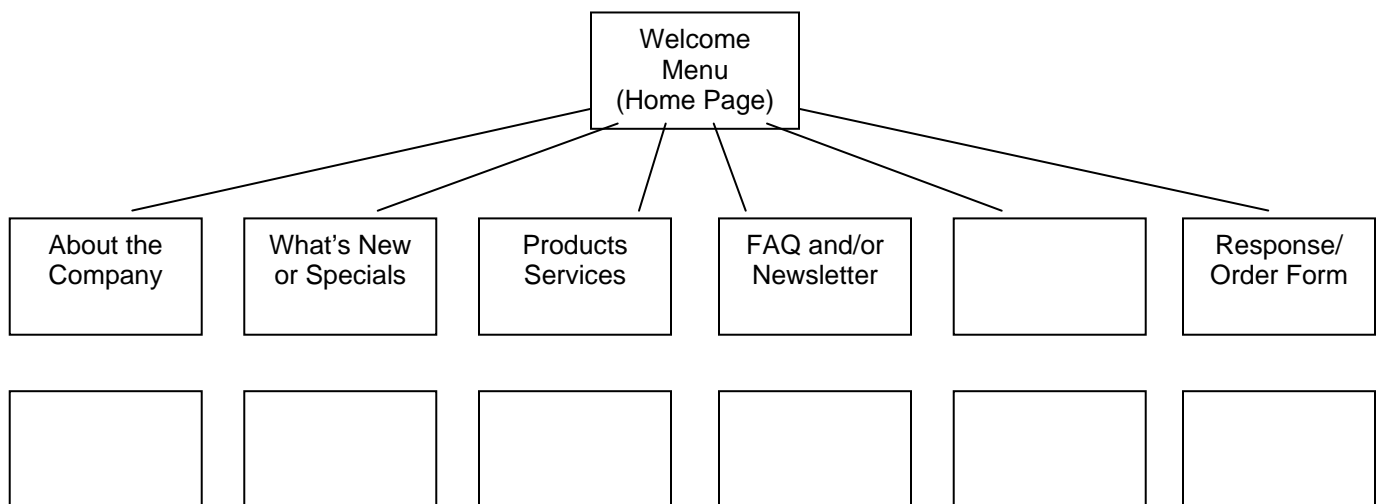
1. Purpose

Give the most important purpose a "1", next most important a "2". Leave those blank which do not interest you at all.

__ To gain a *favorable impression* of the company or organization.
__ To develop a qualified *list of prospects*
__ To *sell products directly* taking credit card information over the Internet
__ To encourage potential customers to *contact us by phone or mail* to consummate a sale.
__ To make available *product information and price lists* to distributors.
__ To make available *product information and price lists* to customers.
__ To strengthen *brand identification*.
__ Other _____

2. Site Organization

Use these as a starting guideline for your website's pages. Circle those you want and cross out those you don't. Use empty boxes for additional or other pages. You can also attach a separate sheet with a flowchart of desired website pages if you prefer.

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                        ┌──────────────┐
                        │   Welcome    │
                        │    Menu      │
                        │ (Home Page)  │
                        └──────────────┘
   ┌──────────┬──────────┬──────────┬──────────┬──────────┬──────────┐
┌────────┐ ┌────────┐ ┌────────┐ ┌────────┐ ┌────────┐ ┌────────┐
│About   │ │What's  │ │Products│ │FAQ     │ │        │ │Response/│
│the     │ │New or  │ │Services│ │and/or  │ │        │ │Order    │
│Company │ │Specials│ │        │ │Newsletter│ │       │ │Form     │
└────────┘ └────────┘ └────────┘ └────────┘ └────────┘ └────────┘

┌────────┐ ┌────────┐ ┌────────┐ ┌────────┐ ┌────────┐ ┌────────┐
│        │ │        │ │        │ │        │ │        │ │        │
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3. Site and Domain Names

Site Name on Masthead (please type your business name as it should appear):

 _____ _____

Your *Domain Name* must be registered and approved by a domain registration service before you can use it, which also requires that it be "hosted" or "parked" by a hosting service. We can register the domain and host or park it for you if you prefer. You may check the availability of your domain name here: http://who.securepaynet.net/whoischeck.aspx?ci=1910&prog_id=parapet.

Domain name _____ ☐ Desired   ☐ Already Registered
Please use our Domain Registration and Hosting form if you want us to register and/or host your site.

4. Masthead Graphic

It is very helpful if you provide a copy of your company's letterhead, brochures, catalog, etc. so we can see how you present your company image.
__ *Company Logo* incorporated in the masthead graphic? If so, please provide a <u>color</u> copy.
__ *Photo or drawing* of product?
__ *Typeface* preference _____

__ Preferred *colors* in palette (PMS or Pantone colors?) _____
     If you've had brochures, etc., printed by a printing house, your printer can help you with this.

__ Other ideas _____

5. Color and Accents

For the most part a white background is recommended for best readability and contrast. Typically, menus run down the left side or across the top of the pages because this is what most users are familiar with and it makes your site easier for them to understand. However, other designs can be used with menus appearing in the middle of the home page, for example, as long as there aren't too many menu choices. If you have a different idea, please indicate it below. Your preference:

May we include a small link at the bottom of the welcome page such as *"Website Designed by Toner Design"* or something similar? (You are under no obligation to say yes.) ___Yes ___No

6. Navigation System

The navigation system should include:

- *Links* from the home page and sectional pages to every page in the system to enable Web search engines to "spider" and index content on every page. These may be text links or make use of buttons, but if you have a large number of links we recommend using text links so your site loads faster.

- *Menu at the bottom of each page—o*n some sites this can appear both top and bottom. Try to keep it to a maximum eight (8) selections. On larger sites server side includes are used to make it easy to expand the site at a later time without having to change the coding on each individual page of the site. "Server side includes" means that this part of the coding is placed in a separate text file that, when the page is loaded, is called for by the page and thus "included" in the page coding. This same file is set up to be called upon by every page on the site, so that one must only change one file to

change menus on every page at once. Text menus will also be set up as server side includes for sites of 10 pages or more, but can include more than eight (8) items. However, keep in mind that fewer items make it easier for the user to find what they want.

- *Menus*—text links are especially useful on larger sites. Included in sites of 10 pages or more. Text menus are good for search engine ranking, but they also allow for more items than image "buttons" as they are easier to see at a smaller size.

Optional Systems. Check those you wish incorporated in your site.

____ *"Buttons"*—are often more elegant, but also more expensive and time-consuming to maintain when a change or addition is made to the system. Also, it takes significantly longer to load many buttons, so they are not recommended for sites where a large number of links to other pages exist.

____ *Frames System*—We do not recommend frames in practically any situation, since they are usually a problem. They do not always print out, cannot be seen by some browsers, cannot be bookmarked easily, and often make the page design look "tacky" with their ugly gray scroll bars. Additionally, they are often unfriendly for search engines, which is the most important reason to use frames very sparingly, if at all. In a very few cases, they are useful: (1) to display large databases of information, (2) purposely hide URLs of content pages, (3) send visitors to other sites while making it easy for them to come back.

____ *Search Engine*—A search engine specifically for your site (not to be confused with the search engines that index millions of websites) is useful on larger sites of 20+ pages to help visitors quickly find what they're looking for. If we host your site, a small search engine is included with all packages and can be installed from your Control Panel.

7. Page Elements

These are the important items which can appear on nearly every webpage on your site (except the "home" page). If there are

- *Page titles* which show at top of Web browser only

- *Top-of-page graphic* based on the design of the masthead graphic

- *Page Title* in larger type. Usually done as an image.

- *Text*. Body Font Style—we recommend using Verdana if possible, as it was designed specifically for the Web and is generally easiest to read online.

- *Footer Menu* – Additional menu at the bottom of the page, especially important on long pages, done as text for better search engine placement.

- *Standard company ID* near bottom of page

- *E-mail response link* to the following e-mail address: _____ *(Note: If you host with us you will have a number of email addresses available to you. You can use these as marketing tools by using one on the web, another one on brochures, still another for the newspaper, etc. It's an easy way to track where people are hearing about you.)*

- *Copyright and trademark information* in small print at the bottom of every page. What registered trademarks, trademarks, and service marks does your company want to indicate here?

Do you have any trademarks or service marks? If so, please list them below or on the back of this sheet and indicate which are registered trademarks.

8. Photos, Graphics, Animations, Sound, and Video

_____ Please verify by initialing this statement that you own the copyright to, or have permission from the
Initials   copyright owner to use any photos or graphics you give us.

- *Clipart* tends to look a bit tacky on websites. Photos are far better. We will use whatever you prefer.

- *Photos* you supply either by sending the photos themselves for us to scan and return, or by sending the digitized images on a diskette.

- *Stock photos*

We can also equip your webpages with:
- *Sound,* either MIDI musical background or streaming Real Audio for music or voice. We do not recommend this unless there is also a button to turn off the sound—music and/or other sound effects often irritate visitors to your site more than make a good impression, particularly if you cater to other businesses.

- *Animated GIF images.* We can also create animations.

- *Shockwave/Flash Animations.* Be aware that Flash interactive animations often take a fair amount of time to produce and can thus be costly. Nonetheless, they can also add a much more polished look to a site.

- *Video clips.* We can take your video and convert to a video format for use on the web.

9. Response Forms

What is the purpose of your response form?

__ *Guestbook* for visitors to record comments
__ *Request for information*
__ *Survey* of customer preferences

Note: *If you plan to use your response form as an order form, please let us know. Credit card information requires a secure site and secure order pick-up. Request our Secure Certificate form/documentation if you plan on taking credit card information.*

10. Web Hosting Service

We can provide web hosting at competitive rates if you require—see additional documents listing describing this service.

If you already have a hosting service: We've worked with dozens of hosting services -- the good, the bad, and the ugly. We usually do not recommend hosting on your local dial-up ISP unless you have experience with them indicating fast response when you have a problem. Too often they are not as well-prepared to meet specialized business site hosting needs and are usually not as (speedily) responsive to required changes. Their main business is providing Internet access; when a hosting problem arises they take care of ISP business first, then get to hosting. We require cgi-bin access and FTP access with the ability to add password protection to folders on your site. Our response form also requires a Unix system with Perl programming language available (most hosting services provide this). It's also useful in some cases to have a Telnet option.

Web Hosting Service _____ Phone: _____

E-mail for support or help _____

11. Registering and Advertising Your Website

To make your website successful, here are some tips to consider:

- Registering your Website with the major search engines that index the Web. If we design your site, we register your website with the major search engines for free.
- Giving customers a good reason to come by offering them something—FREE is the most powerful word on the Web. Offering a free report is a good draw, for example.
- Finding industry-wide linking pages and negotiating reciprocal links to and from their webpages
- Purchasing Web advertising (we can recommend some free banner exchange services)
- Becoming active in several of the thousands of Internet news groups and mailing lists
- Developing a "signature" mini-ad attached to all your e-mail messages
- Making your website part of one or more of the many free (quality) directories on the web
- Getting your website listed on a "portal site", where many users can find it
- Including your e-mail and Web addresses on all your company's print literature, stationery, and display advertising
- E-mail newsletters

Information about *number of visitors to your website* can usually be obtained from your Hosting Provider from statistics generated daily by various programs designed for the purpose. We do not include page counters or particularly recommend them, since it may indicate to website visitors that your pages don't get enough use, which can discourage them. Counters also lend an amateur look. Sites hosted by Toner Design have web statistics available from the Control Panel.

12. Search Engine Submission

We submit your information to the major *Web search engines* to "register" your website after the initial site is finalized. Before doing this we work with you to fine-tune your home page for the search engines. Please ask for our report about search engines or you can download it from our website.

13. Maintenance

We offer package pricing but have typically found that making changes using our hourly rate is best for most clients who only need updates once in a while. Our maintenance package prices (see below) cover minor price changes, product changes, etc. It *does not* include major changes, such as changing newsletter content (which essentially involves constructing a new webpage), which is billed at our hourly rate.

Maintenance Package Pricing – call us at (828) 891-2563 for current rates