Web Site Design Development Process – CMairsCreate.com

Project Management for Website development process - 2 stages

**Stage 1: Initiate Project Process**

1. Determine a website or redesign is needed
2. Gather major players to create a development team
3. Discuss broad goals for the site
4. Define a budget
5. Assign a Project Manager
6. Distribute Design Document Questionnaire to appropriate parties
   a. Basic Questionnaire to start the project plan process
   b. Gathers basic information about the project

**Stage 2: Site Development process**

1. **Site definition & planning**
   - Design document
     1. **Build a design document** (based on the questionnaire)
        o States major site goals
           ▪ Clearly state the purpose of the website
              • Why do you need the website?
              • What do you want to accomplish with the site?
           ▪ Clearly define the target audience
              • Age
              • Occupation
              • Sex
              • Education
              • Race
              • Computer literacy
              • Technologies they can understand
        o Major team members & their responsibilities
        o Content creators & technology needs
        o Defines production issues including budgets, schedules & delivery dates
        o Determine approximate number of site pages
        o Define & document functionality issues such as target browsers, css, etc.
        o Define site maintenance team, have them involved from the beginning
        o Risk Management
           ▪ Identify & assess risks
        o Define maintenance team responsibilities
           ▪ Keep content fresh
           ▪ Make revisions
           ▪ Add pages
           ▪ Track server logs
           ▪ Regularly backup the site
           ▪ Document & store backups to create a “paper trail & site history
           ▪ Reporting hierarchy for long term maintenance of the site
           ▪ Long-term storage for backups
        o Assign a site editor responsible for the content of each page on the site
           ▪ Duties vary based on the project criteria
           ▪ Makes sure content complies with company standards & branding rules
           ▪ Keeps tabs on copyright issues

2. **Project Plan**
   - Document the project - documents to be included:
     1. Design document questionnaire
     2. Design document
        ▪ Design style guide
     3. Mind-mapping
     4. Wireframes
     5. Storyboarding
6. Flowcharts
7. Project Requirements
8. Resources
9. Costs
10. Deliverables
11. Timeline
12. Risks
13. Testing
   • Usability testing
   ▪ Define the scope of the project
     • Set up a methodology for dealing with scope creep
       ▪ What is the process for submitting additional info for the project
         ▪ Written submittal process
       ▪ Who is responsible for making the final decision about any new items
         ▪ Where is documentation submitted for review?
       ▪ Who needs to be contacted & what documents must be modified if an item is added or subtracted moving forward?
   ▪ Determine project mgmt team members
   ▪ Define project phases
   ▪ Determine roles/responsibilities
   ▪ Define resource allocation
     • Graphic needs
     • Text needs
     • Programming needs
     • Additional content needs
       ▪ Flash, video, etc.
   ▪ Set up a timeline for project
     • Gantt chart
   ▪ Define deliverables
   ▪ Identify & assess risks
   ▪ Project documentation – who is responsible?
     • Design document questionnaire
     • Design document becomes a part of the project documentation
   ▪ Very useful for future redesigns

3. Project Communications
   • Communication methods must be defined in the project plan
     ▪ Acrobat.com
     ▪ Acrobat review process
     ▪ Connect meetings
     ▪ Buzzword on Acrobat.com
     ▪ Email

2. Information architecture - defines site & navigational layout
   a. Project Requirements
      i. Detail & inventory content
   b. Detail organization of the site
   c. Determine page layout using post-its
      i. Based on design document & questionnaire info
      ii. Rough out navigational issues
      iii. Finalize page count
3. **Site design** - defines look & feel of site
   a. Confirm content responsibilities & due dates
      i. Graphics & photos
      ii. Text
      iii. Meta tag information
      iv. Programming need
      v. HTML creation
      vi. MultiMedia & Pdf creation
      vii. Search engine for site
      viii. secure a domain name & web host
   b. Define & document site colors & fonts in design document
   c. Define if using css & to what extent
   d. Determine layout grids for homepage & other levels
   e. Define navigation for site
   f. Go over templates & content issues with site maintenance team
   g. Add JavaScript functionality
   h. Drop in META tag info
   i. Develop templates for pages
   j. Check template pages for HTML & Accessibility compliance

4. **Site construction** - create actual pages
   a. Drop in content
   b. Add programming aspects
   c. Finalize database connections
   d. Double check pages for HTML & Accessibility compliance
   e. Edit pages for spelling & content
   f. Testing stage-either offline, application server or testing site
      - Links
      - Navigation
      - Database & JavaScript functionality
      - Forms
      - Customer support sections of the site
      - Search engine features
   g. Upload to a web server for beta testing by development team & others
   h. Can release url to the testing site to employees for additional feedback at this point
   i. Run usability tests by users not on the development team
   j. Refine & correct issues raised in beta & usability tests
   k. Upload to the live site
   l. Backup entire site before launch
   m. Get project signoff on deliverables

5. **Site marketing** – getting the word out
   a. Add website url to all company information, letterhead, brochures & biz cards
   b. Distribute press release about new site launch
   c. Inform employees of new site
   d. Submit domain of site to search engines

6. **Tracking, evaluation, & maintenance** – keeping the site fresh & functional
   a. Meet with maintenance team
   b. Define tracking & site evaluation goals
   c. Re-confirm duties as defined in design document portion above

Notes: Ways to avoid scope creep & keep a tight rein on the project
• Specify the maximum number of pages up front
• Anyone wishing to add pages must justify it
• Find other pages to delete or re-budget for the additional pages