

Confluence Internet Services

Guidelines for Success

The design and implementation of an effective web site, whether it is simple or as complex as a custom e-commerce site, requires clear communication, mutual cooperation and thorough planning, throughout the project.

We are committed to completing each project within the projected time and within the projected cost estimate. To accomplish this we have found that the following actions contribute significantly to the achievement of these goals.

Project Management

- CIS will assign a project manager who will coordinate all of the various activities between the client and the CIS staff assigned to work on the project. Occasionally, it will be necessary for the client to interface with someone other than this manager. When this is necessary the assigned manager will sufficiently brief the third party as to what must be accomplished as a result of this dialog.
- The client must also assign one “project manager” who will interface with the project manager assigned by CIS. This individual must have decision authority that is final.
- These actions will minimize confusion as to who is leading the project and reduces the chance that project deadlines will be missed and additional costs incurred as a result of incomplete communication and significant mid-project changes.

Characteristics of a Successful Project

- Clients that thoroughly understand what the goal of the web site is and result expected drive the most successful projects. Time is spent outlining the major components of the web site, navigation, preparing graphics, refining text content and preparing other components for the project.
- The most successful projects are the result of timely communication and follow-up between all concerned participants. When everyone is responsive, projects are finished on time.
- The most successful projects are the result of focused leadership and teamwork.

Planning Site Content and Organization

- Clearly define what content is critical and what content is peripheral. Develop well-written and edited text the first time as it saves you money in the long run.
- Organize the site layout by preparing a storyboard (sitemap or outline) that communicates your concept and vision of the site and the navigation.

- Prepare yourself. Make notes as to which sample sites you like and why (be sure and make a note of the URL (address). Use these sites to define the design elements, colors (warm or cool), look, feel and navigation features that are closest to what you are looking for.
- Gather your marketing materials from present and past projects. This provides our designer with a sense of the spirit/brand of your company and the image that you are trying to portray. Provide logos, icons, photos and other graphics that you would like to include in your project (originals files are best if possible) send as attached files in an email.
- Providing all of the components for the project at the beginning of the project saves significant time and money.
- The more thought that is given to these actions, in the beginning, the faster your site will be up and running which translates into reduced production costs.
- Throughout this entire process the CIS organization will be ready, willing and able to provide you with as much guidance and support as is required.

A Database Site Primer

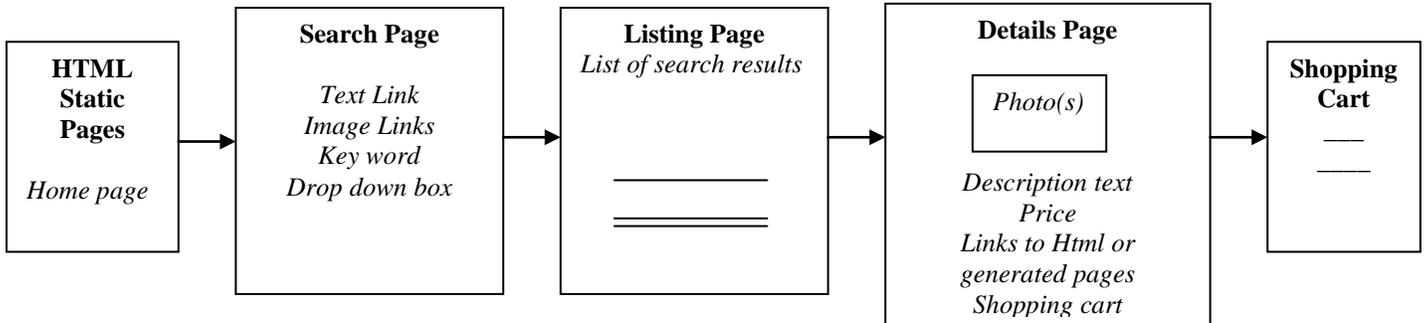
DISREGUARD THIS SECTION IF WE ARE NOT USING A DATABASE

The fundamentals of a database site may, at first, seem abstract and confusing. However, our experience indicates that as our clients become immersed in the project the fundamentals become more tangible and less abstract.

A database site designed by CIS is based on the premise that the user can find what they want within three clicks of the front page. The greatest advantage of using a database is that adding, deleting, or changing items (products, services, etc.) does not require additional design or programming time because there is only one template, not multiple static html pages.

- Creating a dynamic database driven web site requires that the following organizational parameters be adhered to. Actual examples of the following can be reviewed at the various addresses provided in the appendix to this document.
 - HTML static pages: Any pages that are not generated by the database. These may include your home page; about us company information, testimonials, warranty information, reservation information, email, contact page and the like.
 - Search Page: Database sites may have a search page or a category list either located on the front page or on a sub-page depending on the nature of the site. Searches may be presented in several ways. The user may search a site by clicking a text link, clicking an image, typing in a key word, or by choosing a list in a drop down menu.
 - Listing Page: Once a user has selected a search function they will be presented with a list of choices that have been generated by the search. This listing can include; an icon, small photo, description, price...anything you want.
 - Details Page: This page provides all the detailed information contained in the database regarding the product or service selected. It may include text, photos(s), clickable photo enlargements, itineraries, and links to other HTML or generated pages. If desired it may also provide the user with the opportunity to add the product to a shopping cart.
 - Shopping Cart: Not all database sites have shopping carts. This function is implemented if the intention is to offer products or services for sale online. This feature allows the user

to add an item to a shopping cart and continue browsing throughout the site. When the individual decides to checkout, the program remembers what has been selected and will list the items, provide a total, add tax and shipping and provide information on how to complete the transaction.



Simplified Example of a Database Site Configuration

Components of a Database Site

There are three components necessary for a database site to function. The **database**, the **templates** that the information flows into, and the **scripting or programming**.

- **The Database:** This component contains all of your data about your products, trips or other services. This data may include prices, text, photo names etc. Any information to be presented on the listing page or details page must be in the database. Any search parameters on the search page must also be added as fields in the database. At CIS we work with MySQL,.
- **The Templates:** Templates are created to interface with the database. When the user initiates a search the information is presented dynamically “on the fly” into a pre-defined custom template. In the template, space holders are specifically set aside for text, photos or graphics to appear in specific pre-formatted areas on the page. This means that all listing pages and detail pages must follow the same pattern and have the same layout. The decisions required relative to this structure are made at the beginning of the project. If it becomes necessary to make changes later in the project, variances from this format will result in additional programming time, expense and project delays. *It is very important to remember that any change in search functions or template layouts, once approved, may result in increased costs and project delays. A change that seems simple may require a change on up to 7 programming areas.*
- **The Programming or Scripting:** The scripting and programming is the “glue” that holds the database and templates together. When a user initiates a search, the programming tells the database what to display on the page. The programming will also run the shopping cart and purchase functions on the site.

The Process from Start to Finish

- **Pre-Commitment Planning:** **This is the most critical step in the entire process.** This step deals with what, who, when, where and the how of the project. The answers to these questions generate the master plan for the entire project.

- **Site layout:** The client and CIS work together in defining the site layout. This includes defining the search functions, layout of listings and detail pages.
- **Design of Templates:** Once the site layout is determined in detail, a CIS professional designer builds the templates, the search page, the listing page and the final result page.
- **Database Creation:** The templates are given to the programmer who creates the structure of the database. The programmer will import existing data or will require the client to provide "sample data" in order to develop the correct data flow.
- **Database Completion:** The client or CIS (determined before the project is to begin) will enter all or additional data into the database.
- **Scripting:** The CIS programmer will define and develop the scripting necessary to drive the searches and shopping basket.
- **Debugging:** The nature of web site and database design requires careful review because invariably something gets overlooked. We view the final editing and review process as a shared effort. However, if the client requests the service we will debug the database at an extra cost to the project. This decision will be determined before the project begins.
- **Static Pages:** These pages will be designed, developed and refined concurrently with other steps during the project.
- **Final Approval:** The final review process is like a final inspection when buying a new car or home. The client is responsible for reviewing all aspects of the site. If there are still elements or features that are not as agreed they will be corrected immediately. Final approval is the key to turning on the site and connecting it to the domain name.

A Message from Ron Hilbert- President - Creative Director & Founder

The following is a note that Ron sends to our clients as we prepare to initiate a design project for them. It is a perfect summary of the information that has been outlined above. CIS clients have indicated to us that the information provided in this document was invaluable to the process of developing their web site. Regardless of whether your project is simple or complex these thoughts apply.

Dear Valued Client

Custom e-commerce and database sites require mutual cooperation between us. The goal is to complete the site in the projected time frame and within the projected cost estimate. To accomplish this goal we must clearly define the working relationship and boundaries that will help you achieve a feature rich, creative and functional web site.

Here are some suggestions when communicating with our staff that will save us time.

1. Please refer to the exact web page address such as "store-tacoma.htm" for a change or edit.
2. Please remember additions are not edits. Edits are spelling errors, etc. these do not cost you time charges. If it is our mistake we will fix it no charge. Additions are when you change the text you have already provided us or complete changes such as upper case lower case changes with no previous instructions - image changes with no previous specific instructions or font requirements - these additions are time charges.

3. Please provide all text and images for a page at the same time. It is best that when we can do a page completely the first time and not receive it in pieces.
4. Faxes are very helpful and a good visual reference. You should print out a page and clearly mark your changes in black ink then fax it to **541-672-2288**.
5. Keep your pages focused - get to the point as soon as possible.
6. When sending word documents, the content of each individual web page should be a separate Word document. Please give it a relative name (lower case only - no spaces in file names - Okay to use dashes, never use an underline in a file name) Use a naming scheme so all the pages on the same subject will sort together, such as: location-seattle.doc, location-tacoma.doc, location-berkeley.doc. Use a naming scheme for images as well, example: shirt-00364.jpg, shirt-00365.jpg, shirt-00368.jpg, etc. All the shirts will sort together (the second part is their part number, size, color, etc).
7. Small text edits should be drawn out on the hard copy "printed out page" as you need them. If there is additional text, either put it in a word processor document in a ".doc" format (such as Microsoft Word) and attach the file to an email with specific instructions where it goes. Please do all of the edits at the same time it is much easier for us and it is less time consuming. We prefer text edits to be emailed as faxing sometimes blurs the words and makes it more difficult to read handwriting, and sometimes the handwriting is not legible to us.
8. Please send all text in a word document. If we have to key in text it costs more time. Please **spell check** it before sending it. Please note when typing do not hit the return "Enter" key unless you start a new paragraph. **Let the words wrap**. Every time you hit the return key it starts a new paragraph in the word processor background code and converts as a new paragraph. Take your time in creating the text for each page, the most important information and keywords should be in the first paragraph. If you want to indicate a "link" to another page simply underline it and following show the address to the link.
9. If you want to set up a "link" resource page to other sites please collect a number of links and give them to us at one time. It reduces the time for editing and uploading to the server.
10. Photo images final format should be in **96 dpi in .jpg if it is a photo or has a gradient in it. .gif if it is a flat color graphic**. Vector graphics .EPS or .AI format with fonts saved as outlines if we are to do your images. **(All files need an three letter extension in lower case .gif, .jpg, .pdf, .php, .htm)** Best practice is to send a large image say 300 dpi and we can reduce it to fit.
11. Try not to use .png image format as the file sizes are usually larger which slows downloading.
12. All static pages are in the root directory. Do not create folders for sub-pages.
13. **Limit file names (photos, pdf, and page names) to 31 characters, no spaces, no underlines (it is okay to use a dash), always lower case only NO CAPITALS. Use keywords in file names. (All files need an three letter extension in lower case .gif, .jpg, .pdf, .htm, .php)**

The following will affect the cost and time estimates of the project:

- Poor Materials. The most efficient way to give us text and images is stated above.
- Changing project managers mid-stream
- Having more than one project manager communicating with the CIS project manager
- Changing approved template layouts or search options

- Delay of answering questions or responding to emails
- Delay of providing data, text and images to CIS in a timely manner
- Delay of client entering data into database
- Forcing the design of a web site to look exactly like a printed brochure
- Not giving us the final web page document and editing it as you go along

We can handle video editing, rendering and formats that work best on the Web. Just let us know what you need.

Thank you so much for your cooperation and this wonderful chance to be of service to you.

Kind Regards,

Ronald D. Hilbert
 President
 Confluence Internet Services Inc.

EXHIBIT A

MILESTONES (If Applicable)

MILESTONE	COMPLETED
1	Acceptance of home page mockup creative graphic design and navigation.
2	Acceptance of home page skeleton/site template web page. Your signature is required for this job to proceed on the "Proof Notice".
3	Acceptance of main home page, contact us page, help pages (if any) and main template pages for search, results and details skeleton pages.
4+	Each 10 hours of logged work is billed as a milestone and due upon receipt unless otherwise stated.
Final	Final acceptance of web pages and components, then FREE one time registration in the search engines is completed.