

Outline

Web Design at BU – Six Important Steps!.....	1
Planning.....	3
Layout.....	3
Elements of Design – Tips for Success!	3
Keep it simple!.....	3
Navigation	3
Colors and Fonts.....	3
Images	4
Your Home Page.....	4
Naming Conventions.....	5
Accessibility Initiatives	5
Maintenance	5
Additional Resources to assist you.....	6

Web Design at BU – Six Important Steps!

Step 1: Request space for your web

Enter a [help desk ticket](#) to request web request space. Guidance for filling out the help desk ticket is available on the web support page at <http://www.bloomu.edu/technology/web>

Faculty and staff are able to gain web space to create the following types of websites:

- **Facstaff** - available for faculty/staff. This is space to build a personal web to post contact information, class materials, etc.
- **Department** – available for those persons in charge of building a department’s website (i.e., business office).
- **Organization** – available for those persons in charge of building an organizational website (i.e., The Voice, Scuba Diving, etc).
- **Students – do not need to request space**; their network accounts automatically provide 100mb of space. See <http://www.bloomu.edu/technology/student/web> for important student website information!

Step 2: Create local folders for your web

A website consists of local files (files stored on your computer) and remote files (files published to the web server). Typically, you will work on files stored locally on your computer. When finished, you will publish the local files to the remote web server.

Getting Started ~ Web Design Basics

- Set up a local folder structure for your web pages. We typically recommend placing this structure on your P drive or other network drive to take advantage of nightly backups. However, this is not required. (Note: If you build your site on your hard drive (C), you will be responsible for backup of your files.)
- After deciding which drive you would like to use to set up your local folder structure, proceed with creation of a folder to house your local files. Each folder should have subfolders, into which you can organize different types of documents.
 - **Example:** Create main folder called MyWeb
 - Double click on MyWeb folder and create two new folders, one called images and one called documents. Store documents you wish to link to in the documents folder and images in the images folder.
- If you design more than one website, it is suggested you have a special folder created for each site.

Step 3: Set up your site

This is a step done in Dreamweaver. You **must** set up your site so Dreamweaver knows where your local folder structure is, and connects correctly with the remote server. Refer to document on the web support page called “Set up your site in Dreamweaver.”

- **If this step is not done, you will not be able to publish your pages to the remote server!**

Step 4: Build your website

Design and build. Utilize reference manual available on the web support page.

Step 5: Publish your website

Refer to tutorial on the web support page called “Publishing and Editing Files.”

Step 6: Want your site linked on the Bloomsburg University index pages?

Faculty/staff web sites are listed at http://www.bloomu.edu/websites_index

Departments are generally listed on the site index http://www.bloomu.edu/site_index

Student clubs and organizations may be found at <http://www.bloomu.edu/studentlife/organizations>

If you would like to have your site listed on the site index, email the BU Web Team webteam@bloomu.edu.

Planning

Planning is a very important factor in creating a great web site.

- Sketch a design out on paper. List all the pages you would like to have and list how each page will be linked to one another.
- Research other sites on the web to see what features you would like to incorporate into yours.

Layout

- Decide who your target audience will be and decide what content you must include for that audience.
- Keep the same design throughout your entire site (heading, navigation columns). Dreamweaver lets you create templates for this very reason.
- At a minimum, the basic pages that every site should have are:
 - Home page (the initial page that loads when you go to your site). Include a link to the home page from all other site pages.
 - Contact information.
 - About (what your site is about).
 - Specific content pages (specific information about you, your dept., your business etc.)

Elements of Design – Tips for Success!

The design of your site is almost as important as the layout. Try to keep these things in mind when building your web.

Keep it simple!

- Each page should download in 8 seconds or less. Info in bullet format or short phrases work best. People don't want to read long pages of text – link to information.
- Good rule of thumb – click no more than three times to get to information. Plan wide, not deep.

Navigation

- Most web pages have either a top row navigation, left column navigation or right column navigation.
- How do you know what to choose? Go out on the web and research sites that are similar to the one you plan to design.

Colors and Fonts

- Dark fonts on a light background work best.

Getting Started ~ Web Design Basics

- There are only a few basic fonts that you can choose from. **Explanation:** Fonts are not actually stored on your website. The way that fonts work is like this. When a person visits your site, the computer reads the code on your web page. The computer is then told (by the code in your page) to display the text using a specific font on the visitor's computer. **So...** If you used a really great font that took forever to find and downloaded to your local machine, your website would look great on your computer. However, chances are that outside viewers of your web wouldn't have this font installed on his/her computer and your web would not display properly for them.

Images

- Images on your site will enhance the users experience **OR** it will frustrate them so badly that they may never return again!
 - Large color photos, music and animation can be memory HOGS and slow downloads.
 - Watch file size ~ 72 dpi resolution is all a monitor will project so save a copy of your web photos at that resolution.
 - Resize pictures PRIOR to adding them to your website. The rule of thumb is that for images displayed on the web, make them as small as possible without distortion.
 - Posted pictures should be no larger than 800 x 600 pixels;
 - Some digital cameras allow you to make a smaller copy of an image file.
 - Utilize software available to you, such as Microsoft Picture Manager, Photoshop, to resize photos.
 - Free tool, Windows XP Image Resizer is available at this Microsoft Website
<http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/Downloads/powertoys/Xppowertoys.mspx>
 - Two basic file types are recommended for image use on your web site:
 - .jpg or .jpeg (**Joint Photographic Expert Group**) - JPGs should be used for pictures.
 - .gif (**Graphics Interchange Format**) - GIFs should be used for logos and non-pictures.

Your Home Page

Your home page must be named either ***index.htm*** **or** ***index.html*** (not both) in order for it to be recognized as your site's default home page. Browsers automatically recognize this as your home page; therefore, it's not necessary to include the "index.htm" portion when advertising your web address. Example: <http://facstaff.bloomu.edu/johl> would take you to my default home page, the index.htm page.

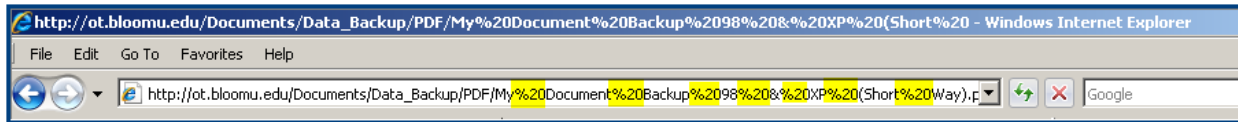
Important Note: When you request web space and are putting up a new site, network services will create your account and **publish a default home page (*index.htm*)** for you – it will say something like this "This is the future site of Judy Ohl." When you are ready to publish your newly created site, you must delete the default home page created for you and publish all your new pages to the remote server.

Naming Conventions

Folders and documents with 2 or more words in them should be typed altogether, no spaces. Example:

pageOne.html or *page1.html* or *page_One.html*

If you have spacing between words, you will have “%20” appear in place of spaces in the web browser once you publish the file. Example:



The page or document will display correctly, but the line has a lot of unnecessary characters!

Accessibility Initiatives

A concern for all web developers is to be compliant with web accessibility guidelines, ways to make web content accessible for people with disabilities. Read more at http://www.w3schools.com/quality/quality_accessibility.asp

- One key issue is providing ALT Tags with images. ALT tags provide a text description when someone places their cursor over a link or picture on a website. Some people turn off the setting on their web browser so they don't see images; the ALT text would be available so they would know what the image is. In addition, some visually impaired people visiting websites use screen readers to read pages to them. Screen readers would read ALT tag info to the person.
- Use of Headings for main sections assists web visitors using screen readers. It helps to break up the sections of a page.
- Colors are another thing. Viewers with visual impairments and color blindness will benefit by simple design. Keep in mind it is best to use dark fonts on a light colored background.

Maintenance

A website is never finished. There will always be new content, images and links to update.

- Keep your content up-to-date. It can be very dissatisfying to view a web page that is out of date.
- If using pictures on your site home page, swap out pictures occasionally to freshen up the look of your site.
- Check links. Make certain all your links go to active pages or content. Broken links can lose a viewer's attention quickly.
- Keep learning! There are tons of web design strategies and tips available when doing research on the web.

Additional Resources to assist you

- Office of Technology Web Support links have been provided throughout this document.
- W3schools.com web tutorials at <http://www.w3schools.com/site/default.asp> (W3schools is the World Web Consortium, an international consortium who develop standards and guidelines for the web.
- Adobe's website <http://www.adobe.com> – on site homepage, search for any topic on Dreamweaver.