

## BUILDING A WEBSITE FROM SCRATCH

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### **BEFORE YOU BUILD THE SITE**

**Domain Name-** Many hosting websites allow you to register a your site for a price. You are able to register the name for a minimum of 1 year. If you are concern about being listed on search engines, we recommend you register for at least two years. If your address ends with a .com, and .net. the chances of being picked up on a search engine is increased. If you have a name that is complex, long, or difficult to remember you may want to consider registering parts of the name as well. Prior to going live, you will have all of these "pointed" at the main domain name.

**Hosting Site:** This is where the files are stored for the website. Obtaining a hosting site/server can be done at any time. It is a good policy to have it before you begin so you can upload images, documents and the pages as you build them.

Gather before starting the actual building process:

**Site Architecture -** What pages do you want to have? You will need to identify which pages will be viewed when a button is clicked on and which ones will be embedded into those pages? Deciding this simple factor will help to keep your gathering of images and writing content directed to the goal of the site. It is OK to change these as you re-think the purpose of the site.

**Logo -** Every organization needs a logo, it can be simple or complex. If you have trouble creating one, a graphic designer can help you with it. For the website, a clear precise image of the logo is required. Your typical photo editor will create a .jpg or .gif image. These are ok, however, professionally done, the image will be in .png, .eps and .ai format. They have a higher quality that show up clearer on websites.

**Images -** You are responsible for the images. Digital images will work fine. Various websites offer professional images for a fee. If you wish to use these images, you will be responsible for purchasing them. Pay close attention to the fine print. Royalty free means you are paying one fee to use the image as much as you wish. Hence they are not really free.

**Content -** Every page has some content. The content is your message. Keep it to 200-400 words. Have spaces between paragraphs and stick to the topic of that page. Keep in mind that the words you use should include keywords that will help to have your site listed in the top 20 listings on a search engine page.

Keywords 10-15 words and short phrases that you think a visitor might use in a search engine.

Descriptions – 25-30 words describing relevant for each page of the site. Include main keyword in the first sentence. This is what visitors who are looking at a search page such as Google or Yahoo.

\*Though these can be added to as building take place it is a good idea to have some of the material ready to help you define the purpose of the site.

## SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION (SEO)

10 rules apply:

1. Unique titles for each page – include 1-2 keywords, keep them relevant to the page
2. Use <h1> Heading tags that are informative, not the title of the page. Use 1 or two per page.
3. Content
  - a. Convey your message clearly
  - b. Organize the information logically
  - c. Write with personality (don't be boring)
  - d. Write with a purpose (each page doesn't just 'end')
  - e. Provide adequate whitespace for readability & easy scanning
  - f. Use grammatically correct content that has been spell checked
  - g. Write with enthusiasm using terminology the average person would understand
  - h. Use verbs and adjectives not just nouns (be descriptive)

**Be sure the words used relate to the keywords and reasons to search for the page. Do not over use keywords; they should be spotted at a glance.**

4. Navigation – Make it simple, don't make the visitor have to think
5. Contextual linking – Use absolute linking ie  
<a href=<http://clientswebsitecompany.com/clients-website-portfolio.html>>  
Clients website Company This type of linking keeps your site from being scraped once it reaches high ranking. These links proved a back link to your site.
6. Use Meta Tags for title, keywords, and description at the lease.
7. Multimedia – keep to a minimum. Make sure images are clean, and quick to load, add the alt text. Flash is still difficult to search.

8. Linking out- validity of content – Use reference or link to other reliable reputable sites.
9. Be wary of loading time. Generally for Bastrop, keep images to high quality, and do not overload the site with images.
10. Markup validations and spell check. Search engines will drop a site if there are too many issues with the coding and visitors leave due to too many spelling errors.

Reference: July 15, 2008 SEO Web Design  
<http://www.websitedesignelixirs.com/webdesign/seo-web-design>

## **BUILDING THE SITE**

### **1. MOCK UP**

Using any drawing device whether paper/crayons, or paint it or Photoshop, draw your home page. Generally the home page is the same for all the pages, If you want the users to first experience to be different than the rest of the pages, you need to design both.

Simply put - Roughly, features and elements you wish to have on the page are decided on.

#### **WHAT TO INCLUDE:**

The logo/branding Placed in the Header area

Where are the Navigation buttons going, will there be a combination of across the top and the side, which side? Where at the top?

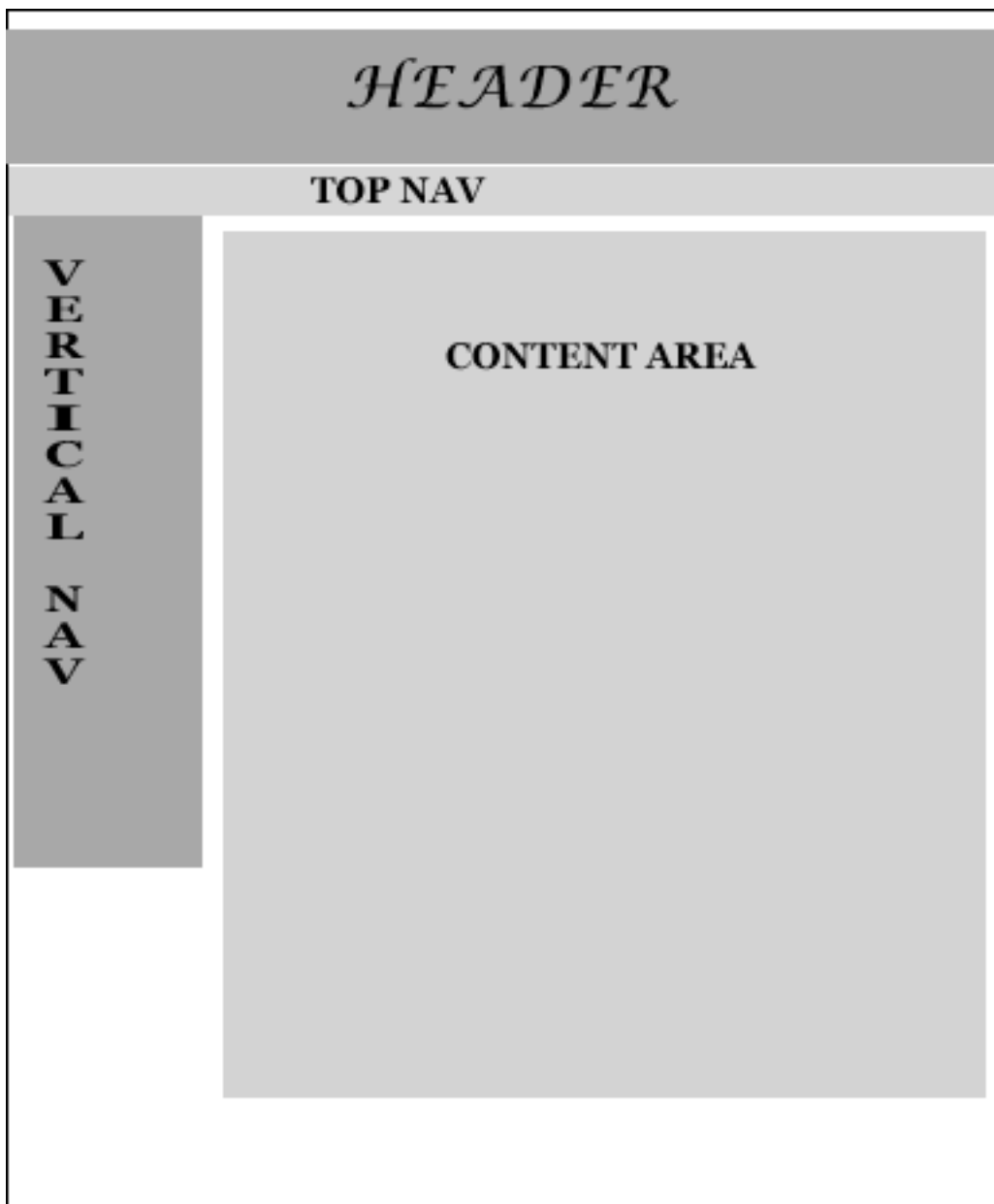
How big is the content area?

Footer – bottom of site to show copyrights

#### **CONSIDER:**

Colors, font, size of font, background, how many images, where will they go

**See example of layout below**



**You can change where and how many navigation places you want. Some are harder to code than others**

