WEBSITE REDESIGN PROCESS
Project Plan Overview: DRAFT
Updated 1/26/12

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B> SITE STRUCTURE AND CONTENT
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D> SITE DEVELOPMENT
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A> DEFINITION AND PLANNING

Step 1: Research and Discovery
Determine the purpose of the project and core and secondary needs of the site as well as the overall goals for the site.
Research iSchool and gain in-depth understanding of programs, disciplines, careers, place in the universe.
Identify branding/perception goals.
Conduct competitive analysis.
Develop audience personas and goals.
Assess the site in terms of analytics, SEO and general stats and establish basic KPIs.
Administer a short survey about the website for internal audience.

Deliverables
- List of current site issues, primary and secondary goals (LD)
- Higher-level descriptors list about brand perception for website (expand after survey) (LD, LG)
- Web survey for internal audiences (LG, NW)
- Competitive analysis report (LG with input from LD, DF, NW)
- Audience profiles (LD)
- Foundational analysis for SEO, GA, and other ratings and measurements (LG)

Step 2: Write the Project Brief/Creative Brief
- Based on the information gathered, write a project brief that states in black and white the project specifics.
- Include mobile strategy and basic technical specifications screen resolution, browser compatibility, download time, web standards, security and accessibility.
- Include social media and SEO strategy sections.

Deliverables
- Project brief (LG)
- Social media strategy and plan (LG)
  - Dependencies: Social media class and projects with Mala
- SEO strategy and plan (LG)
- Usability testing plan (LG)

Step 3: Develop the Project Plan/Timeline
- Create the project plan overview draft.
- Create a detailed list of tasks for each phase of the project plan.
- Establish the timeline for tasks and deliverables.
- Assign due dates and resources.

Deliverables
- Project plan (LG)
Step 4: Document Maintenance Considerations
- Develop a website maintenance plan that documents how the site will be updated and reviewed regularly.
- Consider training opportunities for CMEs and other CMS users to reinforce communications voice and new site standards.

Step 5: Create Promotion and Communications Strategy
- Build out Sharepoint to hold document for school-wide communications efforts.
- Brainstorm ways to generate buzz and anticipation for new site.
- Develop a list of places and methods to promote the new site.

Deliverables
- Redesign communications plan (LD)

B> SITE STRUCTURE AND CONTENT

Step 1: Content Audit and Outline
- Create a list of all existing content that needs to flow into new site.
- Place content into individual Word documents.
- Sort content into groups and identify Content Matter Experts (CMEs).
- Conduct interviews with CMEs.
- Create a content approval process. (Rel. A-6)
- Consider future content needs.
- Review the list of current and future content and conduct card sorting/focus groups
- Create final content outline.

Deliverables
- List of CMEs (LD)
- Content outline draft (LG)
- Content in Word docs (LG)
- Interview questions for CME meetings (LG)
- Content outline final (LG)
- Site maintenance plan (LG)
- First edits on priority content (LG)

Step 2: Site Diagram and Navigation
- Take the final content outline and create site diagram: a visual representation of content outline, site structure and navigational elements.

Deliverables
- Site diagram (LG)
- Navigation draft (LG)
- Navigation final (LG)

Step 3: Wireframe
- Create wireframes for the home page and each template page type.
- Include the containers for navigation, images, content, functional elements (like search) and footer.

Deliverables
Step 4: Usability Testing
• Loop UW Web Team into process to review wireframes.

Step 5: Content Editing and Layout Prep
• Begin editing existing content and curating new content to populate pages.

C> VISUAL DESIGN

Step 1: Design Preparation
• Develop a list of design criteria and goals.
• Connect with usability contacts and resources.
• Review other sites from which to borrow ideas.

Step 2: Draft, Review, Finalize
• Create 1st draft of visual designs for HP and subpages; 2-3 variations.
• Allow for feedback, selection and modifications.
• Create 2nd draft of visual designs for HP and subpages.
• Allow for feedback and modifications.
• Finalize visual design.

Deliverables
  o Multiple draft design comps (DF)
  o Final design elements to pass off to NW (DF)

Step #3: Usability Testing
• Create graphic templates of site and conduct usability testing with 8-10 people.

Deliverables
  o Usability test plan
  o Usability report and recommendations

D> SITE DEVELOPMENT

Step 1: Technical/Functional Plan
• Review the research and materials from A, B & C to confirm that everything is in alignment and supports the overall project goals and needs.
• Target technical specifications in more depth – consult W3C
  o Browsers, OS, resolution and connection speeds
  o Operating systems - Mac, Windows, Other
  o Screen and display resolution
  o Connection speeds
  o Page download size
  o Use of CSS, Flash, JavaScript, video, audio, etc
  o Internal search function
  o Backend technologies, CMS features, personalization, login, etc

Step 2: Refine Project Plan and Timeline
• Refine and add details to the project plan drafted during the first stage.
• Include more detailed list of concrete tasks, assignments, target dates and dependencies between tasks.
• Schedule and administer training in Drupal 7 for those who need it.
Deliverables
  o Detailed site development schedule (LG)
  o Drupal training plan (NW)

Step 3: Build and Integrate the Site
  • Build out templates in Drupal.
  • Create CSS, HTML5, Javascript and others depending on requirements.
  • Optimize images, CSS and HTML.
  • Run initial tests on templates.

Deliverables
  o Drupal site templates (NW)

Step 4: Usability Testing
  • Conduct usability testing on Drupal templates with some people in round #1 plus new people.

Step 4: Create Pages
  • Place content into templates.
  • Establish method for content contributors to review, update and add content. (Rel. A-6)

Deliverables
  o Site maintenance plan (LG)

Step 5: Backend Development
  • Build, modify and/or integrate dynamic features of the site that require database and integration:
    o Search
    o Personalization/login
    o Security functions
    o Web analytics

Step 6: Promotion
  • Roll out tasks in the Promotion and Communications Plan (Rel. A-7)

Deliverables
  o TBD (LD)

E> TESTING

Step 1: Create a realistic Quality Assurance Plan
  • Make sure QA plan contains:
    o Content – accuracy, spelling, grammar (CMEs)
    o Links
    o Functionality
    o Validity of HTML5 & CSS
    o Accessibility
    o Browser/OS/resolution
    o Connection speed
    o SEO
    o Load testing
    o Security
  • Manage the testing process, priorities and fix issues.
  • Conduct the final review of the site before launch.
LAUNCH AND POST LAUNCH ANALYSIS

Step 1: Launch the new and glorious iSchool website! All Hail!
  • Plan the best date to go live. Consider current web site traffic patterns and attempt to launch in a way that minimizes downtime.
  • Make sure that everyone on the team is on call for any challenges that might occur during launch.
  • Consider a soft launch.
  • Conduct the final stage of QA testing on the live site.

Step 2: Style Guide
  • Create a style guide containing the following elements:
    o Visual design standards - logos, colors, typography (to keep the site on brand)
    o Naming conventions - for files, directories, CSS, images, titles, SEO
    o Site structure - document the site diagram and indicate how the structure is built to handle growth
    o Templates - provide the HTML templates and CSS indicating layout, typography, size, color, navigation, menus

Deliverables
  o Style guide (LG)

Step 3: Maintenance Plan
  • Implement the maintenance plan that was developed in the first stages of this process. (Rel. A-6)

Step 4: CELEBRATE
  • Have a launch party!
  • Create a buzz by holding a contest, giving awards or having a special guest at the party. Maybe Al Gore. Or Bono. Or Nancy Pearl.

Step 5: Post-launch SEO and Social Media Tasks
  • Submit sitemaps to Google.
  • Social bookmarking tools:
    o Google Plus, Twitter, Delicious, Pinterest, Digg, StumbleUpon, Reddit
    o Niche sites: [http://www.seodiscovery.org/top-44-niche-social-news-bookmarking-sites-list](http://www.seodiscovery.org/top-44-niche-social-news-bookmarking-sites-list)
    o NB: social media strategy plan to follow
  • Facebook, YouTube tasks.
  • Measure site stats weekly for 3 months to monitor progress of KPIs.

Step 6: Tweak and Improve
  • Continue to make improvements and roll out secondary features we put on the backburner.