

# PREPARING FOR YOUR INTERNET SUCCESS

## *Time Is Money*

No other form of media has ever had the reach of the World Wide Web. Your Web site is your window to the world. It is a technical beast needing to be merged with best marketing practices before venturing out.

### **Your Ultimate Decision Maker**

To save time and money for you and your Internet specialists, please review the following considerations; if you have a team, agree as a body on your growth expectations and plans. Then have one or two point people meet with the designer.

*Direction by committee seldom works, which is why Machiavelli's Benevolent Dictatorship is useful. Have you heard of Findhorn? This eco-village in Scotland was started by Peter and Eileen Caddy in 1962 as a "positive model of cooperative and spiritual living." (They were known at the time for growing huge vegetables by meditating around them – it WAS the '60s.) During a seminar about Findhorn's model, Peter Caddy explained that in spite of the "cooperative model," if Findhorn residents were stuck on a decision, HE had the ultimate power/word. As a former Royal Air Force officer, that seemed fitting. His ultimate control is a perfect example of Machiavelli's Benevolent Dictatorship. Ideally, someone in your organization is that point person; that will simplify your decisions.*



### **Your Internet Presence**

As you would for any marketing or advertising, you: 1) Meet with your organization's principals; 2) Develop ideas/directions/questions; 3) Meet with your designer; 4) Map out a plan; 5) Collect all materials needed to launch your Web site; 6) Your designer builds your Web site; 7) Final changes and approvals.

Your Web layout and content is key to ensuring browser compatibility and a positive user experience. The task of any presentation be it a neighborhood shop, magazine ad, TV commercial, or Website, is to draw traffic to your services and products with a goal to establishing and/or growing your client base.

The specific words on your site will enable search engines to correctly categorize your business as well as organically place your site as high as possible in a search.

Without correct coding, design and content development, search engines will ignore your site.

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### **Cost**

This is the first thing a client wants to know: This will be determined after defining the scope of the site. A site could cost \$1,500 with minimal “add-ons,” or \$40,000++ if significant interactive features, updates or collaterals are needed. Cost depends on features requested beyond your Web design, i.e. video or interactive forms, which have their own set of codes to be incorporated. Cost considerations also include search engine optimization, eMail campaigns, graphics/logo design, features such as eCommerce additions (which can be excellent for non-profits).

### **Your Web Presence (Your Name)**

Before contracting for graphics, especially your logo, be sure that your chosen name is available on the Internet. We recommend registering your name immediately if you have not already done so. We also recommend using .com. Avoid dots and dashes in your Web name: People do not remember them. Ideally your name will relate directly to your plan, product, goals, etc., i.e. MarinLandscaping.com or CaliforniaHealthProducts.com or SonomaValleyWines.com. These examples are organic search terms and help greatly in positioning your company, product and services.

**TIP:** If you are a non-profit, we recommend buying the .com version of your name in addition to the .org version . . . again because people automatically type in “.com” after a Web name. (The .com will point to .org so even if it’s typed incorrectly, it will go to your main site.)

More than 200 million domain names are registered on the Web. The Web is big business and Web names should be considered carefully as they are valuable, i.e.

- Business.com sold for \$7.5 million in December 1999.
- Toy.com was purchased by Toys ‘R’ us at auction for \$5.1 million in 2009.
- Wine.com went for \$2.9 million in September 1999 (and we think that was a bargain price!).

### **Hosting**

Some designers will offer this service themselves. Cautionary Notes:

- We recommend using one of the top-level hosting companies at \$10-\$20/month for your hosting service. Be sure they are available 24/7 and their up-time is exemplary.

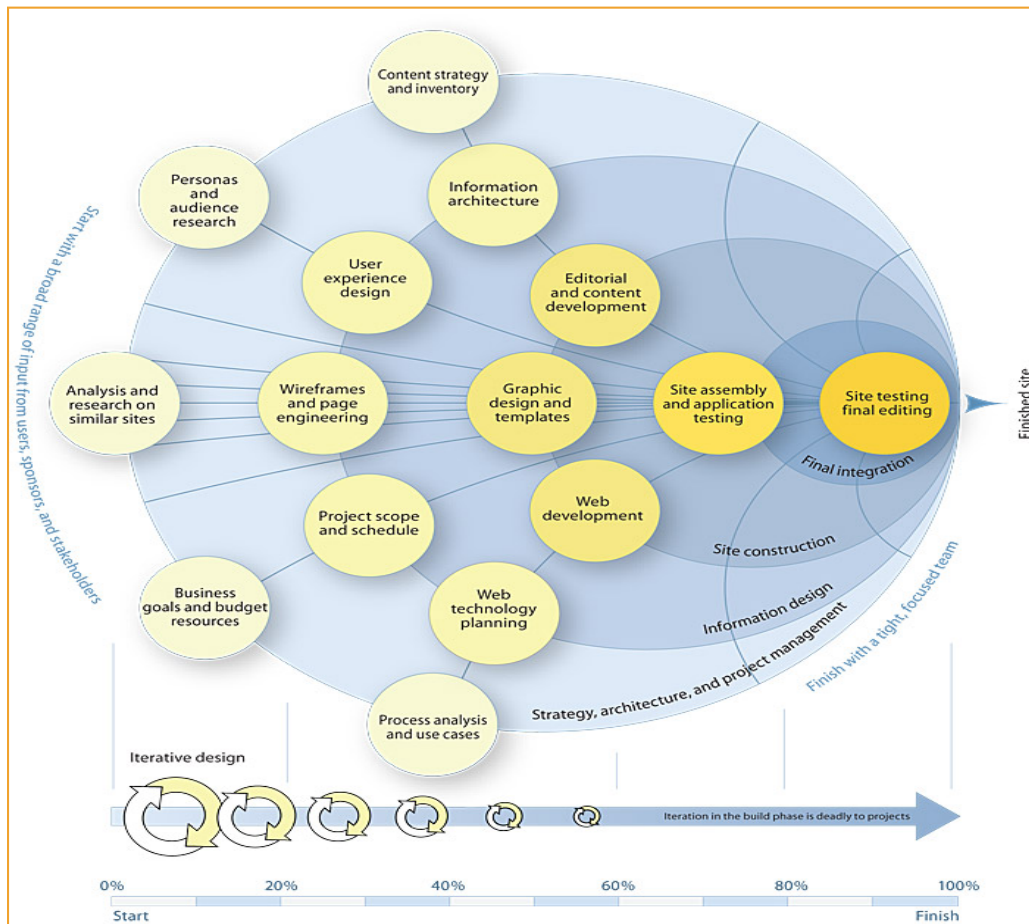
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- Do not give anyone control over your Web site name: Ensure that you have access to your Web site with your own user name and password in the event you decide to work with a different designer in the future and want to move the whole site.
- Please do NOT work with “free” online hosting services; such sites will put ads on your pages, sometimes of competitors even! You can easily lose control of your business focus.

## Considerations

The following Yale Style Guide illustration shows the myriad considerations that go into your Web site.



*Image from Yale Style Guide (online)*

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### **Your Client's Time: Simplicity is Powerful**

Please keep in mind that your clients are probably very busy. You will have less than a minute once they find your site; if they have to figure out where to go, you will lose them. Too many options are not necessarily helpful. Google has ten rules including designing sites that are useful, fast, simple, engaging, beautiful and personable with a positive first impression ensuring that your product is reliable and professional.

**“No Design Is Perfect” – Google.com**

### **Structure, Design, Purpose: Your Homework**

Features beyond a basic Web site are considered an add-ons and each will come with its own fees. Examples are logo design, questionnaires, interactive features, application forms, blogs, social networking, content development . . . To narrow this down:

- Provide a brief list of Web sites you like and indicate what you like about them, i.e. color, layout, graphics, special features such as social networking links, scrolling news feeds, etc.
- Provide a brief list of Web sites you do not like with the same types of comments as above.
- Please point out features that you have in mind; these should be incorporated with the initial design in order to ensure efficient and appropriate site navigation and save money down the road.
  - Blog (WordPress, Joomla, Drupal)
  - eCommerce component (good for fundraising efforts)
  - Interactive forms and documents

### **Editorial/Content**

If you meet with multiple designers to obtain bids, review the checklist at the end of this document; it will help with bids if each designer has the same set of guidelines. Be sure to check sites they have designed: consider appearance, display, and any issues you note (i.e. slow loading, some pages/features not loading at all, broken links, poor graphics, a page crashes your system – it happens!).

- Content Organization, Development, Forms? Documents? Provide materials that feature your business; this could be ads, flyers, mail pieces, etc.
- Text/Copy/SEO: Your Web designer may not be a content developer (i.e. writer), in which case you will need to supply all text or you will want to work with an outside writer. This includes search engine optimization; every word counts!
- Your Web designer should be able to provide contacts in all affiliated areas, i.e. logo designer.
- Target Audience: Younger audiences view sites on hand-held devices which display differently than desk tops; this should be considered in evaluating your direction.

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### **Graphics**

Colors, logo, typography, audio-visual? Are you supplying graphics or AV, or will your designer need to. Graphic quality is extremely important. If you do not have sufficient quantity or quality, include a budget item for graphic creation or purchase (through an image company such as Shutterstock.com). Do you have existing graphics such as logos and letterhead that set your look? If yes, work them into the design?

### **Blogs/Blog Effectiveness**

Blogs are one of the least expensive ways to increase online visibility. Depending on your product/service, it is possible to run your Web presence via a Blog only. Because blogs are updated frequently (or should be – that's the point), they are routinely searched for Internet positioning. Blogs help dramatically with product awareness; they grab readership information, provide branding and definitely shape public opinion.

#### **Blog Features:**

- Frequent updates drives customers to you (SEO: search engine optimization)
- Blogs are free and should be linked to and a part of your main Web site (a blog-only site is also effective)
- Events/Photos/Videos
- Articles on Products and Services
- Product Awareness and Branding
- Trademark and Patent Awareness
- Shaping Public Opinion

### **Marketing/Promotion: Drive Traffic**

Request a marketing plan covering SEO, social networking (facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn – ideally, these will drive traffic to your site), eMail campaigns, publishing (eBooks, instructions, pamphlets)

- Determine measurable success criteria, i.e. how many new clients, how many widgets sold, specific income increase, timeframe. If paid submissions to search engines are recommended, be sure that measurable results are part of the package.
- Branding/SEO: Will you need submissions to search engines?
- Interactive Marketing / Affiliate Marketing (Pay Per Click, Other?)

**TIP:** Social networking (Twitter, facebook, LinkedIn) can be valuable or can eat up your life. Your goal is to get people to your main site/services and become a client/customer. We prefer blogs for this as they will be connected to the main site. Use Twitter, facebook, LinkedIn, etc., for quick notes that directly link to your main site which offers your services. Social networking for social networking's sake is a waste of time.

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### Support Collaterals/Advertising

Include your Web name on EVERYTHING: Business cards, stationery, bills/statements, press releases, manuals, packaging, publications, promotional materials, print advertisements, radio and T.V. ads, posters, billboards, kiosks, direct mail campaigns, response cards, warrantee cards.

### Updates

**Editorial Updates:** Frequent textual updates are extremely important to your position on search engines, which feed on new information. Ideally, you have someone an employee who takes to the Internet; if not, include a monthly update service fee of at least \$100 in your budget. This is too important to ignore.

**Materials Updates:** Because of the complexity of Web site architecture, updates should be scheduled and materials submitted all at once. Your Web site has technical considerations just as running a printing press to publish a magazine does. Hundreds of codes run each and every page.

**Web Site Codes:** Following is an example of simple code that runs one Web page of MarinEStudios (image right). This site also has two other style sheets for the layout and an embedded slide show. Its accompanying blog has another 15-20 of code sheets running the blog.

This is here to give you an idea of what your Web team needs to consider for page layout. Even if you have built a “point-and-click” site on your own, similar code is behind the scenes running your Web site; if you have to make changes, you may not be able to.

```
<!DOCTYPE html PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD XHTML 1.0 Transitional//EN"
"http://www.w3.org/TR/xhtml1/DTD/xhtml1-transitional.dtd">
<html xmlns="http://www.w3.org/1999/xhtml"><!-- InstanceBegin template="/Templates/Master2009.dwt"
codeOutsideHTMLOutsideIsLocked="false" -->
<head>
<meta http-equiv="Content-Type" content="text/html; charset=utf-8" />
<!-- InstanceBeginEditable name="doctype" -->
<title>MarinEStudios in Marin County, California</title>
<!-- InstanceEndEditable -->
<meta name="Keywords" content="Web sites page design optimization, Web development, copywriting, blogs,
blogging, blogger, content development mangement, SEO site optimization, writer, writing, publisher,
photography, logos, illustration, small business websites, professional websites" />
<meta name="Description" content="Build your business with our web design, blogs, social media marketing,
content development, copywriting, photography, illustrations, SEO." />
<link href="MSStyle.css" rel="stylesheet" type="text/css" />
<script type="text/javascript">
//----- LOCALIZEABLE GLOBALS -----
var d=new Date();
```



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```
var monthname=new Array("January","February","March","April","May","June","July","August","September","October","November","December");
//Ensure correct for language. English is "January 1, 2004"
var TODAY = monthname[d.getMonth()] + " " + d.getDate() + ", " + d.getFullYear();
//----- END LOCALIZEABLE ----- </script>
<!-- InstanceBeginEditable name="head" --><!-- InstanceEndEditable -->
<script type="text/javascript"> var _gaq = _gaq || []; _gaq.push(['_setAccount','UA-20647912-1']); _gaq.push(['_trackPageview']);
(function() { var ga = document.createElement('script'); ga.type = 'text/javascript'; ga.async = true; ga.src = ('https:' == document.location.protocol ?
'https://ssl:' : 'http://www') + '.google-analytics.com/ga.js'; var s = document.getElementsByTagName('script')[0]; s.parentNode.insertBefore(ga, s); })();
</script> </head>
<body><div id="menu">
<ul><li><a href="index.htm" accesskey="1" title="Home">HOME</a></li>
<li><a href="http://marinestudios.com/notes/">Notes/New</a></li>
<li><a href="webDesign.htm">Webs/Blogs</a></li>
<li><a href="testimonials.html">Testimonials</a></li>
<li><a href="resume.htm">About</a></li></ul></div>
<!-- end #menu -->
<div id="header"><h2>MarinEStudios: a small house of publishing</h2></div>
<!-- end #header -->
<div id="wrapper"><div id="content"><div id="posts">
<div class="post"><h2 class="title"><!-- InstanceBeginEditable name="subject" -->Welcome to MarinEStudios<!-- InstanceEndEditable --></h2>
<div class="story"><!-- InstanceBeginEditable name="copy" -->We develop Web sites and Blogs for a variety of clients (see list left) with a focus on content
development. Content is King: It is what determines your position on the search engines.

We are also world travellers: Our newest images and stories from our <a href="http://www.tkqlhce.com/click-4307136-8331182" target="_blank"
onmouseover="window.status='http://www.cruisedirect.com';return true;" onmouseout="window.status='';return true;">Last Minute Cruise</a> aboard the Caribbean Princess following Hurricane Thomas
around the Caribbean are at <a href="http://www.internationalharbors.com">InternationalHarbors</a>. The site also has images of Hawaii at Christmas, the
Mayan Riviera in Mexico, France, Italy, Greece and Turkey.
<!-- InstanceEndEditable --></div></div>
<div class="post"><h2 class="title"><!-- InstanceBeginEditable name="subject2" -->Our time and proceeds support . . .<!-- InstanceEndEditable --></h2>
<div class="story"><!-- InstanceBeginEditable name="copy2" -->
<p><a href="http://www.maritimheritage.org">&deg; Family, friends, associates and</a></p>
<blockquote><p><a href="http://www.maritimheritage.org">The Maritime Heritage Project,</a> a fourteen-year-old internationally renowned
California non-profit corporation dedicated to preserving West Coast shipping history. The Project focus is on ships, captains, passengers, and merchandise
arriving in San Francisco during the mid-to-late 1800s.

<a href="http://www.amazonanimalorphanage.org">The Amazon Animal Orphanage</a> in Iquitos, Peru is an official &quot;Centre of
Custody&quot; for abandoned and sometimes endangered animals. </p>
<p>It was established by Gudrun Sperrer who also operates Pilpintuwasi Butterfly Farm. The Orphanage developed by &quot;default.&quot; Gudrun initially
wanted to show the lifecycle of butterflies. Tourists and visitors began bringing abandoned and injured animals to the Butterfly Farm, starting with Pedro Bello,
the Jaguar above. Now Gudrun has one of the most amazing orphanages imaginable . . . with owl monkeys, marmosets, red Uacaries, capuchins, howler monkeys,
anteaters (who have beautiful fur). . . Please stop by the site and please support endangered animals!</p>
</blockquote>
<!-- InstanceEndEditable --> </div></div></div>
<!-- end #posts -->
<div id="links"><ul><li>
<h2><script type="text/javascript">document.write(TODAY);</script></h2></li>
<li><a href="mailto:Dianne@MarineStudios.com">Inquiries:<br />Dianne@MarineStudios.com</a><br /></li>
<li><h2>Projects</h2></li>
<ul><li><a href="http://www.amazonanimalorphanage.org" style="text-decoration:none" target="_blank" title="Amazon Animal Orphanage.">Amazon
Animal Orphanage</a></li>
<li><a href="http://www.ecrest.net" style="text-decoration:none" target="_blank" title="eCrest.">eCrest.net</a></li>
<li><a href="dennycreative.com" style="text-decoration:none" target="_blank" title="Denny Creative at EDAC.">Denny Creative</a></li>
<li><a href="http://www.hartwellgroup.com" style="text-decoration:none" target="_blank" title="Hartwell Executive Search.">Hartwell Group</a></li>
<li><a href="http://www.hewettlandscaping.com" style="text-decoration:none" target="_blank" title="Landscaping Marin County.">Hewett's
Landscaping</a></li>
<li><a href="http://www.internationalharbors.com" style="text-decoration:none" target="_blank" title="International travel stories.">International
Harbors</a></li>
<li><a href="http://www.joancollettbrown.com" style="text-decoration:none" target="_blank" title="Oil paintings.">Joan Collett Brown</a></li>
<li><a href="http://www.MarinFamilyAction.org" style="text-decoration:none" target="_blank" title="Marin non profit.">Marin Family Action</a></li>
<li><a href="http://www.MaritimeHeritage.org" style="text-decoration:none" target="_blank" title="1800s family history.">Maritime Heritage
Project</a></li>
<li><a href="http://www.millvalleyservices.com" style="text-decoration:none" target="_blank" title="Marin printing services.">Mill Valley Printing</a></li>
```

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```
<li><a href="http://www.paulmchugh.net" style="text-decoration:none" target="_blank" title="California author.">Paul McHugh, Writer</a></li>
<li><a href="http://www.prisillaroyal.com" style="text-decoration:none" target="_blank" title="California mystery writer.">Priscilla Royal, Author</a></li>
<li><a href="http://www.ProsperInPajamas.com" style="text-decoration:none" target="_blank" title="Life your way.">Prosper In Pajamas</a></li>
<li><a href="http://www.saylorsrestaurantandbar.com" style="text-decoration:none" target="_blank" title="Marin Mexican Restaurant.">Saylors Restaurant
&amp; Bar</a></li>
<li><a href="http://www.simoninsurance.net" style="text-decoration:none" target="_blank" title="Marin insurance services.">Simon Insurance</a></li>
<li><a href="http://www.susanadams.us" style="text-decoration:none" target="_blank" title="Marin Supervisor Adams.">Supervisor Susan Adams</a></li>
<li><a href="http://www.sweetwaterspectrum.org" style="text-decoration:none" target="_blank" title="Sweetwater Spectrum.">Sweetwater
Spectrum</a></li>
<li><a href="http://www.indian-circle.org" style="text-decoration:none" target="_blank" title="Indian Circle.">Three Nations Indian Circle</a></li>
<li><a href="http://www.SusanAdams.us" style="text-decoration:none" target="_blank">Supervisor Susan Adams</a></li>
<li><a href="http://www.VisualSheArt.com" style="text-decoration:none" target="_blank" title="Marin County artist.">Visual She Art</a></li>
<li><a href="http://www.voteondesalination.org" sstyle="text-decoration:none" target="_blank" title="No on Desalination.">Vote (No) on
Desalination</a></li>
<li><a href="http://www.VoteForFernandez.com" style="text-decoration:none" target="_blank" title="Manny for Novato City Council.">Vote For Manny
Fernandez</a></li>
<li><a href="http://www.WeClean123.com" style="text-decoration:none" target="_blank" title="Marin janitorial service.">We Clean 123</a></li>
<li><a href="http://www.WisdomToChange.com" style="text-decoration:none" target="_blank" title="Change is necessary.">Wisdom To
Change</a></li></ul>
<h2><a href="photography.htm" style="text-decoration:none" target="_blank" title="MarinEStudios photography.">Photography</a></h2><br />
<h2><a href="illustration.html" style="text-decoration:none" target="_blank" title="MarinEStudios illustrations.">Illustrations</a></h2>
<ul><li><div align="center"><!-- InstanceBeginEditable name="Offer1" -->Register Your Own Name!<br />
Try the newest ".co"<br />
<a href="http://www.anrdoezrs.net/click-2581703-10379071" target="_top"> </a><!-- InstanceEndEditable --></div></li></ul>
<!-- InstanceBeginEditable name="Offer2" -->
<li> If you decide to build and/or maintain your own Web sites or blogs, you will need to know basic HTML at least. <a href="http://click.linksynergy.com/fs-
bin/click?id=RtNTyOgZM74&offerid=145244.10000064&type=3&subid=0" target="_blank" >PeachPit Guides</a> are invaluable for learning and keeping up to
date.
<div align="center"><a href="http://click.linksynergy.com/fs-bin/click?id=RtNTyOgZM74&offerid=145244.10000118&subid=0&type=4"
target="_blank"></a></div></li>
<!-- InstanceEndEditable -->
<li><div align="center"></div></li>
<!-- InstanceBeginEditable name="quotes" --><li></li></li></li>
<!-- InstanceEndEditable --></ul>
</div><!-- end #links -->
<div style="clear: both;">&nbsp;</div> </div></div>
<!-- end #content --><div id="footer">
<p id="legal"> Copyright &copy; 2002-2011. All Rights Reserved.<br />
MarinEStudios. D.A. Levy, Proprietor<br /> eMail: <a href="mailto:Dianne@MarineStudios.com">Dianne @ MarinEStudios.com</a></p></div>
<!-- end #footer -->
</body><!-- InstanceEnd --></html>
```

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*After reviewing considerations, please fill out the attached so we can develop a plan and budget for you.*

*Note: This will soon be an online form that you can fill it and eMail to us. Thank you.*

First Name	
Last Name	
Company Name	
Company Address/Suite	
City/State/	
Zip Code	
Phone	
eMail	
Your Company Name	
Do you have a logo? Will you supply art or need graphic design? Will you supply images/graphics/photos. Formats: gif, jpg, pdf, other.	
Have you registered your Website name? (Extremely important before proceeding with collateral materials)	
Do you have an existing Website? If yes, do you know the site's host?	
Do you have a tagline? If so, what it is?	
What is your business, service, mission	
What is the purpose of your Website? What do you intend to accomplish with it?	
What are the objectives of developing/redesigning your Website?	
Who is your target audience: Age, interests, gender, locality, education	
Who is your competition? (List some of your competitor's websites.)	
Sites you like. Why?	
Sites you dislike. Why?	
What should visitors expect to find on your site?	
Content management (CMS)/Interactive? Will you have frequent updates? Do you have staff for the updates?	
List development: Online opt-in forms (via social networking: Twitter, facebook, LinkedIn	

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### YOUR WEB SITE PAGES

Considerations: Home, About, Contact, Personnel, Bios, Service/Products, Event Calendar, Photos (gallery or slide show?), eMail capture, Guestbook, Site search, audio, video (You Tube), membership, testimonials/quotes, membership, other, eStore (online shopping center)

Home Page Recommendations: Logo, links to other pages, content development (SEO), introduction, products/services, images, new (or link to Blog for News), location/contact info anchoring page (anchoring every page). Other pages:

1. About: Include background (history), staff bios/photos
2. Services/Products: Depends on your business: images, lists, products, form(s)
3. Contact: List principals, others, phone/eMail/forms (for questions)
4. Testimonials (Extremely important and it helps with search-engine ranking)
5. Press/News
6. Other

### YOUR COMPANY: Circle all that apply

Image: Color combinations, corporate, expensive, affordable, professional, creative, industry leader, other

Style: Traditional, contemporary, cutting edge, formal, casual, other

Mood: Serene, spiritual, powerful, cool, conservative, artistic, playful, authoritative, historical, festive, fun (for children), ethnic, simple, serious, friendly, other

### CONTENT STRATEGY/DEVELOPMENT/MARKETING

Content Development/SEO: These are often dealt with separately, but we combine them. SEO (search engine optimization) is a fancy phrase directly related to the words on your site.

Blogs/Blogging: Nothing increases your visibility more than a blog which, again, relates to content. All major search engines feed on content and blogs are content. We can train your staff or our writers will blog on a routine basis for a fixed fee depending on your needs.

Social Networking: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube: Establish and maintain presence.