

A short paper on steps of designing an appropriate websiteMasoud Nosrati ^{*1}, Ronak Karimi ², Hamed Nosrati ³, Ali Nosrati ⁴^{1,2} Young Researchers Club, Kermanshah Branch, Islamic Azad University, Kermanshah, Iran.^{3,4} Islamic Azad University, Kermanshah Branch, Kermanshah, Iran.minibigs_m@yahoo.co.uk

Abstract: In the modern world that the lives are going to have an online aspect in addition to traditional life, having suitable websites for different purposes plays a big role in social communications. High quality communication is the product of good interaction, and a good online interaction is the product of a good website.

In this paper, we want to introduce some basic steps that can help to provide a guideline for designing a suitable website. We have tried to cover both technical and psychological aspects of a website. These steps are divided into 3 parts: pre-design, design, and post-design steps. Each one of them is consist of some steps that are described in details through the paper.

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1. Introduction

Nowadays, World Wide Web (www) plays a definite role in the human societies. Almost all the social relationships are going to have an online aspect in addition to traditional aspects. In this world having a suitable website helps to make high quality relationships and get a social higher level. But a major question witch may be asked is that "What are the steps of designing a suitable website?"

In this paper, we are going to answer this question in technical way. Here we are focus on the performance of the website. And we are not going to over talk on some common aspects such as: beauty, attraction, regularity, complexion, easy working, etc [1].

In the second section, we will get into the steps of designing a good website and each step will be described in details.

2. Steps of design

In general, we categorize the steps of a website design to the following sections. Then, we will investigate them:

Pre-design phase:

- Specifying the goals
- Collecting information about users and their needs
- Organizing the information
- Modeling

Design phase:

- Designing the interface
- Providing the contents
- Testing the website
- Publishing

Post-design phase:

- Supporting and maintenance

2.1 Specifying the goals

Before you start to work, you need to pay attention to an important point that is the goals of the website. Each website has a general purpose and may include some implicit goals, too. Specifying these goals help you to distinguish the way of design.

For example, a big e-shop website may include some goals such as: contributing, delivering, selling, etc. Knowing these goals helps to designer to consider different separated functions for doing each one. It may lead to scheme the website to some micro-sites that work together to obviate these needs. Also, it simplifies the general purpose of website and avoids the designer to face with complex relationships between different parts of website [2].

2.2 Collecting information about users and their needs

As the second step, you have to know that who your audiences are. Having some general information about users' community such as: age, gender, education, taste, needs, etc. can help you to provide more suitable contents.

Another important point is about hardware and user equipments. You have to determine the type of user hardware, in order to adapt the created website to it, and avoid placing some contents that user can't be able to use [3].

2.3 Organizing the information

The purpose of organizing information is to deliver the proper information to corresponding user.

There are some methods to do this. For example we can point out the following ones:

- *Tree structured information:* Using this kind of structure provides access levels for achieving information. It can be used for organic and multilevel user sites.
- *Pure linear structured:* In this type, pages that include information are in a sequential order and placed one after another. They show all of information to all of users in a sequential way.
- *Linear structured with alternatives:* In this type, user can select the path of movements between information by answering YES or NO to asked questions. This type can be used for some special parts of websites or for risk management systems.
- *Complex structured:* Combination of the above structures makes a complex structured information system. Almost all of big sites use this kind of structure.

2.4 Modeling

One of the important parts of website designing is modeling. It means that before you start to work by your computer, draw a model of website on the paper (or by drawing tools on the computer). It helps you to know what material you want to place in the pages and what kinds of information should be displayed. Also, location of each item will be set. This step gives you some ideas about interface of website, because you are not facing with computer limitations in this phase [4] [7].

2.5 Designing the interface

After drawing the model on the paper and making decision about the page style and contents, it is time of beginning to implementation. During the previous steps, you decided what you want to create and specified the characteristics of your website. Now, you have to make it. This step needs to your sufficient technical information and experience.

Remember that use optimized codes as much as possible to decrease the computing complexity. Speed is very important, and fast interfaces are very pleasant to users. Also, showing suitable help messages in appropriate locations of page can motivate users not to close your website in the browser, and return for other times [5].

2.6 Providing the contents

Providing information is the most important part of the website design. It should be tried to organize the information in the best way. Due to this, optimization and categorizing are some useful techniques that can help to provide a suitable content

[6].

Generally, it should be tried to deliver the best content to user in the easiest way. Content should be in a suitable meaningful form so that the meaning can be easily received by the user. It should convey the concepts in the best form [7].

2.7 Testing the website

When you create a website, you have to be aware of its performance. Function of websites in the real world uses should be evaluated before publishing.

As the basic testing, you can check out all the links in the pages. Also, multimedia contents should be covered.

Another important point is the various platforms that users have. One step of testing is to check the website on different web browsers. Website should be designed so that has a similar output on the different platforms and browsers. Always consider the most common browsers like Internet Explorer, Firefox and Opera. Your website should have similar results on all of them.

Other important point is considering the network traffic. It should be tried to use optimized techniques that high traffic of website doesn't defect on the performance [8]. Heavy traffic causes reducing the speed of website and also it may crash.

2.8 Publishing

Previous steps give some guidelines to create a proper website with a suitable interface and good performance. After creating the pages, it is time to publish the website in the internet. An important point which should not be neglected is that you should choose an appropriate host and domain. Your host must support the traffic of your site and it must provide a sufficient bandwidth. Host should be always on and never off. Interruption in servicing is not pleasant to users. Also, the domain that you choose should be related to the name and title of website. It has to be short and easy to remember as much as possible.

2.9 Supporting and maintenance

Supporting is the important post-creating activity that is done by designer. Each website needs to be refreshed from time to time. It is very important to update the content and improve the positive features of website. The purpose is to avoid losing audiences, because users like diversity.

Don't forget that a website is like a plant that grows and goes up everyday, and you have to look after it, in order to have the best fruits [9] [10].

3. Conclusion

In this paper, we talked about basic steps for designing a good website. Due to this, we divided these steps to three parts: pre-design, design, and post-design steps. Then described all of them and told our reasons and advices on each one. The steps including: specifying the goals, collecting information about users and their needs, organizing the information, modeling, designing the interface, providing the contents, testing the website, publishing and supporting and maintenance, were described in details during the second section of the paper.

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