

NEW WEB SITE CREATION GUIDELINES

October 16, 2008

STEPS TO CREATING A NEW SITE

It is vital that your new site is organized and meets the needs of your users. Carefully consider your goals and objectives for the site and keep them in mind as you plan your site. The director of communication, IT director and Webmaster are available for consultation on any of the steps below.

1. **Determine your goals and objectives for the site.** Why do you want/need a site and what do you hope to accomplish with it?
2. **Determine your commitment.** The College of Education has limited web resources and is responsible for maintaining college-level sites. How much time and (potentially) money are you willing to put into your site? Do you have a graduate assistant that can maintain the site? You are responsible for maintaining your site. Remember, the content you put on the site needs to remain current and accurate and that takes time for someone to do it.
3. **Determine your audience.** Do you want to reach people within the university, people outside the university, prospective students, undergraduates, graduate students, international students, staff, alumni, business partners, etc.?
4. **Contact the director of communication and the IT director, to request help creating a new site.** Bring the above information so it can be determined if the College of Education can develop the site or if it needs to be outsourced.
5. **Develop a site map.** This is what will be used to create your navigation bar. Visitors need to be able to easily navigate your site and locate information.
 - a. Organize “chunks” of information, i.e. about, people, engagement, resources, contact, etc. Take a look at the navigation bar on www.purdue.edu. You don’t find “art education” or “football tickets”—instead you find “academics” and “athletics.”
 - b. Prepare a site map with site map creation software or in an outline format.
6. **Collect content for your pages.** Pull together content for each of the pages on your site. Collect content you already have or draft new where necessary. Keep in mind that the attention span of site visitors is very short—be concise. As a general rule, Web writing should be about half the length of a paper equivalent. Group information in paragraphs or lists to make the page ‘scannable.’ If you have particular images you’d like to include, gather those also.
7. **Work with developers to create the site.**
8. **Maintain the site.** This goes back to #2—how much time can you or an assistant invest in maintaining the site? You’ll need to ensure that all pages of your site remain current and accurate. This can become quite a challenge if you’ve created a vast Website.

WHO CREATES THE SITE?

One thing to keep in mind when requesting a new site—the College of Education has a half-time webmaster and only one third of the communication director’s job is to work on Web projects. As you can see, our in house resources are a bit limited. The good news is there are plenty of other options.

The College of Education can help create a new site when:

- The site is a top-level, college-wide initiative or program.
- It is for a College of Education center such as GERI or CLEAR.
- A directive is delivered from the dean.

Note: While we can help create sites as noted above, you will be responsible for the steps outlined on the previous page (creating a site map, collecting content, maintaining the site, etc.).

A site will need to be outsourced when:

- It is for a funded project.
- It is for classroom use.

OUTSOURCING YOUR SITE

Purdue Marketing Communications

PMC is the College of Education’s preferred option if you need to outsource your site. They will develop and create sites within the Purdue style guidelines. In other words, they’ll create a site that looks and feels like other Purdue sites. This may be an important factor to consider. Due to the nature of your project or research, you may want to ensure that visitors know this is a Purdue-related website.

- [Contact PMC](#) for more information

Download the templates from PMC

PMC provides templates for our content management system. If you or an assistant is a bit tech savvy, you may be able to create the site yourself.

See the templates here:

- <http://www.purdue.edu/globals/blog/>

Web-based site creation

A quick search on the web will return thousands of resources for creating a site yourself. While many of these are certainly user-friendly and even free, be sure to thoroughly investigate these options before selecting one. Security and support are two important considerations.

Selected site creation tools:

- www.homestead.com
- www.weebly.com
- www.godaddy.com

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?

College of Education

With our limited resources within the college, turnaround time on a new site can be a bit long. Depending on current projects, a simple (5-7 pages) site can take up to 8-10 weeks to develop. While the actual creation of your site may not necessarily take a long time, fitting the job into the lengthy Web queue is the trick.

Purdue Marketing Communications

The current schedule at the time of the request will determine the turnaround time. I worked with PMC to create a site over the summer and was quite pleased with their service and turnaround time. Contact them directly for more information.

ITaP SHAREPOINT IS AN OPTION

If you need space where you can work collaboratively and share documents, ITaP SharePoint is a good resource for that. SharePoint is a browser-based tool that provides you the ability to upload documents, create wikis and blogs, and outline task lists and discussion panes. Contact Bob Evans at bob@purdue.edu for details. He'll put you in touch with the ITaP SharePoint people. There is a one-time set up fee and a nominal charge for each gigabyte of space needed.

QUESTIONS

1. For help with planning and design/layout guidelines:

Tonya Agnew, Director of Communications
tragnew@purdue.edu

2. For help with server and URL questions:

Bob Evans, Director of IT
bob@purdue.edu

3. For help with CMS questions:

Teja Josyula, Webmaster (until mid-December)
atjosyul@purdue.edu