



Intermediate: Building a Website (2)

Before creating a website, you should formulate a plan:

- Define the objectives of the website
- Formulate ideas and content
- Determine where to obtain content and materials
- Decide on structure
- Consider the links between pages

Objectives

Why do you want a website? What is its purpose? Who is it aimed at and where are you going to publish it? Is it simply a reference point for information, or is it intended for passing documents between colleagues in your community group, or to market or sell some of your services?

Ideas and Content

Some ideas to get you started are:

- What sort of image is to be portrayed?
- Is there a logo to be used and does the organisation associate itself with a particular colour scheme?
- Does the organisation have details about its objectives, its structure or its history?
- What literature is already available for use as content?
- Do you have any interesting clients? Are there any testimonials or case studies that could be used?
- What pictures or graphics are already available? Do you have anyone able to create images for you or are there any photos you have that could be scanned and made electronic?
- Is feedback required from the website? If so, in what format? For example signing a guest book, send an email, request further information, order a product etc.
- Provide contact names, addresses, telephone & fax numbers, email addresses and location details such as a map.
- What sort of questions do visitors want answered? FAQs?

Website Structure

As you gather ideas and content, you will find that for any sizeable website, material will fall into groups. For example, if you were putting together a website for a school, the groups could be divided into subject areas or into years. Material could be for pupils, for teachers and for parents. Think of the different subject areas as folders, as you would have in a filing cabinet. This is the type of structure you need to create for your website.

It is also a good idea for all images to be placed in an **images** folder. This separates them from the main web pages and makes it easier to refer to graphic files in more than one place. The graphics can then be used on more than one page easily. You will want to make your logo a certain size to fit in with the design of your page.

As your ideas and the structure of your website increase, you should probably work towards having at least 10 pages on your website. Smaller than this and a site hardly becomes worth visiting. You should draft out a web sitemap showing the structure of how you intend to build your site, its folders, its page topics and its images. Make a list of the images you require, for example:

- Those that are already available, e.g., your organisation's logo
- Those that you need to take a picture of or free online clipart

Links Between Pages

Through your web sitemap you can determine the links you require:

1. **Links within the same page** - these help you to break your web page into sections.
2. **Links to other pages within the same website** - these help your user navigate their way around your website.
3. **Links to other websites** - these are normally websites with related information or websites that you want to suggest your users look at.
4. **Links that give feedback** - these could be email addresses or submitting details on a form - e.g., an information request form or a book review or an event form.