

## Developing Your Website

### Writing Content and Structuring Pages

#### 1. Writing Content

While 90% of efforts on webpages go into design and programming, what you are actually saying is as important as how it looks. You could have a wonderfully designed site, but if it fails to provide the information your web visitor is looking for, you won't have achieved your aim and your visitor won't come back. So, how can you effectively write for the web?

#### Helpful Questions to Ask Yourself

*There are a number of questions you can ask to determine WHAT you write in your website:*

- What is the objective of each page on the site?
- Have I thought about it from my audience's point of view?
- What information are they looking for?
- Is there any information within the University of Adelaide website that I can link to that would help visitors of my webpage (such as calendars or maps)?
- Is there any other information on the Web that I can link to that would help visitors of my webpage (such as calendars or maps)?
- Have I duplicated any information that is already on the University of Adelaide website? Could I link to that instead?
- Have I checked for acronyms and that my audience understands what the terms mean? Have I included the full term the first time the acronym is used?
- Have I answered the questions that a visitor may have?
- Have I given people a contact point or something to do now?
- Who within the area will be responsible for responding to emails?
- Have I had someone proof-read my copy and do they understand it?
- Have I included enough keywords in the body text so search engines can find my page?
- Have I made a diary note to update this information or remove it if it becomes obsolete?
- Is the language I have used appropriate and easily understood by my audience?
- If I am linking to external sources, are they up-to-date? Are they appropriate?

#### 2. Structuring Pages

Structuring a website properly is critical. A high part of the usability of your site is made up of the ease in which people can find the information they are looking for. If you've hidden this content in a place that is hard for them to find, your website would have missed its mark completely.

*The following seven steps can help you to structure an easy-to-navigate, integrated site.*

<b>Step One</b>	Work out the objectives of your site. Why are you building a website?
<b>Step Two</b>	Determine who will be your visitors. Make a list of the types of groups who will visit your site - students, potential students, other universities, researchers, alumni.
<b>Step Three</b>	Ask two questions - what do these groups want from my site and what do they want to do? <b>a.</b> If possible, try to think like a visitor and keep focussed on what your target audience wants from your site. This is very important, as too many sites are too inward-looking and, in turn, provide visitors with what the organisation <i>thinks</i> they want, rather than what they <i>actually</i> want. <b>b.</b> If you find that you have several audiences, you may need to offer different paths through the site to help each group find what it needs.
<b>Step Four</b>	You can now develop a menu system, using the information you currently have on hand. <b>a.</b> The objectives of your site. <b>b.</b> The information these groups want from your site and what they want to do. Because visitors to your website want information, the site's purpose should be immediately obvious and the site should be easy to navigate. Great content is no use if people can't find it.

<b>Step Five</b>	Now organise these elements into a logical structure. You may find that developing a flowchart is a good way to visualise the site as you are mapping it out. You can also see how some sections need to follow others within your site.
<b>Step Six</b>	The major navigation elements of the website should now be obvious. For example, you've probably identified which sections of the site should be accessible from every page.
<b>Step Seven</b>	Try to structure your site's pages so that each page doesn't either scroll on for a number of pages or only have one or two paragraphs. If you do have a page that requires a lot of scrolling, break it up into pages of four or five paragraphs or edit it. If you have a page that only says one or two lines, then incorporate it into another page.