

Guidelines for W^3 Projects

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Introduction

These guidelines are devised to help our clients receive reliable and maintainable information products on the first go-round—and to clarify any potential complications or exceptions in advance. Unless otherwise agreed in writing, all work performed for the Inter@ctivate Consulting Group is work-for-hire. In three brief sections, these guidelines address Design, Content & Programming, and Hosting & Administration. The goals can be summarized as follows:

1. *Help our client maintain consistent style as their site evolves or changes hands.*
2. *Allow the widest possible audience to access our client's information service with a minimum of technical interference.*
3. *Serve our client's information to the Internet-at-large in a reliable, measurable, and modifiable configuration.*

1 Design

GOAL *Help our client maintain consistent style as their site evolves or changes hands.*

Style Guide The designer should provide a brief *style guide*. This guide may be written,

a visual example, templates, whatever is appropriate to communicate the designer's advice and suggestions for evolving the project in the spirit of the original design.

2 Content & Programming

GOAL *Allow the widest possible audience to access our client's information service with a minimum of technical interference.*

Usability and Browser Independence

- Accurate and verifiably correct HTML syntax
- Usable from one-year-old public-domain web browser without additional plug-ins or configuration.
- Pages or screens in the content collection should render across a low-bandwidth Internet connection in 15 seconds or less.
- Accessible to a lowest-common-denominator user, surfing from a 14", 256-color, 640x480 monitor, wired by a 28.8 modem and a one-year-old web browser.

Server-Independence

- Relative URLs are used in place of absolute URLs.
- Server-side includes, if used, should be based on the original NCSA SSI specification.
- Lower-case, space-‘ ’-free *naming scheme* for directories and files.
- Data not maintained in a SQL database should be stored in plain-text files, delimited by a combination of commas and quotes.

Delivery

- Content should be committed directly to the appropriate CVS module in the ICG repository, or delivered in a single, self-contained, platform-independent archive file, such as tar/zip or info-zip.
- Documentation: include a brief write-up clarifying location of key data files, foreseeable maintenance issues, and other care-and-feeding considerations.

Recommended

- Deliver *tested* content. A variety of tools are available to test hypermedia content.
- Manage content changes with a platform-independent, public-domain *version control* system such as the GNU Revision Control System (RCS) or Concurrent Versions System (CVS). The ICG system is documented: <http://interactivate.com/public/cvswebsites/>

3 Hosting & Administration

GOAL *Serve our client's information to the Internet-at-large in a reliable, measurable, and modifiable configuration.*

Access logs provide direct access to raw logs for all information you serve for our client. Updated daily and retained for at least one month.

Account access provide remote access to the virtual-homed service account(s) via SSH and FTP, with other protocols negotiable.

Backup our client's content daily, retain it for 12 months. Our client will pay for any restores that they initiate.