

## MCIT New Website Developer Guide

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At MCIT, website development involves various departments and we work in a collaborative fashion to provide our clients with the best web solutions to meet the client's objectives. In order to insure this quality, MCIT developers follow a specific process when developing websites. As a new MCIT developer, you are expected to follow the process and be competent in the terms and technologies required for creating effective web solutions.

### Resources for new MCIT developers

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#### Read and Research about Website Planning

##### RESEARCH

1. Make sure to read all the information regarding the content and purpose of the website.
2. Scan the overall process of web development at [Web Style Guide Online](#).
3. Read the specific section from Web Style Guide Online about [types of planning diagrams](#).
4. Research information via internet search about conceptual website maps.
5. Research information via internet search about wireframe diagrams for web design.

##### PRACTICE:

6. Review the structure of two different types of websites and for each one:
  - 6.1. Sketch a wireframe diagram of the main page.
  - 6.2. Sketch a conceptual website map.
    - 6.2.1. View a video on how Visio can [analyze an existing site](#). Note: this video uses Visio 2007.
  - 6.3. Share your diagram and website map sketches with a team member.
  - 6.4. Provide constructive feedback.

##### TASK

7. Identify the pages of your website content by "[chunking](#)" the [content](#). (Note: read both hyperlink sources)
  - 7.1. List the pages needed using clear and meaningful file names.
  - 7.2. Identify and list any other content needed such as images or external links.
8. Read the [file structure section](#) at Web Style Guide Online
9. Create handwritten sketches for your site (wireframe diagram, conceptual website map, and file structure diagram).

## Learn the basics of diagramming with Microsoft Visio

1. Learn about using Microsoft Visio for creating website maps and wireframe diagrams.
  - 1.1. View the [Getting started with Visio 2010](#) video.
  - 1.2. Read the [Beginner's Guide to Visio](#).
  - 1.3. Review [Student Conceptual Website Map Tutorial](#)
  - 1.4. Review Visio Online Help for tips on using [connection points](#), ways to [save a file](#), and lots more.
2. Create a Visio file containing a wireframe diagram for your page layout and a conceptual website map, and file structure diagram.

## Review MCIT's best practices of web development

### USABILITY SUGGESTIONS:

#### USABILITY STANDARDS FOR WEB SITE APPLICATIONS:

Usability-how easy it is to use a web site

- Users want quick access to information
- Users want easy-to-understand navigation
- Users scan web pages (vs. reading every word).
- Users don't like to scroll to find information.
- Users are anxious to click to get what they want.
- Users want easy ways to get back to more choices when they explore links.

### CONTENT SUGGESTIONS:

#### HEADER CONVENTIONS:

- Headers include a logo, tag line, navigational bar, utilities, and unique site components
- Tag lines identify a unique identifier for the site
- Navigational bar provides links that divide the site into sections
- Utilities consist of links to useful but not primary information (about us, contact us, etc.)
- Unique site requirements (search box, shopping cart, etc.)
- Keep the header area relatively small
- Give the most important components primary locations

#### NAVIGATION/LINK CONVENTIONS:

- Underlined text must always be a link. Do not use underline for emphasis.
- Images close to short text phrases are generally linked (clickable)
- Small symbols (icons) in front of a text phrase are generally linked (clickable)
- Icons should only be used as navigation if they are universally recognizable
- Clickable buttons should look like they are 3D
- Short text phrases in columns are clickable

- If you click the logo in the header, you to the home page
- Let the users know where they are
  - Highlight the active links
  - The heading for the page should be the same as the link that led to the page
  - Provide breadcrumbs in this format: Homepage > Products > Outdoor > Grills

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#### CONTENT PAGE CONVENTIONS:

- Give the most important components the primary location
- Prioritize the components for each page
- Keep header area relatively small so more page content is visible without scrolling
- Chunk long pages into grouping content into separate web pages, tabs, or accordion containers
- Use effective writing for the web
  - Use fewer words
  - Use headings and subheadings to identify portions of the text
  - Use bulleted and numbered lists
  - Use tables for tabular information
  - Avoid all caps unless required by an acronym or other conventions
  - Avoid paragraphs with more than 5 lines.
  - No line of text should be more than about 600 pixels wide
  - Make the text large enough to read (11px Arial; 12px Verdana), but not so big that you scroll to read
  - Increase the line spacing (leading) to improve readability.
  - Never use more than one exclamation point!
  - Use a spell checker
  - Use contrasting colors or simple backgrounds to make your text easy to read.
  - Keep paragraph text left-aligned (avoid centering and justifying paragraph text)
  - Use a sans-serif font
- Use effective graphic design
  - Alignment: related items should line up
  - Proximity: related items are close
  - Repetition: for continuity
  - Contrast: makes site elements stand out
  - White Space: helps to guide the eye

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#### FOOTER CONVENTIONS:

- Copyright information
- a repeat of important page links
- auxiliary information or additional site features
- a “last modified” date

## CODING SUGGESTIONS:

- Always Declare a Doctype
  - Use Meaningful Title Tags
  - Use Descriptive Meta Tags
  - Use semantic tags (header, nav, section, article, aside, footer) and/or Div tags with descriptive IDs to Divide Your Layout into Major areas
  - Separate Content from Presentation
  - Generally design elements should be in the style sheet
  - Use Modernizr for cross-browser compatibility
  - Use Heading Elements Wisely
  - Use the correct HTML Element at the correct Place
  - Don't Use Divs for Everything
  - Use an Unordered List (<ul>) for Navigation
  - Close Your Tags
  - Use Lower Case Markup
  - Use Alt Attributes with Images
  - Use Title Attributes with Links (When Needed)
  - Use Fieldset and Labels in Web Forms
  - Validate Your Code
  - Write Consistently Formatted Code
  - Avoid Excessive Comments
  - Follow best practices of html and css
- Review useful best practice advice from <http://www.slideshare.net/hoctudau/html-css-bestpractices-5865752>

Adapted from [Six Revisions website](#)

## Review the basics of creating web pages using HTML and CSS

1. View the "[How to Create HTML Files](#)" video.
2. Read and practice with basic HTML5 tags at [w3Schools.com](http://w3schools.com) .
3. Try the w3Schools.com 20-question [HTML quiz](#) at and the [HTML5 quiz](#)
  - 3.1. Check your answers and review the questions marked incorrect by using the w3schools topic related to the missed question.
4. Watch the "[Applying Style Sheets](#)" video.
5. Search for other HTML and CSS basics videos and instructional websites and watch and read more about HTML/CSS.

## MCIT Recommended Plugins for NotePad++

For maximum productivity, the following NotePad plugins are recommended for MCIT web developers. Be sure to install them. Learn about their use to take advantage of their usefulness.

- Explorer
- HTML Tag
- ImgTag
- NppExport (optional)
- NppFTP (optional)
- Plugin Manager
- Spell-Checker
- TextFX Characters
- WebEdit

