



Introduction

This article walks you through the process of discovering and defining what your website needs to deliver, what content you'll need to create and how to prioritise it.

Job Description

Imagine your website as another person only your team and write a job description. Think about all the tasks and responsibilities it has. This information, combined with your mission statement, will give you a clear expectation for the site and help you define what your objectives are.

Your Mission Statement

A mission statement is a short explanation about why your organisation exists.

All successful companies have a crystal clear vision, they know what they want to achieve and they define this succinctly with their mission statement.

One way to think of this is: If you had to describe what your organisation does in less than 15 seconds, how would you do this?

Here are a few examples to get your creative juices flowing ...

Facebook: Connect with friends and the world around you on Facebook.

Microsoft (when it first started): A computer on every desk and in every home.

Alzheimer's Association: A world without Alzheimer's disease.

Your Website Objectives

What do you need your website to do? Think about all the things that could help you make more money, have a bigger impact, gain respect and raise awareness of you.

Make sure your objectives are fit to drive forward your mission statement. Objectives are a very important part of your strategy. They give you a focus for your content and user journeys, but they also give you the means to measure your effectiveness.

Typical objectives include:

- To increase ticket purchases and event attendance
- To raise awareness of our offering
- To gain newsletter subscribers
- To build our brand

Objectives are the things that will bring the most impact to your organisation.

Audiences

Who will be visiting your website? To deliver great content you'll first need to think of who it is you're hoping to reach.

To do this, it's a good idea to break your audiences down into groups like so:

- Potential funders
- Artists
- Parents
- Young people
- Etc

Once you know who it is you're trying to reach, it'll be easier to talk to them using the right kind of messaging and language.

Actions & Activities

Now you have defined who you are trying to reach, it's time to list everything you'd like them to see or do on your website.

Lets use the parents group as an example:

Families

- Watch a video
- Enrol my child onto a class
- Sign up for our newsletter
- Find our address
- Download resources
- Etc

Do this task for each audience group. Once you have all this information written down, you're starting to get a great picture of who is coming to your site and what you want them to do when they get there - great work!

Defining Pages & Priorities

Now it's time to go back to your goals. Think about these goals and put them in order of importance.

For example:

1. To increase ticket purchases and event attendance
2. To raise awareness of our offering
3. To gain newsletter subscribers
4. To build our brand

Now you know the goal and the priority of that goal, you can apply that information to the actions and activities audience group lists.

Give each action and activity numbers that relate to your aims and also start thinking of the page where that content could sit. For example:

Families

- Watch a video
Goals 2, 4, 1 - Home page, event page, about us page
- Enrol my child onto a class
Goal 1 - Events page
- Sign up for our newsletter
Goals 1, 2, 3 and 4 - Footer of all pages
- Find our address
No goals - Contact page
- Download resources
Goal 2, Parent resources page
- Etc

All this information gives you a great idea for the pages and content you'll need on your website and it will also give you a great idea of how to prioritise that content to make the user journeys simple and easy to follow.

You can also use the content map spreadsheet resource to help visualise this part of the plan.

Next steps:

Now you have a good understanding of the content you will need to create or adapt, the next step is to go through each of the site pages you have identified and make notes about what the content is for each one.

Some of the content will already exist, some will need to be created – if so who is responsible and what call to action or functionality will be needed for that page.

You can plot all of this out using the content map spreadsheet to create a plan following the lines of:

Page name: (name of the page)

Page content: (details of the content for that page)

Existing or new content to be created: (details of what needs to be edited or created)

Content notes / other related material: (suggest other content for visitor to look at / further reading / articles / event info / details of who is responsible for creating content / does the page need a call to action / sign up / buy ticket link etc)

Define how you will measure effectiveness: what actions and activities on this page can you use to measure effectiveness?

User Feedback Surveys

You'll now have enough information above to start creating a basic sitemap. If you are working with an agency, they should also be able to help you with this process.

With your live site, you're missing a trick if you stop thinking about your content.

The content on your site can always be improved. Sometimes it's as simple as moving some content further up the page so people don't miss it, or changing the wording of a Button.

The more you test, the better it will become. The best way to spot opportunities is user feedback, testing, search console and Analytics.

Here are some options you can check out for user feedback and site testing ...

Visitor feedback surveys

A pop up form to ask questions about experiences on the website. You can ask questions such as, what is the purpose of your visit? How did you find our website? Did you find what you were looking for today? You can trigger the form to pop up when people leave the site, visit a certain page or spend a certain amount of time on your site.

Example survey form providers:

- Survicate <https://survicate.com/>
- Surveymonkey <https://www.surveymonkey.com>
- Google forms Free tool <https://www.google.com/forms/about/>

Heatmap tools

These allow you to visualize how visitors act on a particular page on your website. This information helps you understand usability issues with your Website.

Example services include:

- Clarity from Microsoft - Free tool <https://clarity.microsoft.com/>
- Hotjar <https://www.hotjar.com>
- Free Hotjar account for non profits: <https://www.hotjar.com/nonprofit/>
- Crazy Egg <https://www.crazyegg.com/>
- ClickTale <https://www.clicktale.com/>