

# *Web Presence Strategies for Small Communities and Local Governments*

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## Background

Over the last two decades, the Information Technology revolution has touched all aspects of our lives. In doing so, our sense and definition of community has broadened beyond hometown sentiments and simple geographic boundaries. One aspect of the revolution, the dramatic rise of the Internet, has been well documented since its introduction to the general public in the mid-1990s (NTIA 1995, 2002; Horrigan 2009). This transformation has enhanced the ability of many communities to connect with people and information much more rapidly. For instance, the Internet's potential to add value to public sector services by increasing the availability of data and speeding feedback to and from constituents (Bauer et al. 2002). However, significant concerns have been raised about certain people and areas lagging behind others in participating in the digital economy and becoming part of the information revolution (Strover 2001; Lindroos and Pinkhosov 2003; Warren 2007). Generally speaking, such concerns have been raised in those communities that were relatively isolated (e.g. rural America). As evidence, rural areas are often found to lag their urban counterparts both in terms of Internet adoption rates and in the availability of broadband infrastructure (NTIA 1995; Malecki 2003; Whitacre and Mills 2007). In addition, the flow of information has arguably been unidirectional with rural areas serving as ready consumers of knowledge and services generated from outside their traditional community base.

While data on the exact number of small communities lacking websites or with underperforming websites is difficult to come by, there is some available information that points to the need for this type of Extension program. For instance, data collected by Connected Nation provide an interesting (and rare) look at the status of county websites in the state of Tennessee. As part of this study, county websites for all 95 counties (if they existed) were evaluated in categories such as general criteria, information dissemination, and interactive functions. Thirty-two of the ninety-five counties (34%) did not have a website at the time of analysis (mid 2008). Further, of the thirty-nine counties with population under 25,000, sixteen (41%) did not have a website. And finally, counties with populations under 50,000 had significantly lower scores for information dissemination and interactive functions than those with higher populations, suggesting that more rural counties struggle with both the technical knowledge and time / manpower requirements to create and maintain a fully functional county-level site. It should be noted that this analysis relates solely to the *counties* within Tennessee – there are undoubtedly smaller communities within each county that would benefit from educational programming on the procedure for setting up a website and what type of content should be included.

Other evidence also suggests that rural communities need Extension programming in developing public-use websites. The Kauffman Foundation's New Economy Index in 2008 included a category on e-government, where states were ranked on the use of information technology to deliver government services. The more rural states in the South, Midwest, and Mountain regions consistently ranked well below the national average in this category, leading Kauffman to suggest that "more populous states with bigger budgets tend to score higher" (Kauffman, 2008, p. 40).

From this perspective, small or rural communities are less likely to take advantage of having a web presence - due in part to lower levels of Internet expertise by their residents. Therefore, these communities are potentially the ones with the most to gain from establishing their own web presence, as they seek ways to use technology to increase the interconnectedness between local community members, government, business and educational institutions in addition to fostering linkages with non-locals – such as potential residents, tourists and businesses.

## Introduction

Every day, community organizations, government officials, business owners and education providers are faced with the challenge of connecting with their constituents and clientele. Perhaps you are thinking about developing or enhancing your community or institution's presence on the Internet but this may seem like an especially daunting task. The potential options are as wide ranging as the reasons or opportunities that might originate from such a venture. In rural America, community-level websites are often oriented towards economic development (especially industrial recruitment and tourism) or as a means of providing a general introduction to the community and/or its institutions for residents. Though these public and private entities typically have the best intentions, the process of creating a community-level website, if done poorly, can significantly affect content development/maintenance and therefore limit the site's usefulness and ability to attract visitors to the website.

This facilitator's guide is designed as a basic introduction to the development of community-based websites and an important resource for the facilitator as they work with the *Web Presence Strategies for Small Communities and Local Governments* curriculum. Whether your community is seeking to upgrade their existing presence on the World Wide Web or if you are discussing the concept for the very first time, this guide and the curriculum serves as a launching point to learn more about:

- Internet usage trends
- The process of developing a website on a community level
- Types of "community" websites
- Website
  - ownership and hosting
  - design
  - content
  - construction
- Marketing your community online effectively

In alignment with the curriculum, this facilitator’s guide covers the two main modules and the accompanying sections (workshops):

**Module 1: Developing Website Content for Small Communities**

*Section A: Introduction*

*Section B: Getting Started*

*Section C: Preparing Content*

**Module 2: Getting your Content on the Internet**

*Section A: Website Ownership and Hosting*

*Section B: Search Engine Optimization / Site Analysis*

*Section C: DIY Videos: Yahoo! SiteBuilder and Microsoft Office Live*

Ultimately, the goal of the curriculum and guide is to position a community for success as they develop web-based strategies for community and economic development. In support of this goal, we use a conceptual model that incorporates four fundamental elements (applications) of a community: government, business, education and community groups (Figure 1). Using the Venn diagram, it shows that each of these elements overlap with another, finally culminating in “Quality of Life” where all four overlap.

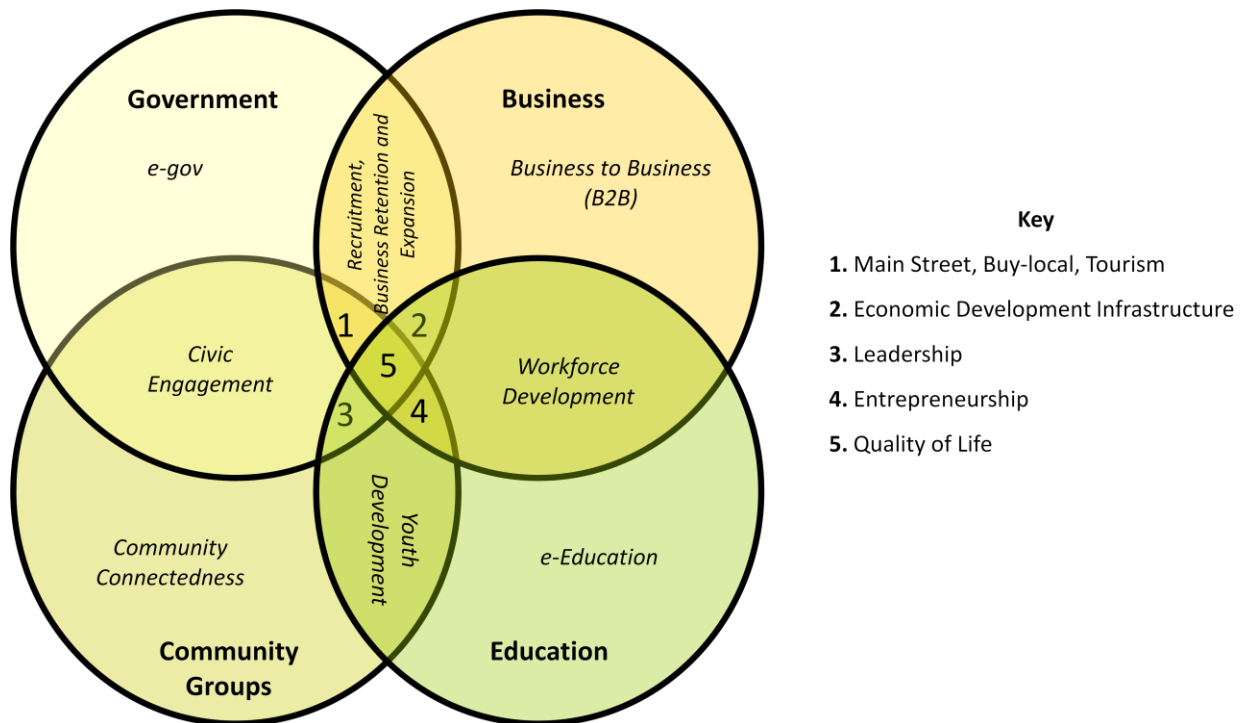


Figure 1: Foundations and applications for a community website

The categories identified in Figure 1 serve two purposes for the curriculum. First, they aid communities in identifying who the target audience(s) is (are) for the website and subsequently provokes their thinking about the needs of that (those) audience(s). After a general introduction to Internet usage and community-based websites (Module 1, Lesson A), the actual planning process for website development occurs in Module 1, Lesson B: *Getting Started*. Second, the thirteen categories presented in Figure 1 are used to organize the discussion in Module 1, Lesson C: *Preparing Content*, in which examples of appropriate content are provided. Module 1, Section C: *Preparing Content* is designed to help communities make their website content needs concrete by looking at live examples and it is meant to inspire communities with ideas about future applications and content for their websites.

Whereas Module 1 prepares the interested community members for website planning, Module 2 is about making the plans a (virtual) reality. Module 2, Lesson A discusses important decisions that communities face when creating a website, such as who will own and/or maintain the website, options in designing the website, etc. Module 2, Lesson B educates the community website development team on search engine optimization (or, getting your community's website to rank highly in a Google, Yahoo!, or Bing searches) and site analysis – collecting data about who comes to your community's website, how they got there, and what they viewed. Module 2, Lesson C provides guidance on two user-friendly options for “going it alone” in developing your community's website: Yahoo! SiteBuilder and Microsoft Office Live.

With the exceptions of Module 1, Lesson B and Module 2, Lesson C, each module is designed to be interactive and should last between 1.5 to 2 hours. By interactive, we mean that each session will require participation from the workshop attendees to provide input into the scope, content, and design of the community's website. *The goal of this curriculum is a new or enhanced community website!* Therefore, each module provides questions and exercises for the facilitator to use in moving the community toward a live website. Instructions for these participatory moments are provided in the detailed discussion of each module below, along with a description of any necessary materials that may be needed. In addition, each workshop has an assignment for the participants to complete prior to the next meeting.

Module 1, Lesson B (a daylong workshop) provides the framework for site development from visioning to site mapping. This process is necessary if the community group wants to see results and succeed in their mission to develop a web presence for their community. This section is guided by an indispensable worksheet that should be filled out in great detail. By obtaining the desired information, the group has a foundation to work from, including a work plan and site map.

Module 2, Lesson C is designed to be a self-paced tutorial in using the development tools in creating the community's website; therefore, it is anticipated that this module will be used individually by the person(s) responsible for the actual construction of the website, if the community decides to build it themselves. The tutorial videos are accessible online and can be used step by step in the construction process, or they can be viewed all at once and referred back to when questions arise during the building process. Therefore, there is no anticipated time allocation for this section, as it will depend upon the skills and time availability of the web engineer.

A timing issue regarding the curriculum is the frequency of meetings. Each community using this curriculum will have a unique set of resources and face constraints in approaching website development. The timeline below is recommended to keep the community moving forward and maintain momentum behind the project, but it can be tailored to the specific circumstances of the community. We recommend allowing 2 to 3 weeks in between the completion of each module. This will allow time for the facilitator to synthesize (i.e., summarize the section results) the input of each section for the participants, give the participants time to process the section material before moving to the next stage, and it will provide time for participants to complete assignments. With this in mind, this curriculum will require a minimum of 3 months to complete in a typical community. Below is a recommended timing of workshops. In addition, we suggest having a final press release/community event to celebrate the launch of the website (after Module 2, Lesson C or the hired web developer completes the website) and introduce it to the community.

<b>Workshop</b>	<b>Facilitator's Guide Section</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Length of Meeting</b>
1	Module 1, Section A  Background information that will assist with the planning and implementation of the website	1 <sup>st</sup> week of 1 <sup>st</sup> month	2 hrs
2	Module 1, Section B  As a committee, go over all aspects of the website project and begin to develop the site map	3 <sup>rd</sup> week of 1 <sup>st</sup> month	Daylong
3	Module 1, Section C  Review content (and examples) appropriate for target audience(s) of the website and finalize the site map	1 <sup>st</sup> week of 2 <sup>nd</sup> month	2 hrs
4	Module 2, Section A  Consider basics of actually building a website: ownership, domain names, hosting, working with a developer, and what software program to use	4 <sup>th</sup> week of 2 <sup>nd</sup> month	1.5 hrs
5	Module 2, Section B  Understand how search engines work and how using analytics can help improve a website	2 <sup>nd</sup> week of 3 <sup>rd</sup> month	2 hrs
6 (optional)	Module 2, Section C  Actually create a website by following videos for either Yahoo! SiteBuilder or Microsoft Office Live		self-paced
Curriculum Finale: Community Celebration/Website Launch			



The remainder of this guide contains detailed information about each section of the curriculum. Facilitators are encouraged to review the entire curriculum before beginning it in a community. This will help the facilitator steer the community (appropriately) through each workshop/set of exercises and better able to convey to participants where the curriculum is headed. In this guide, the facilitator will find the following sections:

- Overview: provides the facilitator with the motivation, logic and desired outcomes from the workshop;
- Lesson Objectives: explicitly defines the objectives of the workshop for the facilitator;
- Materials: details what materials will be needed for the workshop and how to use them;
- Slide Instructions and Additional Information: tells the facilitator how to best utilize the information on the slides, how to manipulate the slides to best meet the needs of the community; may also include things like data sources, websites that provide more information, or general advice about presenting the workshop.

While no script exists, per se, the PowerPoint slides for each section contain speaker notes to guide the facilitator through the presentation of the material to his/her audience.

# Module 1: Developing Website Content for Small Communities

## Section A: Introduction

### Overview

Over the last two decades, the Internet has developed from a unique platform for researchers to communicate to a nearly ubiquitous means of connecting individuals, institutions and communities with knowledge and information. This enhanced ability to connect and communicate has led to vast array of opportunities. During this time, as website types diversify and the technology intensifies, Internet access and use has expanded across geography and demographics. Nearly 80% of American adults access the Internet regularly (Pew Research Center, 2010) and nearly two-thirds of American households have Internet access at home (NTIA, 2010). Internet usage trends impact your website development given their influence on website content, delivery, design, marketing, etc.

Section A serves as general introduction to current trends in internet use, the curriculum's conceptual model and provides a general overview of the entire curriculum so community members have an idea of what their "internet project" is going to entail.

### Lesson Objectives

- Introduce current trends in internet use
- Discuss opportunities and common issues encountered when communities "go online"
- Consider goals, objectives, and resources associated with setting up a community website
- Introduce program modules and content

### Materials

- Flip charts & markers
- Computer
- Projector
- Internet access
- Module 1, Lesson A Power Point presentation
- Module 1, Lesson A Corresponding Tables (Optional)

### Slide Instructions and Additional Information

Script: See notes in Power Point presentation.

Additional Information:

Data Sources:

All of the data sources used in this section are clearly identified on the slide, in the speaker notes or both. When possible, a URL is given so the facilitator can go to the original source to gather additional information or, most importantly, update the data presented AND ensure that the link is functional. If the link is broken, a simple internet search using the title of the document or exact wording from the publication (in quotes) will usually be enough to track down the new link.

Helpful websites:

The following websites may be of particular interest when teaching this section:

Pew Research Center's Pew Internet and American Life Project - <http://pewinternet.org/>

"The Pew Internet Project is an initiative of the Pew Research Center, a nonprofit, nonpartisan "fact tank" that provides information on the issues, attitudes and trends shaping America and the world. The Project studies the social impact of the internet."

National Telecommunications and Information Administration - <http://www.ntia.doc.gov>

"The National Telecommunications and Information Administration is an agency in the U.S. Department of Commerce that serves as the executive branch agency principally responsible for advising the President on telecommunications and information policies. In this role, NTIA frequently works with other Executive Branch agencies to develop and present the Administration's position on these issues." Of particular interest may be NTIA's work in the area of broadband (<http://www2.ntia.doc.gov/>) and internet use (<http://www.ntia.doc.gov/data/index.html>)

US Census Bureau - <http://www.census.gov>

The US Census has an amazing amount of publically available information. With regard to the internet, two areas may be of interest: Statistical Abstract of the United States - Information and Communications ([http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/cats/information\\_communications.html](http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/cats/information_communications.html)) for general data about the internet and E-Stats - Measuring the Electronic Economy (<http://www.census.gov/econ/estats/>) which covers e-commerce topics.

The Sunshine Review - [http://sunshinereview.org/index.php/Main\\_Page](http://sunshinereview.org/index.php/Main_Page)

"Sunshine Review is a non-profit organization dedicated to state and local government transparency. The Sunshine Review wiki collects and shares transparency information and uses a "10-point

Transparency Checklist" to evaluate the content of every state and more than 5,000 local government websites. Sunshine Review collaborates with individuals and organizations throughout America in the cause of an informed citizenry and an accountable government."

#### Content Tips:

This presentation is meant to serve as an introduction for the group of individuals or committee that has come together to explore their web presence options. We refer to "community" throughout the curriculum. The vast majority of the time, we are really talking about the group that has assembled with an interest in getting their "community" online or changing their current site. With regard to committee participation, "community" can be thought of as all of the individuals, associations and institutions that may be impacted by the proposed website project, be they stakeholders, end users or both.

Given our conceptual model (the Venn Diagram) and its four components (Government, Business, Education and Community), this presentation provides some interesting data and opportunities to consider the current trends and issues that impact success or failure when trying to create a web presence.

As with the entire curriculum, virtually all of the slides provide some guidance on how to best use them and ideas about how to bring some interactive elements into play.

#### Homework:

- Core group seeks additional participants

## Section B: Getting Started

### Overview

Sometimes with community-led ventures getting “out of the gate” is the hardest part of the project process. If the start is poor, it is very likely that the finish will be too. The ultimate goal of Section B is to set a strong working foundation for the group and to ensure that: 1. All of the appropriate people are at the table; 2. A common vision is established; 3. Consensus is built around how the proposed site is going to fit the vision; and 4. generally, what the site is going to include.

A worksheet has been developed around this foundation building process. While the workshop will take up to five hours to complete, it is guaranteed time well spent. By providing transparency, outlining expectations and fully considering all aspects of project implementation, the committee will have documented a robust way forward.

### Lesson Objectives

- Identify committee members that will assist with the development of a website
- Discuss ways to create buy-in and obtain input from stakeholders
- Develop website goals and objectives
- Learn how to choose a domain name
- Build on past experiences
- Effectively partner with other organizations
- Ascertain resource availability
- Develop a site map

### Materials

- Flip charts & markers
- Computer
- Projector
- Module 1, Lesson B Power Point presentation
- Electronic and hard copies of Worksheet A-1
- Internet access

### Slide Instructions and Additional Information

Script: See notes in Power Point presentation

Additional Information:

Helpful websites:

N/A

Content Tips:

The hardest part of this Section is trying to keep the group on task, fully engaged and convinced that the hard work is going to pay off. At this stage, building consensus can also be a challenge. Effective time management is one way to help. The following is a suggested workshop timeline:

1. Participants (15 mins) – Introductions and roll of current committee members
2. Attributes (10 mins) – List community attributes on flip chart
3. Vision (20 mins) – Discuss vision, write down vision/mission statement(s)
4. Buy-in and stakeholders – (10 mins) – Discuss plan to develop buy-in
5. Target audience – (10 mins) – Identify target audience
6. Goals and Objectives – (20 mins) – Discuss and draft goal(s)
7. Information – (20 mins) – Discuss potential components and brainstorm topics
8. Aggregation (“Lumping”) and Navigation – (15 mins) – Identify themes and potential navigation buttons
9. Roles – (15 mins) – Create sub-committees for each of the themes or categories
10. Available Resources – (15 mins) – Identify available resources
11. Branding – (15 mins) – Identify current and potential future branding efforts
12. Estimated budget – (15 mins) – Discuss budget
13. Timeline – (15 mins) – Discuss timelines, overall and step by step
14. Current conditions – (20 mins) – Navigate old site and identify elements to keep
15. Sustainability – (15 mins) – Address initial sustainability issues
16. Building Linkages – (15 mins) – Identify other complementary sites
17. Domain Name – (15 mins) – Decide on domain name(s) and how they will be obtained
18. Marketing – (20 mins) – Develop overarching marketing plan
19. The Way Forward – (20 mins) – Outline next steps for following meeting

Once the meeting is over, be certain that everyone receives a copy of the completed worksheet. Also, be certain that everyone understands the next steps and expectations. While everyone entered the room with the best intentions, EVERYONE needs to be held accountable for what is to come.

Homework:

- Fill sub-committees with individuals committed to the project
- Finalize Worksheet A-1 and distribute to all committee members

## Section C: Preparing Content

### Overview

Let's now turn our attention to the actual content of the website. Based upon the diagram presented earlier, we have identified thirteen general applications for a community's website. The table below presents these thirteen applications, and the associated target audience, and recommends content for each application. This table is meant to provide a guide for the type of content a community would want to include for a given application; do not limit yourself to these suggestions. Attending this workshop should be all involved in defining the content for each content area identified in the previous workshop; this includes the core development team and those sub-committee members recruited after the previous workshop.

This presentation will provide additional descriptions of the thirteen potential content areas and examples from real websites for each. The idea is that the group should explore the Internet for ideas of how to present different content, preview different design elements/styles, and formulate its own content.

Application	Community Sectors Involved	Target Audience	Appropriate Web Content
1. e-Government	Government	Residents, Gov't Departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact information of local officials/departments</li> <li>• Downloadable, commonly used forms</li> <li>• Communication tools (email links/forms)</li> <li>• Electronic payment system for local taxes, utility bills (if appropriate)</li> <li>• Electronic applications for common permits/licenses, voter registration</li> <li>• Information about local services (e.g., special trash collection dates for hazardous waste, location of recycling center, hours of operation, local public transportation route/schedule, if appropriate)</li> <li>• Minutes and agendas for council and committee meetings</li> </ul>



<p>2. Business Recruitment, Retention and Expansion</p>	<p>Government and Business</p>	<p>ED Consultants, New Businesses, Existing Businesses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Demographic data (population by age, educational attainment, population growth trends)</li> <li>● Economic data (employment by sector, unemployment rates, average wages, market size/pull factor, employment trends, list of major employers)</li> <li>● Infrastructure data (proximity to major markets/transportation hubs, major highways, rail access, airports; water, sewer available capacities; availability of broadband and existing land/buildings)</li> <li>● Incentive programs</li> <li>● Tax information</li> </ul>
<p>3. Retail (e.g., Main Street, Buy Local) and Tourism Development</p>	<p>Government, Business, Community Groups</p>	<p>Residents, Non-residents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Business list</li> <li>● Attractions list</li> <li>● List of lodging options</li> <li>● Calendar of special events</li> <li>● Description of local programs to encourage retail/tourism development (also, how to get involved, meeting schedule and agendas, accomplishments)</li> <li>● Links to related websites/marketing sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter)</li> </ul>
<p>4. Economic Development Infrastructure (e.g., Small Business Incubators/Commercialization Centers, Workforce Investment Areas, Loan Pools and Venture Capital)</p>	<p>Government, Business, and Education</p>	<p>Residents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Description of services/programs with contacts and location information, eligibility requirements, program requirements, how to participate</li> <li>● Accomplishments</li> <li>● Educational materials for download</li> </ul>

5. Business to Business	Business	Existing Businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● List of businesses that serve other businesses (i.e., referral list)</li> <li>● Create a virtual community (e.g., forum or chat room, Facebook group, etc.) for local business owners and link to it</li> <li>● Government procurement system access</li> </ul>
6. Workforce Development (K-12 Schools, Vocational Training, Higher Education)	Business and Education	Residents, Non-residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Listing of educational and vocational institutions with contact information in the region (may or may not be in the city/county of the website)</li> <li>● Listing of local schools (public and private), along with measures of size, performance, and cost (when appropriate)</li> <li>● Highlight opportunities unique to your region (e.g., special certification programs, accolades earned by the institutions, etc.)</li> </ul>
7. Entrepreneurship	Business, Education and Community Groups	Residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Listing of service providers in the community that target small business owners and entrepreneurs; provide contact information, service hours, location</li> <li>● Link to eXtension’s CoP “Entrepreneurs and their Communities”</li> <li>● Listing of web-based resources available (e.g., CFED and FIELD websites)</li> <li>● Link to a community virtual network (e.g., Facebook group) for entrepreneurs</li> <li>● Listing of known entrepreneurs and their businesses in the community</li> <li>● List of government resources available to support</li> </ul>

<p>8. Online Education and Distance Learning</p>	<p>Education</p>	<p>Residents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● List of institutions which provide distance education opportunities in your community's region; include web address, contact information</li> <li>● Highlight other web-based technologies used in the community (e.g., tele-medicine)</li> <li>● Link to library resources available online</li> </ul>
<p>9. Youth Development</p>	<p>Education and Community Groups</p>	<p>Residents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● List of organizations, programs and services available to youth in your community (include parks and recreation programs – sports, arts, etc., educational programs, vocational training, leadership development, social clubs, community service orgs); include info on how to register/participate, who to contact, etc.</li> <li>● Calendar of events</li> </ul>
<p>10. Community Leadership</p>	<p>Education, Community Groups and Government</p>	<p>Residents, Gov't Departments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Description of local community leadership development program (if available), including contact info, participation commitment and application materials</li> <li>● List of volunteer opportunities throughout the community, with links to organization/agency websites, contact information, etc.</li> <li>● List of city/county committees which seek public input and/or have appointed/volunteer positions; agendas and meeting schedules</li> <li>● Calendar of events</li> </ul>

<p>11. Community Connectedness (Opportunities for social interaction, which may include hobby/leisure/service clubs, non-profit organizations, religious organizations, community-wide events)</p>	<p>Community Groups</p>	<p>Residents, Organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Calendar of events</li> <li>● List of social, community and service organizations with meeting times, contact information</li> <li>● Information on funding opportunities within the community, such as United Way campaigns, fund-raising at community-wide events, etc.</li> <li>● Listing of accomplishments</li> </ul>
<p>12. Civic Engagement (Community organizations focused on social and local government issues like local political parties, volunteer EMS/Fire Services and auxiliaries, public library auxiliary, participation on community boards/councils/committees, local government education programs)</p>	<p>Community Groups and Government</p>	<p>Residents, Organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● List of volunteer opportunities throughout the community, with links to organization/agency websites, contact information, etc.</li> <li>● List of city/county committees which seek public input and/or have appointed/volunteer positions; agendas and meeting schedules</li> <li>● Calendar of events</li> </ul>
<p>13. Quality of Life</p>	<p>All</p>	<p>Residents, Non-residents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Amenity information (e.g., weather data, proximity to parks, nature areas, etc.)</li> <li>● Special event announcements</li> </ul>

Lesson Objectives

- Review website goals and resources to frame the discussion of particular content
- Explore content appropriate for a community website
- View examples of websites that integrate appropriate content
- Revise relevant site map worksheets to reflect implementation and/or content ideas

Materials

- Flip charts & markers
- Computer
- Projector
- Module 1, Lesson C Power Point presentation
- Hard copies & electronic copies of Worksheet A-2
- Internet access

### Slide Instructions and Additional Information

As noted on Slide 1 of the Power Point, this presentation MUST be customized to only include those content areas that are related to the community's goals for its website and should be broken up into several sessions. The titles given to the content areas in the Venn diagram (and used in this presentation) are not as important as making sure that the website committee sees examples relevant to their task. Thus, the facilitator should feel free to re-order the slides, rename the categories, and eliminate slides to make this presentation as beneficial as possible to their community. Slides 3 and 4 in particular need to be updated to reflect the community's specific goals and available resources identified in the previous session to provide boundaries for the discussion of this session.

Throughout the script, there are instructions for the facilitator in square brackets ( [ ] ) – these are just reminders to the facilitator to utilize the animations contained in the slides or direct the group in an activity.

While the slides each contain a screen shot of the website to emphasize particular content or design elements, the facilitator should take the group to the actual website, if Internet access is available.

Reflection Slides: At the end of each content area, there is a slide labeled "Reflection." This slide is meant to force the facilitator to stop and help the group process what they've seen in order to develop their own website. The following questions should be asked:

- what do you like about this/these example(s)? What do you dislike?
- what information would you eliminate from the example? What information would you add to it?
- how could the information be better organized/presented?

The responses to these should be recorded on a flip chart so they can be kept and reviewed while trying to complete Worksheet A-2 associated with each content area.

Once the examples from all the appropriate content areas have been reviewed, group must then finalize the site map. Begun in Lesson 2, when the basic organization of the website was defined, the site map is like an outline for the website that identifies how the pages of the website will be organized and linked together. It also determines the content that will be on each of the pages identified. The homework for this workshop is to complete Worksheet A-2 for each page of the website; committees which have multiple topics under their content area or "navigation button" will need to complete multiple A-2 worksheets.

The completed Worksheet A-1 and completed Worksheets A-2 together comprise the community's site map. Someone must be designated by the group to be responsible for these documents and combine them into a single packet (i.e., folder or binder). (This will most likely occur at the beginning of the next workshop.) In addition, this individual should construct a visual representation of the site map, like an organization chart, to summarize the site. All of these materials will be given to the web designer (or individual within the group developing the website), from which he/she will construct the website.

Script: See notes in the PowerPoint slides.

### Additional Information:

#### Data Sources:

U.S. Census Bureau's American Factfinder: [factfinder.census.gov](http://factfinder.census.gov)

U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis' Regional Economic Information System:  
[www.bea.gov/regional/docs/cd.cfm](http://www.bea.gov/regional/docs/cd.cfm)

Community Economic Development HotReport (collaborative project of U.S. Census Bureau, Employment and Training Administration, and Economic Development Administration):  
[http://smpbff2.dsd.census.gov/TheDataWeb\\_HotReport/servlet/HotReportEngineServlet?emailname=whazard@census.gov&filename=ed\\_home.html](http://smpbff2.dsd.census.gov/TheDataWeb_HotReport/servlet/HotReportEngineServlet?emailname=whazard@census.gov&filename=ed_home.html)

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' Local Area Unemployment Statistics: [www.bls.gov/lau/](http://www.bls.gov/lau/)

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages: [www.bls.gov/cew/](http://www.bls.gov/cew/)

U.S. Census Bureau's Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics: [lehd.did.census.gov/led/index.php](http://lehd.did.census.gov/led/index.php)

U.S. Census Bureau's Building Permits Database: [censtats.census.gov/bldg/bldgprmt.shtml](http://censtats.census.gov/bldg/bldgprmt.shtml)

#### Helpful websites:

University of Idaho Extension's Community Data Tools:  
[www.extension.uidaho.edu/communitydevelopment/datatools/index.html](http://www.extension.uidaho.edu/communitydevelopment/datatools/index.html)

EconomicDevelopmentOnline.com

This website contains information and advice on website content specifically focused on economic development.

#### Content Tips:

Once you have your web design (i.e., the concept and site map) complete, the next challenge is to finalize the content that will fill the pages of your website. There are a host of issues surrounding content that generally fall into one of three categories: drafting text, updating the content and legal issues. The style of writing on a website should be clear, brief and colloquial; we'll explore some principles and tips to help your website speak to your target audience. Keeping your website's content current is also critical to making sure your community's website is successful. Then, we discuss some legal issues that your community will want to address before launching its website. We conclude this section by touching on the substance of the content – what is appropriate content, given the target audience for your website?

As was mentioned previously, your website is likely to be the first impression a visitor gets of your community. So just like in a job interview, you want that impression to be great! It probably goes without saying that your website should be free of grammatical errors, misspellings, and other mistakes.

However, this is the minimum. Your website should be easy to read (avoid long sentences with complicated structures, the use of pronouns, etc.), concise (remember, focus the text to your target audience!), and conversational. You can also use section headers and bolded text to draw your reader to key words and phrases to help the visitor get the message without having to wade through a lot of detail. Using a conversational tone will help keep the text readable, but it also gives the appearance of interacting with the visitor, which may enhance the visitor's experience. Also, making your website visually appealing is good but carefully choose the pictures and graphics incorporated into it; these not only slow down the load speed of your site, but they can also distract from the message the site's text conveys.

Ultimately, your website will be used to communicate information to your target audience. Data about your community is often a critical piece of information you want to share. What data you should include on the site will depend on your target audience. For example, if your website is targeting economic developers and site selection consultants, then your site should contain data on your community's workforce, physical infrastructure and amenities. However, if your website is targeting residents, you may want to include a list of local businesses, community calendar and contact information for government offices. Regardless of the data you post on your website, you need to keep that data updated, so that you are communicating the latest and most accurate information possible to your visitor. Communities often underestimate the amount of time and effort required to maintain a current website. In addition to securing the data (which can be time consuming in its own right), it needs to be appropriately formatted, coded and uploaded. It is wise for a community to formally designate an individual with the responsibility of maintaining the community website, so that someone is always thinking about it and accountable for it. Formatting, coding and uploading can be done in-house if you have the expertise, or it can be done by the web designer, but it will cost you additional money for the designer to do it. Who will do the actual updates to the site should be considered when the website is being designed.

There are also legal issues to consider when selecting content for the website. First, you will want to decide upfront (i.e., before the design process) who "owns" the content of the website. This is a complicated question because there are three types of content that need to be addressed: the design itself, the content you provide, and content you purchase/use with permission. Web designers may want to maintain the copyrights (or other legal protections) regarding the design of the website for a number of reasons: ensure access to the design for their portfolio/promotion (e.g., entrance into design competitions), protect the use of a characteristic style or 'trademark', or provide some incentive for you to work with them in the future on design modifications. If done appropriately, the web designer can maintain legal ownership of the web design without affecting your community's ownership of the content. A community may or may not want to copyright (or otherwise protect) the original content of the website. On one hand, legal protections will provide some security that your content will not be misused and/or plagiarized, and you would want to protect any proprietary, individual and/or personal data about your community from abuse (this may also require security features to be built into the website in addition to copyright declarations). However, the process is not costless in time and money. On the other hand, your community may want to share ownership of the site's content, i.e., create a

'wiki' style environment that allows information to be edited by anyone, or may not have the resources to secure these protections. Second, any information or content that you do not create on your own must be used with permission, legally secured, and properly acknowledged. Any fonts, stock photos and graphics used, for example, must be secured legally and used in accordance to the provider's terms of use. The general rule is that materials available free (e.g., fonts, graphics and photos provided with Microsoft Office) can be used freely and without acknowledgement if used for non-commercial applications; a community website that is not selling anything certainly qualifies. Additionally, there may be additional content you want to use that is available from your state's Department of Commerce, or another government agency (e.g., TVA Economic Development). For example, your state's Census Data Center may compile demographic profiles that you want to integrate into your website, or maybe your state's Department of Commerce has a sites and buildings application that allows prospective employers to search for appropriate real estate in your community and you want to embed this into your site. Do not assume that you can 'borrow' this content; often times, the agencies and organizations providing this information have contracts and legal agreements with organizations from which they get the data and/or technology as to how the information/technology can be utilized. Check with the organizations to make sure your community's use of the resources will not jeopardize the availability of those resources. Usually, there is a way to access these resources in a manner that allows everyone to maintain their integrity. Lastly, do not forget to appropriately cite the sources of your web content. This will add credibility to your site and prevent additional legal problems.

#### Homework:

- Each content area committee will need to meet and complete Worksheet A-2 for each topic in their content area



## Module 2: Getting your Content on the Internet

### Section A: Website Ownership and Hosting

#### Overview

Once you have determined who your audience is and what type of content you want to include in your website, you have several options for actually putting one together. There are two distinct options that we will discuss in this document: building a site yourself (using either an online software program such as Yahoo! SiteBuilder or a template based format such as Microsoft Office Live), or hiring a web developer / designer to construct a site for you. The final choice should depend on the time commitment of the staff assigned to this project, their familiarity with computers, and the associated budget. All three options can be effective for developing a community website if they are appropriately planned.

#### *Building a site yourself*

In today's increasingly web-friendly environment, most main-stream word processing tools (such as Microsoft Word or PowerPoint) can create official webpage code (html) simply by choosing "Save as: Web Page." Inserting pictures, links to other sites, and links to other Word or PowerPoint documents is straightforward and can serve as an easy way to outline the way you want your site to look. However, sites made using these tools typically lack many techniques commonly used in many more professional-looking websites, such as background designs, navigation bars, and roll-over image enlargements.

Most professional designers use a dedicated software package such as Adobe Dreamweaver or Microsoft Sharepoint Design. These packages can be somewhat costly (\$450 for Dreamweaver, \$150 for Sharepoint Design) but offer much more control to the designer and allow for more complex designs and features. It can take a significant amount of time to learn how to effectively use this type of software, although creating simple pages can be done relatively quickly. Most community colleges offer short courses on how to use this software, and some universities even offer full semester-long classes if your community is interested in building its own website developer. Regardless of the software you choose, you will need to be able to upload the files you create onto the domain name and web host that you have purchased. This typically consists of logging on to your web host account and finding all relevant files (and pictures, videos, etc) on the computer where they were created. These files are then transferred to the web host, which makes them viewable by anyone who visits your domain name.

#### *Using an online template*

Many web hosting companies are looking to cater to small businesses by offering online "templates" that can be easily configured by the user. These templates allow the user to change formats, fonts, insert pictures, establish multiple pages, and use a large number of web developer techniques without learning any associated software. Although these templates are mostly marketed to small businesses, communities can also use them. Many of the sites designed using this option look very professional, and most web hosts offering templates provide examples of sites built using their system. For communities

on a strict budget, this will often be the best option! It allows you to create a professional-looking site with only limited technical knowledge, and for a reasonable price (generally around \$10 - \$15 / month for most major sites). It is also quite easy to make changes and updates using this option.

This curriculum demonstrates creating a community website with a series of videos featuring two different types of online templates or software. The videos are discussed in Section C, and the templates featured are from:

- 1) Yahoo! SiteBuilder
- 2) Microsoft Office Live

### *Hiring a web developer / designer*

While some communities can design a very effective website themselves using either online templates or a dedicated software program, outsourcing the work to a website professional can often be the best option. As noted above, understanding what you want your site to do and having an idea of what it will look like are important factors in determining the cost for a developer to create your website. Costs can vary significantly, typically hovering in the several thousand dollar range for most communities interested in building an effective site. There are many places to find web developers – asking around your local area typically turns up a few names, and there are websites out there dedicated to connecting designers and clients (such as [www.webdesignfinders.net](http://www.webdesignfinders.net)). Additionally, several of the bigger name web hosting companies like [www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com), [www.godaddy.com](http://www.godaddy.com), or [www.networksolutions.com](http://www.networksolutions.com) all have designers on staff if you don't mind working over long distances. Before you hire a designer, make sure to view a portfolio of their work, and specifically ask to speak to clients they have worked with previously. Ask these references questions regarding the level of service received, the length of time required to design and deliver the site, the reliability of the designer in making website updates, and at least one thing they disliked about the designer. You should also discuss several topics with the designer before you officially begin working with them, including the time frame for the project, how site maintenance will be handled, and how the eventual termination of the contract will be handled. Make sure that YOU, the client, own the domain name as opposed to the designer, and that you have access to the required hosting passwords once the contract is complete. Many communities have been stuck with an outdated, or even incomplete, website if their designer leaves and they have no way of accessing the work that has been done.

Once your website is complete, you should have it assessed using online tools and test it for some important details before it goes "live." Sites such as [www.scrubtheweb.com](http://www.scrubtheweb.com) and [www.netmechanic.com](http://www.netmechanic.com) offer free evaluations of the code underlying your site. Some of the most common checks include making sure that your title and meta tags are included, along with Google Analytics code (see Section D, "Getting Hits", on website marketing), cross-browser checks (making sure your site operates in various versions of Internet Explorer, Firefox, and Safari), proofreading all text, double-checking links, and validating your site (making sure the code works using a site like <http://validator.w3.org>). Also, getting someone outside of the process to look over your site once it is near completion provides some extra insurance that you haven't overlooked any important details.

## *Website Design*

There are a number of considerations one should make when designing a community website, but ultimately your choices should reflect your intended audience. Other factors will also affect your design, but ultimately you want to create a web presence that is appealing, useful and valuable to your intended audience, whoever that may be: residents, visitors, local business owners, potential business owners, youth, businesses external to your community, etc. In addition to identifying the audience, you need to keep in mind their technical savvy, purpose for using the site, and the impression that you want to give them of your community. Let's explore each of these issues briefly as we address this topic of website design.

When designing your community's website, you will want to keep in mind the web proficiency of your target audience(s). There are amazing things that can be done on a web page, but often times they require special "add-on" software to use, require lengthy download times (especially in areas without broadband access), or are sensitive to browser settings. The last thing you want to do is set your target audience up for frustration and/or failure, because they will stop using your site. Even items like drop down menus can create frustration if they overlap other links, disappear too quickly, etc. Also, you do not want the information you are attempting to communicate to the visitor to be overshadowed by the technical or graphical sophistication of the site.

You also want to make sure that your website communicates a consistent message as other media associated with your community. That is to say, make sure that the logos and contact information on the web matches that of your community (or that of the lead organization). Your community's website is likely to be the first impression that potential residents, businesses and others will have of your community – you want it to be a good one. If you want to demonstrate unity, collaborative spirit and progressiveness, then use colors, text fonts, logos, etc. that are consistent with your community. Ideally, you would want to match your website design with existing letterhead of the Chamber of Commerce or city government (or other lead organization); if this is not possible, the theme of the page should correspond to the community image. Putting it another way, the virtual experience should match the reality of your community. A 'classic Western' theme would not fit a community in Southern Florida, for example, but it may be very appropriate for a community in Oklahoma.

Lastly, I want to make a few comments regarding web designers. First, web designers focus on the aesthetic dimensions of the website (including graphics), whereas web developers tend to focus only on content (they are computer programmers, not graphic artists). Make sure you know who you are working with. Second, you need to have a good idea of what you want your site to do, what features you want included on your site, and a rough idea of what the site will look like. These are important factors in determining the cost of creating your website. The more interactive and graphic intensive (particularly if the graphics are not provided by you) your website is, the more time, and therefore cost, involved in its creation. Being able to provide examples to the designer can be helpful as well. Third, when choosing a web designer, you definitely will want to review their portfolio of clients, and you'll want to determine the qualifications of the designer (and/or developer, if the actual coding of the site will be out-sourced). You should also inquire about additional services provided by the designer. Many designers will bundle

services, such as web hosting or marketing, for a discounted price, or they will sell blocks of design labor at lower per unit cost than their hourly rate. Fourth, you want to make sure that your website will be compatible with Internet Explorer v. 5.0 and Netscape v. 6.0 or greater to ensure that the vast majority (nearly 95%) of visitors will have a good experience on your site. Building your site to be compatible with other browsers is possible, but it will increase your design costs. Lastly, as I have alluded to already, web designers cost money. Relative to the cost of your domain name and hosting fees, web design is by far the most expensive component of launching a website. Do not be surprised if the web design estimate ranges between \$2,000 and \$8,000. Websites like [www.quotecatcher.com](http://www.quotecatcher.com) and [www.designquote.net](http://www.designquote.net) provide estimate calculators. You should keep in mind that the cheapest estimate may not always be the right designer.

In this section, we discussed factors to consider when designing your community's website. You want to make sure that the site is user-friendly, which means that it is browser-compatible, downloads quickly and minimizes the number of 'add-ons' needed to view the site. Additionally, the site should be easy to navigate, and it should be consistent in format to other community materials. Lastly, working with a professional designer can be beneficial, but it still requires effort on your part and it can be expensive, depending on the level of sophistication you desire in your website.

### Lesson Objectives

The objectives of this module include:

- Re-hashing who will "own" the site locally
- Understanding the basic ingredients of a website
  - An idea of what the community wants (Module 1)
  - Domain Name
  - Web Host
- A brief synopsis of the do-it-yourself software options
- Listing the pros and cons of working with a developer

### Materials

- This module can be performed with just a computer and projector. For a more interactive session, a computer lab (with Internet connections) would be useful. The computer lab might be useful for participants to explore some of the domain name registration sites or overviews of the software programs used to create sites.
- Module 2 , Lesson A Power Point presentation
- Flip chart / marker could be used to discuss the pros and cons of using a developer – specific to the community.

### Slide Instructions and Additional Information

At this point in the curriculum, the community should have already gone through an entire planning phase (Module 1) and so should be familiar with what they think their website will contain. The basic point of this workshop is to get them to understand what it takes to actually get their concept online.

This will include an understanding of how you register a domain name, get a web host, and the underlying costs.

The presentation should be made with somewhat of a “switching gears” mindset: the participants are no longer concerned about WHAT they will put on their page, now they are learning about HOW it will be done.

Extra time can be spent on the Microsoft Office Live and Yahoo SiteBuilder slides if participants want to explore these sites to see which they like. The videos in Lesson C use these different packages to demonstrate how to construct a community website.

At the completion of this presentation, the group must decide whether the community should hire a web designer or develop the website themselves.

Homework:

- If the community is hiring a web designer, they need to seek out possible designers and get bids or estimates from them.
- If the community is developing the website internally, the person who will be developing the website must be identified.

## Section B: Search Engine Optimization / Site Analysis

### Overview

Once your website has been developed, there are a number of techniques you can use to generate traffic. These include making use of viral marketing (word of mouth), incorporating search engine optimization techniques, using analytical tools to see where your traffic is coming from, and even taking part in social networking or Web 2.0 tools like Facebook or Twitter to promote your site.

This workshop also deals with how to keep track of the number of people visiting your site, focusing on a free tool from Google Analytics. Various useful features from Google Analytics are highlighted.

Finally, the focus turns to sustaining interest after a site has been set up. This is important since many sites get up and running with a head of steam, but falter over time and become outdated quickly.

### Lesson Objectives

This workshop focuses on the following objectives:

- Basics of website promotion
- Search Engine Optimization (SEO)
  - 5 proven techniques
- Analyzing what you have
  - Importance of using analytics
  - Installing Google Analytics
  - 3 most useful features of Google Analytics
- Sustaining interest among constituent groups

### Materials

- This module can be performed with just a computer and projector. For a more interactive session, a computer lab (with Internet connections) would be useful.
- Module 2, Lesson B Power Point presentation
- There are numerous opportunities to engage the audience if a computer lab is available. The slides marked “Your Turn” allow participants to work through examples being discussed – for example, how to find popular keywords that you are interested in or how to find the title tags of various websites.

### Slide Instructions and Additional Information

This is the last PowerPoint oriented workshop. At this point, participants should know the content they want to put online and what tool they are going to use to get it there. The focus here is on some techniques that can drive traffic their way. So, the tools on how to incorporate the various techniques should be geared towards the individuals that will actually be building the site, or working alongside the developer to help them understand which keywords they want to be associated with, what title and meta tags they think are appropriate, etc.

The section on Google Analytics walks through how to install the html code, which will allow a user to determine how many hits are coming into the site and where they are coming from. The videos that are part of Workshop C also demonstrate how to do this task.

Below are some additional notes that can be used with the slides in this workshop.

### *Non- Search Engine Optimization (SEO) techniques*

When most people think of website marketing, they think of “getting ranked highly on Google.” While search engines like Google are important for generating website traffic, there are numerous other techniques that can be very effective at website promotion. Optimizing your website to be found by search engines will be covered in a later topic – but for now, let’s focus on other ways of creating traffic.

One of the most effective marketing techniques is simply word of mouth. “Viral marketing” is basically any advertising that spreads itself the way viruses do. If you tell 10 people about the community website you just set up, and those 5 people go out and tell 4 other people, who in turn tell another 5 people...it adds up quickly. It’s possible that the people you mention it to aren’t really that interested, but the topic may stick in the back of their minds during future conversations. If they hear that a certain person or business is considering relocating, they can then tell that person about the website you helped to develop. Other methods of viral marketing include displaying your domain name on any promotional material you may have, such as business cards or flyers for your community. Many people have come up with other creative ways to market their site, such as t-shirts or cars with domain names on them, or mousepads / pencils that have the web address listed.

Other non-SEO techniques include incorporating email signatures for all community employees that lists their title and the community’s domain name, so that this information is displayed with each email they send. Additionally, setting up a newsletter that can be emailed to multiple recipients is generally a great way to market your site – but regular, value-added updates are required. For-pay sites like [www.constantcontact.com](http://www.constantcontact.com) or [www.listbox.com](http://www.listbox.com) can help build and manage these email lists, and provide various newsletter templates to choose from. These sites also allow for observation of which emails have been opened and what portion of the newsletter was clicked on.

### *Search Engine Optimization*

To effectively use search engine optimization tools, it is important to understand how a search engine like Google finds and ranks individual sites. They do this by employing “spiders” which are basically pieces of code that make their way through all of the components of your website. The spiders determine what the theme of the site is, and then rank it based on a number of determinants such as keyword placement, link popularity, and site organization. Spiders do not see websites as humans do, instead they scroll through the underlying html code to figure out the underlying theme. Search engines should eventually find your site without any work on your part, but it is always a good idea to submit your domain name and keywords to the most important search engines: Google, Yahoo, and MSN. Performing a simple Internet search on “website submission Google” should provide the necessary links to submit your site.

While there are numerous SEO techniques (in fact many people make a living thinking up new ways to get companies ranked higher), we will focus on five tried and true methods. These are:

1. Using appropriate keywords that are highly searched for throughout your site.

Google provides a tool that can be used to estimate the search volume for basic keywords at [www.adwords.google.com](http://www.adwords.google.com). They offer related terms, and show how popular they are – make sure to include the more popular terms throughout the various pages of your site. You should, however, have a consistent theme throughout your site that the spider can pick up on.

2. Incorporating “title tags.”

Title tags are literally the first thing a spider sees – they display the title of the web page in the upper left hand corner of the browser. Many amateur sites simply display “Home” in this location, which tells the spider very little about the site’s purpose. Make sure to change the title tags for the various pages in your site. This can be done by your developer or in the specific software or template you used to design the site.

3. Incorporating “meta tags.”

Meta tags such as keywords or description tags are not actually seen on a particular page, but are behind the scenes words that describe the website and list keywords that you think are a good fit. The meta description tag actually describes your business, and should be in sentence form. The meta keywords tag should include any keywords that might be relevant, including plurals, common misspellings, or combinations of terms. This can also be done by your developer or using the software / template that built the site.

4. Naming (or talking about) your pictures.

Remember, spiders can’t see any images you include on your site, so calling a picture “pic1.jpg” provides it with no useful information. Instead, calling it “community\_shelter1.jpg” lets the spider know what the picture deals with. Alternatively, you can use text beside the picture to discuss what it entails.

5. Generate external links – create content.

A large part of how your site is ranked is the overall relevance and popularity of sites linking to you and that you have links to. The spiders crawl to these sites to ensure relevance, so if you can get a very popular (and relevant) site to link to you, that works strongly in your favor. Send emails asking to exchange “reciprocal links” with other websites that might be interested (nearby communities, state tourism sites, etc.) If you are successful at generating GOOD CONTENT (such as interesting things to do in your community), other sites will notice this and provide links to you.

### *Web 2.0*

Early websites were one-way streets, basically providing information for people to read. As the Internet evolved, websites became more interactive in nature, and the term “Web 2.0” was coined to refer to



those sites that promote communication and collaboration. Sites like Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, YouTube, and Twitter are all part of Web 2.0. Interactive forums are also a very popular component. For a community website, Web 2.0 can be a very effective way to generate traffic. Creating a Facebook account of your community and updating it with current happenings or pictures, uploading YouTube videos of fun events in your community, or participating in travel forums with ideas for people considering a vacation can all help drive traffic to your community website.

### *Using Analytical Tools*

Learning where visitors come from and how they interact with your site can be very beneficial. Google Analytics ([www.google.com/analytics](http://www.google.com/analytics)) provides a free tool that consists of html code that is installed on every page in your website. This is done by your designer or using the software or template you used to build the site. After the code has been installed, it keeps track of a large number of statistics on website usage, including data on page views, pages per visit, average time on site, geographic location of hits (to state and even city level), the sources of your website hits (search engines, links, direct domain name entry) and which pages are the most viewed. Incorporating these tools can give you a better feel for who is using your site, and they can also be used to see which keywords are having the most impact.

### Homework:

- If using a web designer, select the web designer and setup a meeting to give him/her the site map materials developed in Module 1.
- If developing the website internally, make sure the individual responsible has the site map materials and other resources needed to proceed with site construction.

## Section C: DIY Videos - Using Yahoo! SiteBuilder and Microsoft Office Live

### Overview

This section is a series of videos that demonstrate using 2 types of software packages (Yahoo! SiteBuilder and Microsoft Office Live) to actually build a website. Each of the series starts off as if the participant has never seen the software / templates / websites before – literally starting from the very bottom.

There are 7 videos associated with using Yahoo! SiteBuilder. These are broken out as follows:

1. Loading Yahoo! SiteBuilder Software (7 minutes)
2. Getting Started with SiteBuilder (46 minutes)
  - a. Picking a template, inserting pages (0:00)
  - b. Editing links to other pages in your site (17:14)
  - c. Previewing your site in a web browser (29:32)
  - d. Inserting a YouTube Video using HTML code (34:45)
3. Business Page (42 minutes)
  - a. Inserting text and pictures (2:34)
  - b. Adding a new page (for list of existing businesses) (23:19)
  - c. Adding a community map to a new page (31:42)
4. Education Page (31 minutes)
  - a. Inserting contact information using bulleted lists (8:50)
  - b. Inserting list of distances to higher education facilities (15:24)
  - c. Inserting links / information about entrepreneurship (20:26)
  - d. Previewing the page and making sure all links work (28:15)
5. Community Groups Page (34 minutes)
  - a. Adding a list of community groups (6:48)
  - b. Adding volunteer opportunities using bulleted lists (15:00)
  - c. Inserting a calendar using HTML code (19:46)
6. Government Page (32 minutes)
  - a. Adding pictures and info about elected officials (5:04)
  - b. Adding links to minutes of city council meetings, or other PDF documents (10:06)
  - c. Inserting Government forms for downloading (Word or PDF format) (18:44)
7. Finishing Touches (27 minutes)
  - a. Inserting Title and Meta tags (0:00)
  - b. Installing Analytics HTML code (11:27)
  - c. Publishing your content with Yahoo! Web Hosting (18:39)

There are 6 videos associated with using Microsoft Office Live. These are broken out as follows:

1. Intro to Microsoft Office Live
2. Intro to the Page Manager
3. Intro to the Page Editor
4. Editing Pages
5. Page Editor and More
6. Site Design and Reports

### Lesson Objectives

The goal of this workshop is to allow someone associated with the community group to actually build the community website using one of the two software / template programs demonstrated.

At the completion of this workshop, a participant should have enough knowledge to build an entire community website, including all aspects of material developed in Module 1. Note, however, that some more advanced concepts (drop-down menus, rotating pictures, etc) will require a professional developer to install. This is also discussed in the video.

### Materials

- Module 2, Lesson C, Parts 1 & 2 Power Point presentations
- Participants will need access to a computer where they can access the Internet video files that are part of this curriculum, as well as potentially start building a website. For Yahoo! SiteBuilder, this can mean saving files to the computer itself – which means it should be a personal computer or one specifically for this purpose. When using Microsoft Office Live, files are saved online meaning that different computers can be used to construct the site over time.
- Most participants will likely watch a portion of the video, and then try to replicate what the video demonstrated on their own computer. This entire workshop can be done without the need for an educator to be there, but participants should be aware of the length of the videos and the time requirement to replicate the tasks.

### Slide Instructions and Additional Information

The two programs were introduced in Workshop A of this module. Before jumping into the videos, participants should have spent some time in this workshop exploring each of the alternatives and seeing which was a better fit for them. In particular, Yahoo! SiteBuilder is an actual software program that is downloaded to someone's computer and then worked with on that computer, while Microsoft Office Live is web-based and all files are saved to the Internet. (NOTE: SiteBuilder DOES have the option of working 'online' as well, but this is NOT demonstrated in the videos).

## References

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## Appendix

Worksheet A-1: Website Development Information

Worksheet A-2: Individual Section Worksheets to Describe Page Content

**Web Presence Strategies for Small Communities and Local Governments  
Worksheet A-1: Website Development Information**

**1. Participants:** Please list the organizations and the individuals from each organization who will provide content and participate in discussions about designing a new community website.

Last Name	First Name	Institution / Business / Affiliation	Telephone	email

**2. Attributes:** List the major selling points that set your community apart from others in your region or state.

**3. Vision:** Do you have a community vision? What is your community vision and how will this project achieve it? Please explain.

**4. Buy-in and stakeholders:** How will your committee develop buy-in from education, healthcare, business, community improvement, economic development, city/county government , etc. in the area?

**5. Target audience:** Who is your target audience? Target audiences for consideration – alumni, retired folks, young families, entrepreneurs, tourists, students, etc.

**6. Goals and Objectives:** Recall the Venn Diagram that was handed out during the last meeting. Also, think about your vision, stakeholder and target audience. What is (are) the goal(s) (and objective(s)) for this website project? Explain.

**7. Information:** What information must we provide to meet our objectives? Please list (most useful to brainstorm a list and then use "Individual Section Development Worksheet" after the site map is developed):

**8. Aggregation ("Lumping") and Navigation:** How do we want to organize our information into categories? (example – "Quality of Life", "Demographics", etc.)

**9. Roles:** Given the categories that have been developed in #8. Who will be working on which categories?

Category	Chairperson	Chair Contact information	Sub-committee Members



**10. Available Resources:** List internal and external resources that could contribute to the project (example – “local photographer – images for website”, “youth – logo contest”, etc.)

**11. Branding:** Do you currently have and own the rights to a logo or other branding materials (motto, tagline, etc.)? Please list and explain.

**12. Estimated budget:** Include itemization when possible.

**13. Timeline:** This may be desired or dictated by a grant. Include an overall deadline for site launch and deadlines for specific objectives

**14. Current conditions:** If the community is updating or overhauling a site, please answer the following:

a. What is the current website status?

b. How does your community perceive your website?

c. How do “outsiders” perceive your website?

d. What is the current usage of your website (i.e. web traffic statistics)?

e. Who developed your current site? List contact information.

f. Who maintains your current website(s)? List contact information.

g. Do you have direct access to all of the content files associated with the current site?

**15. Sustainability:** As of right now,

a. Describe how will this new website be updated and sustained?

b. Do you need assistance finding a web developer? If not, who may be developing the site? List contact information.

**16. Building Linkages:** Please list other important partner's websites that will complement development of your own:

**17. Domain Name:** Given your vision, goals and audience,

a. What URL(s) are you proposing to use (e.g., [www.morgancountytn.org](http://www.morgancountytn.org))?

b. Do you already own this (these) URL(s)?

c. Are there other URLs that you should own? Please list:

**18. Marketing:** Does your community have a marketing plan and budget? If so, please summarize.

## Web Presence Strategies for Small Communities and Local Governments

### Worksheet A-2: Individual Section Worksheet

1. Section Title (Use Keyword or Navigation Button Label):

2. Purpose:

3. Does this section meet the overall goals/objectives of the website? If yes, how?

4. Who will gather information/data/resources for this section? (List names, contact information and area of emphasis)

5. Content: Outline all content for this section (Content refers to the information and/or functionality of the page – what text and/or applications are needed on the page; how it will be presented is covered in the next item, media; you do not need to write the text at this point, just note what the text will address and how long, in terms of sentences or paragraphs, the text will be; for example, a community connectedness page might need 2-3 sentences to describe the community’s regular interaction/social events that might serve as an introduction to an interactive calendar.)

6. Media: Determine what media will be added to this section (Photos, Video, Illustrations, etc. You want to be as specific as is necessary; if you are working with a web designer, you may not need to provide photos and illustrations – the web designer may prefer to work with stock photos or his/her own media – part of what you are paying for is his/her artistic expertise, so take advantage of it. However, if you are doing-it-yourself, you will need to find specific photos, etc. to provide to the individual actually constructing the site. At this point, you may not know who will be doing the construction, so focus on the concepts you want present on the site and the details can be worked out later.)

7. Link location: How will visitors access this page?

8. Additional needs:

9. Potential future enhancements: