Web Sites For Advocacy and Community Organizing: Basics, Essentials, and Best Practices

Design Element Best Practices

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Learning Goals

► Appreciate design best practices
► Learn what needs to go “above the fold”
► Understand appropriate front page, featured content, “side” links, and footers
► Enumerate essential page-based elements
Design Elements

Best Practices

- Provide consistent navigation throughout the site
- Create organization brand through images and fonts
  - Your design impacts how people relate to you
- Offer entry point for each audience
- Use a universal color palette
- Design for accessibility
  - www.watchfire.com
Design Elements – Above the Fold

► Banner area should contain:
  ▪ Organizational Name
  ▪ Logo
  ▪ Tag Line
  ▪ Photos
  ▪ Have banner area linked to index page
Design Elements – Above the Fold

► Global Navigation
  ◌ Main site destinations should be consistent across site
  ◌ Be wary of drop-down navigation menus
  ◌ Sub navigation links help people get to destinations faster

► Language Links
  ◌ Should be readily visible on front page for sites with multi-lingual content
Design Elements – Above the Fold

► Search Box
  ▪ One of most-often-used navigation methods
  ▪ Never hurts to use Google code...

► Email List Sign Up
  ▪ Email, Zip Code
  ▪ Validation Check

► Donate Button
  ▪ Consider breaking out of donate button with a different color or graphic
Design Elements

► Front page features should tell the story of your organization
  ▪ Mission statement
  ▪ Featured Campaign
  ▪ Slide show depicting work and issues
    ▪ Should convey passion and relevance
  ▪ Quote(s) from member or noteworthy supporter
  ▪ Member profile told as story with picture
Design Elements

- Featured content gives updates and new information to supporters and repeat visitors
  - What’s New
  - Campaign updates
  - Featured Events
  - Action Alerts
  - From Our Blog
  - Featured Video
“Side links” can provide contextual navigation

- Other content in this section
- Featured campaign icon
- Flickr badge for page-specific event
- Store Items relevant to page content
- Related links
- Link to site map
Design Elements

Page footers contain essential boilerplate

- Repeat the global navigation links
- Address and Phone Number
- Contact Us
- Site Credits
Design Elements

► Page footers
  ▪ Privacy Policy
  ▪ User Agreement
  ▪ Copyright Notice
    ▪ Consider Creative Commons (creativecommons.org)
  ▪ Fair Use Statement
  ▪ Editorial Policy
Design Elements

Page-based elements make the site easier to user

- Printer-safe page version
- “Email this page to a friend”
- Change font size
- Breadcrumbs to document navigation path
- RSS/XML icon where appropriate
- Home page link
End Of Section

► Questions?
► Comments?

Thank You!

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