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Web Studio, LLC

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO

ORGANIZING YOUR WEBSITE CONTENT

3 Steps You Can Take Right Now to Prepare
for Your Perfect Website

In order to effectively share your message with others you will need to use text, photos, illustrations, stories, charts, and videos. All of this is your content. When it comes to assembling a website, your content is the most important piece of the puzzle.
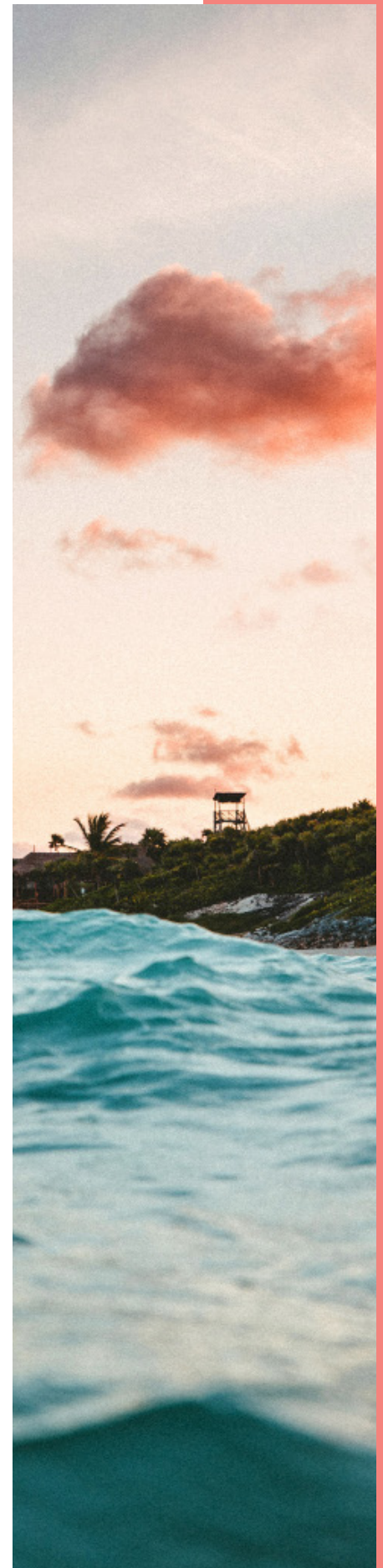
This article will give you a plan that you can immediately put into action as you begin gathering content for your project. It's here to help you work collaboratively with your team and designers/developers like us.

LET'S BEGIN!

STEP 1: CREATE A SHARED FOLDER

The key to digital organization is having a dedicated space for your files. I, myself, have been guilty of downloading and saving files all over my desktop and documents folder, only to have to search frantically to track them down later while mumbling under my breath, "I know it's here…wait, maybe it's here…" There's an easier way!

To avoid digital clutter and last-minute frantic searches during your project life cycle, I recommend setting up a Google Drive shared folder that gives editing access to all involved with the content development process. Then, as you gather files and documents, save everything to this one folder. We love this method because it's simple, and by storing the documents "in the cloud", you'll have 24/7 access from any computer or mobile device.

TAKE ACTION:

1. Visit http://drive.google.com to access your Google Drive cloud storage.
2. In drive, click **New > Folder** to create a folder.
3. To share the folder, follow these steps as outlined in the Gsuite Online Learning Center[1]:

    1. Select the file or folder you want to share.
    2. Click Share ＋👤
    3. In the **Share with others** box:

        1. Enter the email addresses or Google Groups you want to share with.
        2. Choose what kind of access you want to grant:
            - **Can edit**—Collaborators can add and edit content as well as add comments.
            - **Can comment** (Select files only)—Collaborators can add comments, but not edit content.
            - **Can view**—People can view the file, but not edit or add comments.
    3. If you want to control how visible your files are to other people, such as keeping them completely private or allowing anyone on the web to see them, click Advanced > Change and choose an option. The options available will depend on your admin's settings for your organization.

4. Click Done.

TIP: Within this top-level folder, create an "images" subfolder for saving your images and visual content. Then, to keep your images organized, rename them to match the corresponding page and placement. *i.e. - homepage-banner1.jpg, services-feature.jpg*

STEP 2: CREATE A SITE OUTLINE

Once you've created space for your files, it's time to brainstorm what content you'll need. If you're anything like me, you might enjoy doing regular "brain dumps" to clear your head, jotting down ideas and sketches onto every post-it note or napkin that is in your path. Or you may prefer to do the opposite and start with a structured framework or template. Whatever method you choose, here's a quick way for you to pre-sort out web content ideas, and make room for new ideas to grow - create a site outline.

One suggested site outline for a typical nonprofit site is below.

A. **Home**

B. **About Us / Who We Are**

      i. Mission/Vision Statement

      ii. Introduction/Bio

      iii. Team Profiles & Headshots

C. **News & Events**

      i. Current Projects & Opportunities

      ii. Press Releases or Articles

      iii. Events Calendar

D. **Contact Us**

      i. Volunteer (can either be a section, or a stand-alone page)

E. **Make a Donation**

And some other pages to consider are Privacy Policy, Terms & Conditions, and Refund Policy.

TAKE ACTION:

Start by making a list of your main website page and subpage titles. This list will eventually become your site's navigation, and when combined with the next step, will give you a place to sort your ideas and brainstorm collaboratively.

STEP 3: CREATE A UNIQUE DOCUMENT FOR EACH PAGE LISTED IN YOUR SITE OUTLINE

Now that you have your shared folder and a sitemap, you're ready to take the next step in preparing the ground for collaboratively cultivating and growing your website's content.

Long gone are the days of having multiple versions of the working file zipping back and forth by email only to discover that the file you've been editing for the last hour isn't the most up to date copy. In the last few years, Google has revolutionized document sharing and collaboration by enabling us to edit the same document, even at the same time. There are other desktop and web apps that have upgraded their features to allow similar functionality, but we love Google's software because it doesn't require a subscription, it is reliable, and the mobile apps are intuitive to use.

TAKE ACTION:

Within the shared folder you set up in Step 1, create a Google document for every page in your sitemap outline in Step 2.

To create a new document, follow this step as outlined in the Gsuite Online Learning Center[2]:
In Drive, click **New > Google Docs > Blank document**

NEXT STEPS:

Once the pages are set up, you're ready to begin drafting content for each individual page.

For sample templates and content worksheets to help you craft targeted messages that speak to your audience, visit panoramicwebstudio.com/resources for **Part 2: Content Worksheets.**

SOURCES:
1. "Getting Started With Drive", Gsuite Learning Center - https://gsuite.google.com/learning-center/products/**drive**/get-started/
2. "Getting Started With Docs", GSuite Learning Center - https://gsuite.google.com/learning-center/products/**docs**/get-started

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Tammy Iroku is an entrepreneur, author and the founder and CEO of Panoramic Web Studio, LLC. She has been developing user-friendly websites and print media for over 20 years for clients in an array of industries including nonprofit organizations, public schools, music entertainers, churches and public speakers.

Iroku continuously researches website best practices in her quest to know as much as possible and to hone her design craft while fully understanding her diverse clients. Panoramic Web Studio's operations are currently based in Brooklyn, New York where she lives with her husband and two sons. You can get in touch with her via Instagram or through her website.

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panoramicwebstudio.com/get-started