

# Takin' Care of Business



Mr. Breitsprecher's Edition

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www.myBusinessEd.com

## The Design Process

Discovery

Exploration

Implementation

Web design is art, science, and problem solving all rolled into one. The goal is to create a web that works for its users, but that also meets the needs and objectives of its owner.

This means you have to carefully work with the organization you are designing for and understand what its potential customers/users expect when they surf the web.

Creating and finalizing a web involves programming skills – this is literally science. Our Web Design class, like many in the professional web development community, will separate the design & content from the mark-up/coding. We will just look at web design and content.

Using strategies to get things done helps us work efficiently. It helps us do better work. It more-fully ensures we achieve our objectives. Web Design can be broken into a process with three tasks: Discovery, Exploration, and Implementation.

### Discovery

No web design can work if we do not start by meeting with our client and learning what they want to achieve. This is the first step and it determines how every other step will work.

Before you meet with your client, do some research so you know who they are and what they do. This will let you ask better questions about their business and what they want the web design to achieve.

When you meet your web client, be prepared to sell yourself. Let them see that you are the right person, highly qualified, to do the job. Show

### Web Design versus Web Programming

It is not polite or nice to judge people, however, it is fair to acknowledge that different job tasks require different skills. In some cases, these skills are most-comfortable when people have certain personalities or character traits.

For example, Web Design is more of an art than it is a technical skill. Details matter, but paramount is the “big picture” and how the details fit together to create a unified design. Computer programming, on the other hand, requires creative problem-solving skills, but this is very different than creating graphics and visual representations of designs.

It is common for businesses to separate the design, content creation, and coding of their website into 2 or 3 work groups. It helps when each group understands the skills that others bring to the table.

them that you want to do their web design and will make their web site GREAT!

One way to impress your client, is to be prepared before you meet them. Then carefully ask questions, carefully listen to their answers, and take notes.

### Exploration

The next step of the design process is to take the information from the Discovery stage, and research how other webs are designed to serve similar organizations and/or needs. Imagine that you are a user of these websites. What works for you? What does not work? How will you make your design better?

At this stage, have plenty of paper with you as you sit at your computer and check webs on your smartphone. Make sketches MANUALLY of what you see.

Remember, you need to check on BOTH desktop/laptop displays and on handheld devices. Be sure you see each web you explore on a widescreen display and on the “portrait” orientation that we commonly use with our smartphones. Draw with color if you

like. Visit websites and create drawings of designs that you can build on. Remember, virtually none of us want to use websites that are so unusual and different that we cannot intuitively understand how information is structured.

### Implementation

Now that we have worked to understand our client's needs and explored different examples of how to meet those needs, it is time to begin creating a layout. Often, it is best to develop a concept and then prepare 2 designs. This way, you can offer your client choices.

If you offer your client 2 choices, they may want to talk to you about developing a third option. That is fine too – it moves the design process forward.

It is not wise to begin creating a working website when preparing design proposals. If your client hasn't approved the design concept, it is a waste of time. Do not move to the coding/mark-up phase until all details on the design are in place. Use your computer and smartphone to look at ideas, but create a drawing of your proposal.