Takin' Care of Business

Separating Design from "Mark-Up"

The first thing that working professionals must master to achieve success is the process of getting work done to high-quality standards. Nowhere is this more true than in anything related to computers and digital technologies.

Investment in computers, software, and hardware only make sense when they result in high-quality project being completed promptly. If I want to do low-quality work, there is no reason to invest $1,000 or more in a computer and many hundreds of dollars more for software if I am not going to better work than I can with simpler technologies – perhaps even paper and pencil!

Just as importantly, investments in technology need to help us complete projects. This means that it is not enough to master the software. *We also need to learn a work-flow process that keeps us organized, on-track, and helps us get things done promptly.*

Web Design vrs Web Development

Designing websites pages and creating & organizing content is essential to creating a web that is useful, informative, and fun for its visitors. This is a complex task as web design includes everything that specifies what a site should be.

It includes planning the layout, navigation, logo, graphics, color schemes, interactivity, embedded or linked media, and more.

Developing/Programming websites picks up after the design. It is only when the entire concept

Web Design: Easy as 1-2-3

In Web Design class, the emphasis is on learning what makes websites and then applying a professional design process. In order to really learn how to design webs, we will not study how to code them. While we can break the design process down into three simple steps, we cannot simplify the details and reflection that is inherent in good design.

Likewise, when students take a computer programming class and learn how to create website or apps, the emphasis is how learning and applying the details of the different languages that make computers work and do the fun things many take for granted. Design and content naturally cover different skills sets. Each is an art full of exciting opportunities and career paths. While it is valuable to learn both sides of web creation, it is best to learn each independently from the other. Web Design can be broken into three steps:

1. **Discovery:** What is the purpose of a website, who will use it, how should users interact with it. What do we want the website to do.
2. **Exploration:** How can we meet the objectives and goals we developed in the discovery page. How do other websites deliver these types of objectives?
3. **Implementation:** How can we conceptualize and finalize a design and all of the details and content that will make it great?

of a web is finalized and approved that we can begin the process of developing the coding that will make the design work. Remember, web pages need to perform across different devises, operating systems, and platforms.

Choosing how a web should be coded with XML, CSS, and scripting languages like Ruby on Rails or PHP can only be done after a final design is agreed on. Without a solid design, web developers/programmer cannot create the magic of a web's design.

More importantly, web development/programming is very detailed work. It is not hard, but it has to be done to precise and exact standards. It would be a waste of time to start coding a website before all stakeholders agreed on the design.

Separating Content from Mark-Up

Across many professions, it is common to divide work into manageable chunks. This is how we create a process to be productive. This is how we create a workflow that produces high-quality products. Newspapers, for example, separate the complex process of laying out each page from the writing and editing.

The process of creating, editing, and revising the content of any publication is critically important. Content is created by people that specialize in getting good information together.

The process of presenting that content, called "mark-up", is done by people that specialize in making content look and work great.

By Mr. Breitsprecher, 2017