



Developing a Web Strategy

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Have a Plan

- **Winging it no longer works!**
- Over 70% use the web
- You won't know (if, when, why) you are excluded
- How does the audience decide the site is usable?
- Dynamic, frequent, no guarantees — need to get people to the site



Web Site Dimensions

- Architecture
- Content (including dynamic content)
- Visual (and audio) interface



Conduct an Audit

- Is your web site usable?
- Is your web site dynamic?
- Is there reason to visit frequently?
- How do people find your site?
- Is navigation easy?
- How good are your competitor's sites?



Ongoing

Your web site is a perpetual process



Web Strategy

A web strategy is not...

- Reusing brochure text
- A technology to eliminate genuine relationships
- Hiring a friend
- Launched and then forgotten

Web Strategy

A web strategy is...

- In alignment with the Business Plan
- Very nimble - a series of trials and adjustments
- Constantly being improved
- A commitment to listen and improve relationships
- Aware of the user (internal) and the audience (external)



Strategy Hierarchy

- Objectives
- Strategies for each audience
- Benefits to audience
- Specification development
- Setting priorities



Ask Questions!

How do I know what my objectives are?

- Why do I have a web site?
- Who is the site for?
- How do potential buyers benefit from my site?
- What do I want the site to do?
- What are the expectations for the site?
- How will I know (measure) the success of the site?



Objectives

- Goals
- Requirements
- Constraints



Audience

Know your audiences (see Appendix)

- What content is required (output)?
- What content is produced (input)?
- What functionality do both of us want?
- What is their technical competence?
- Take a field trip



Your Strategy

- Site strategy
- Know your audience
- Technical strategy
- Functional specifications
- Creative specifications
- Select a developer (if not done internally)
- Implementation plan



Site Strategy

- Mission and vision
- Overall goal (review quarterly)
- Competitive analysis
- Measurements of success
- Check alignment with business strategy



Audience Strategy

- What is their behavior?
- How they use the web?
- What's in it for them?
- What paper can be eliminated?



Functional Specification

- What will the site do for each audience (and the associated benefit)?
- Constraints
- Develop a set of wants and needs



Functional Specification

- Defined releases
 - Crawl, walk, run
 - Incremental wins
 - Roadmap for improvements (timelines for additional functionality)
- Evaluation and redevelopment
- Establish budget and production plans



Creative Specification

- Visual intent (image, look and feel)
- Same class or style as your competitors?
- How does it differ from the crowd?
- Does the site resonate with your ideal customer?
- Does the customer get to the story he / she wants to hear quickly?
- Tone
- Early brainstorming



Project Summary

- Vision, goals, and constraints
- Definition of each audience
- Functionality by audience
- Sample of content
- Develop a detailed Scope of Work
- Develop timelines and checklists
- Progress reviews and feedback



Outsource?

Find a “good” developer by evaluating:

- Experience, and alignment with your goals
- Accountability and timeliness
- Conflicts:
 - Of interest
 - In vision
 - In communication
 - In reporting requirements
- Cost (fixed vs. time and materials)
- References



Technical Strategy

- Hosting
- Lack of speed KILLS
- Navigation
- Document handling and collaboration (see Appendix)
- Secured and unsecured sections
- Back-end databases



Project Management

- Build a Team
- Content strategy and development takes time
- Use the timelines and checklists
- Conduct checklist reviews
- Manage the exceptions
- Redevelop timelines as needed



Project Management

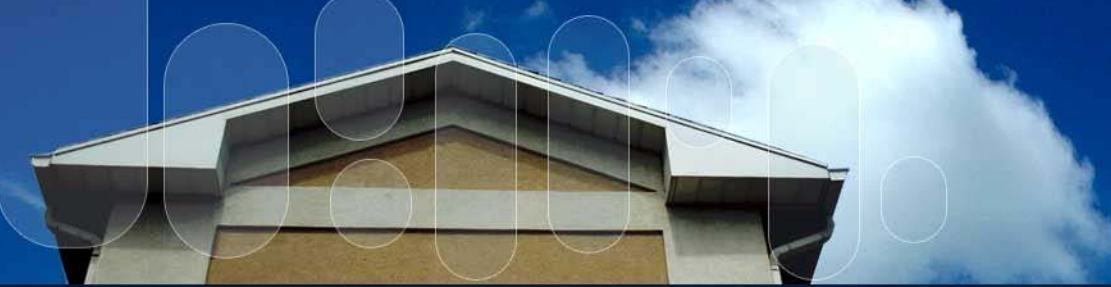
Avoid changes:

- ***Architectural changes*** made mid-stream can mean redeveloping the site from the beginning
- ***Visual changes*** mid-stream are less damaging, but can disrupt the tone and harmony of your site strategy
- Evaluate ***Ideas*** for potential changes as early as possible; carefully consider the cost and benefits



Implement the Plan

- Share the vision
- Internal review
- Train your audience



Evaluate Results

- Reaching the buyer?
 - Interview your sales team
- Focus groups
- Survey your buyers
- Maximize search engines
- Links
- Make adjustments



Content

- Out of date content
- Poorly edited content
- Good web sites take too much effort to be a one-time experience for your customers
- Content management involves effort both in producing content and in planning flexibility to accommodate fresh content
- Interview audiences



Avoid

- No Contact Information
- Pop-up windows
- Slow performance
- Forced sign-in
- Inability to use browser controls
- Bad search tools
- Pages listed as “under construction”
- Visual elements that only look good on large screens



Bad Design

- Too much flash and animation
- Ineffective streaming video
- Over-design, impeding user navigation
- Not providing useful information
- Lack of readability
- Hiding the “important information”
- Fewer than three clicks



Success!

- Your web site and your business objectives are in harmony
- Your buyers, trades, and external audiences find it easy to work with you
- Your audiences find the site easy to learn and use
- Your audiences recognize the web site saves time and money
- Your web site SOLVES problems



Audience Appendix

Typical Homebuilder Audiences

- Sales
- CADD
- Estimating
- Purchasing
- Construction
- Customer Service
- Land
- Accounting
- Human Resources



Audience Appendix

Sales

- Buyer
- Realtor
- Lender
- Construction

CADD

- Architect
- Permitting entity
- Sales / buyer
- Construction
- Engineers
(certification)



Audience Appendix

Estimating

- Vendors / trade partners
- Purchasing
- CADD
- Sales / buyer

Purchasing

- Trade partners
- Manufacturers
- Construction
- Accounting



Audience Appendix

Construction

- Trade partners
- Sales / buyer
- Accounting

Customer Service

- Homeowner
- Construction
- Trade partner
- Purchasing



Audience Appendix

Accounting

- Management
- Purchasing
- Construction
- Lenders
- Taxing authorities
- Banks

Human Resources


- Employees
- Recruitment



Audience Appendix

Land Acquisition and Development

- Sellers
- Governmental agencies
- Engineers
- Construction
- Purchasing
- Accounting



Document Collaboration Examples

- Scopes of Work
- Drawings
- Bid documents
- Contract documents
- Sales agreements
- Loan documents
- Customer Service requests
- Engineering certification
- Schedules
- Purchase orders
- Rebate reporting
- Safety briefings
- Web leads
- Plat plans

Shinn Group of Companies

Shinn Consulting

Our mission is to improve the professionalism of the home building industry.

Our services include:

- Business management and specialized consulting for all aspects of the builder's organization
- Best practice awareness and experience exchange through facilitation of builder groups and in-house seminars
- Ownership transitions and other exit strategies including sale of the business
- Facilitation and guidance of the strategic planning process and development of business plans

Lee Evans Group

The Lee Evans Group has been the premier organization in management education for the home building industry since 1954. Our seminars focus on management techniques to improve profitability, assist in controlled growth, survive during tough economic times and provide construction controls.

All of our seminars are designed to help the builder:

- Satisfy customers by building the house right the first time, then giving superior customer service
- Manage capital and financial operations to achieve high profitability
- Build strong and integrated systems to make the management job easier and less stressful
- Train and educate personnel to work as a team to produce superior results

Builder Partnerships

Operating as an agent for over 35 builders constructing more than 10,000 units annually, Builder Partnerships fosters communication and cooperation between builders and manufacturers. Our focus is to create win-win relationships for both builder and manufacturer.

Our program:

- Improves communication and interaction between builder and manufacturer
- Manages a comprehensive specification agreement and rebate program
- Streamlines the purchasing decision
- AND, much more

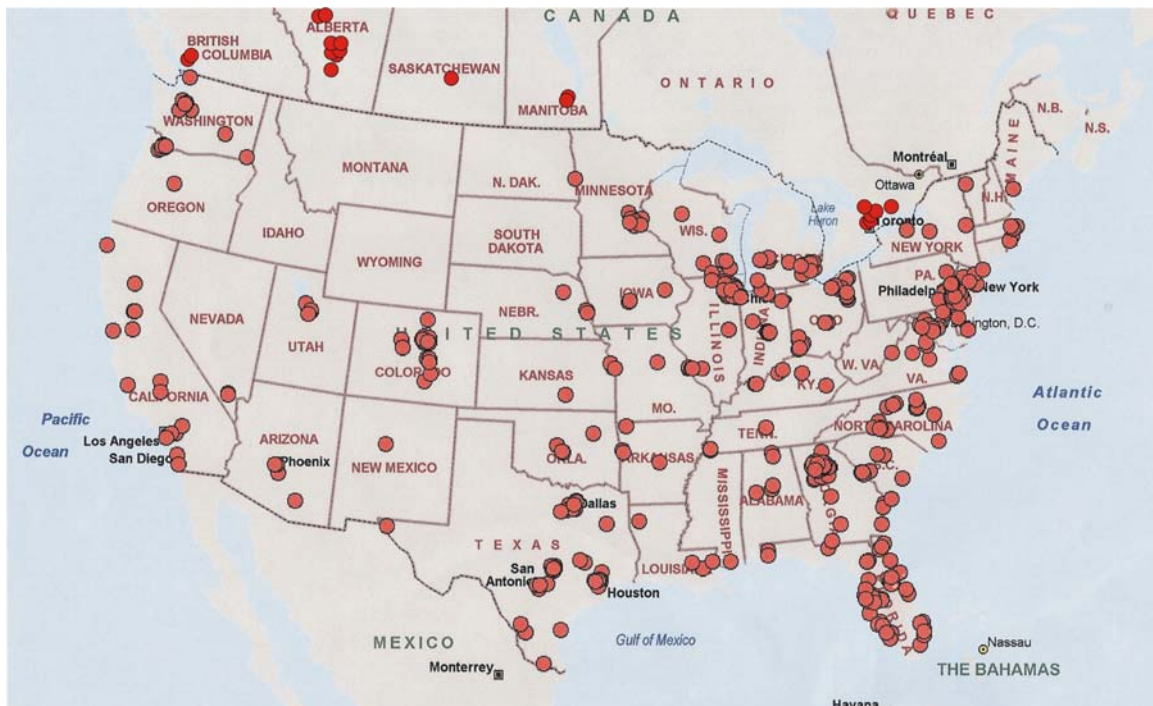


Our Clients

Our primary clients include:

- Medium to large volume regional builders seeking to increase their profitability
- Other players in the home building industry, including manufacturers, financial entities, software companies and other suppliers

Our builder clients, located across the United States and Canada, include top performers among regional homebuilders. Many of these companies have been recognized by home building professional magazines and local Home Builder Associations (HBAs) for their successful management styles; and are considered spheres of influence within their communities.



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Strategy

- Audit and improvement of web based processes
- Evaluation of possible uses and target audiences
- Definition of objectives
- Assistance with set up for ease of navigation
- Creation of an ongoing web management strategy

Site Architecture

- Visual layout & design
- Database development
- E-commerce site development
- Portal and document collaboration development
- Graphic Design
- Rich Internet applications
- Custom content management solutions

Internet Marketing

- Email newsletters
- 2D/3D Animation
- Webinar solutions

Dedicated to improving the professionalism of the home building industry, Shinn Consulting is a widely recognized and well-respected leader providing support to home builders. Our consultants are highly familiar with the intricate nature of the industry, and have a solid history of working with organizations to evaluate and recommend the best solutions for their needs.

Contact us at
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