

## Under Construction: Building Your Township's Website

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## Who are you?

- We don't need a website
- We need a website
- We have a website, but...
- Our website is awesome



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## Who am I?

- LIAA has 15 years of experience with community information
- Community Center website building solution
- Long and extensive relationship with MTA



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What we'll cover:

- Where do I start?
- What makes a good website?
- There it is...now what?



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Why have a website?

- The big two:
  - Increase civic engagement
  - Decrease repeated questions
- The big others:
  - Expand access to government services
  - Identify community assets and values
  - Extend community identity
  - Your citizens will love you
  - It's the American way



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What makes a good website?

1. Design
2. Technology
3. Features
4. Ease of Use
5. Content



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## What makes a good website?

1. Content
2. Ease of Use
3. Technology
4. Features
5. Design



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## Getting Started: First Lesson



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## Getting Started: Process

- Plan ahead
- Choose your tools
- Build it
- Market it



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## Plan Ahead



- Who will use it? (Roleplay)
- What do they need? (Outline & Write)
- Who will create it? (Delegate)
- Who will maintain it? (Participate)
- What should it look like? (Design)

**Content is the Key!**



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## Choose Your Tools: Considerations



- What type of site do you want?
  - Brochure
  - Community
  - E-Government
- What sort of native technical expertise do you have available?
  - Establish a relationship with an expert that will empower you



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## Choose Your Tools: Considerations



- The tool you choose to build your site should:
  - Be easily accessible
  - Allow every content owner to participate
  - Avoid single point of access (either internal or third-party)



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## Choose Your Tools

Method	Setup	Training	Participation	Cost
HTML	☹️	☹️	☹️	☹️
Visual Editor	😊	😊	😊	😊
Blog	😊	😊	😊	😊
Hosted CMS	😊	😊	😊	😊
Installed CMS	☹️	😊	😊	☹️
Enterprise CMS	☹️	😊	😊	☹️

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## HTML

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## Choose Your Tools

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Hosted CMS	😊	😊	😊	😊
Installed CMS	☹️	😊	😊	☹️
Enterprise CMS	☹️	😊	😊	☹️

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## Choose Your Tools

Method	Setup	Training	Participation	Cost
HTML	☹	☹	☹	☹
Visual Editor	☺	☺	☺	☺
Blog	☺	☺	☺	☺
Hosted CMS	☺	☺	☺	☺
Installed CMS	☹	☺	☺	☹
Enterprise CMS	☹	☺	☺	☹

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## Hosted CMS



LIAA Community Center, many others

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## Choose Your Tools

Method	Setup	Training	Participation	Cost
HTML	☹	☹	☹	☹
Visual Editor	☺	☺	☺	☺
Blog	☺	☺	☺	☺
Hosted CMS	☺	☺	☺	☺
Installed CMS	☹	☺	☺	☹
Enterprise CMS	☹	☺	☺	☹

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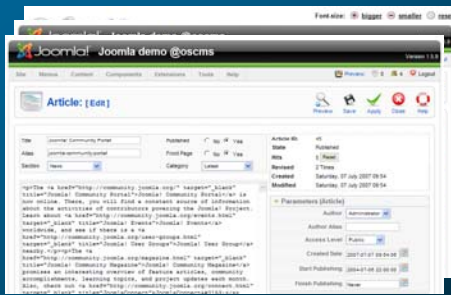
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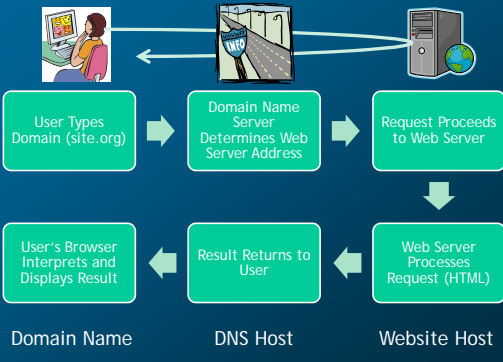
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## Installed CMS



Joomla Drupal

## Sidebar: How Websites Work



## Build It

- Don't underestimate how much **work** starting a website will be
- **Many hands** make light work:
  - Work together in local computer classrooms
- Identify writing and layout **standards**
- Name an editor to **review** all pages
- Don't forget the **10-second rule**

## Market It



- Mention to callers “You could find this on our website”
- Mention website in all mailings
- Hand out website literature at community gatherings
- Get other websites in the community to link to your website

Use Every Opportunity!



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## A Word About SEO

- Search Engine Optimization
- Think before you sign up with a service
- Add clear and relevant text to your home page
- Get links to your site from all community websites



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## Features and Navigation

- What’s the **minimum** content we can get away with?
- What content **should** we really have?
- How do we make sure people can **find** things?
- What other **cool things** should we use?



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## Minimum Content

- **WHO:** Contact Information
- **WHAT:** Positions and Responsibilities
- **WHEN:** Hours
- **WHERE:** Locations



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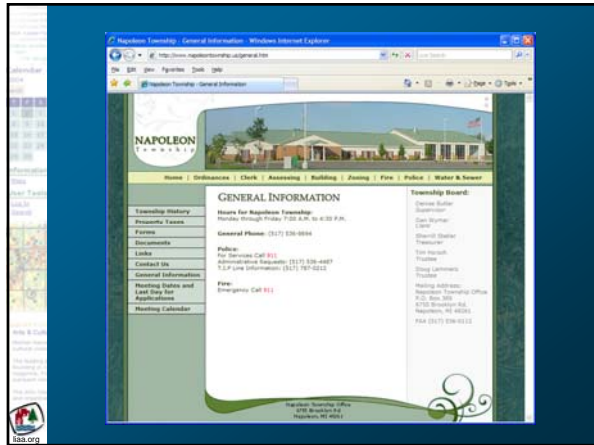
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## Suggested Content

- Ordinances
- Plans
- Forms (online or PDF)
- Event Calendar
- Agendas and Minutes
- News or Blog
- Community Information
- Maps



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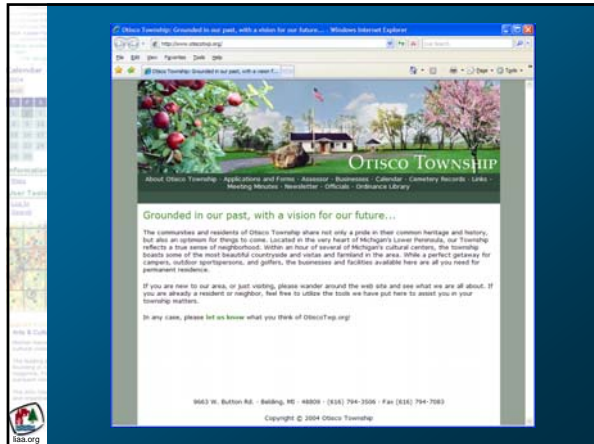
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## Designing Good Navigation

- Make an Outline
- Choose Seven or Fewer Main Topics
- Allow for Multiple Ways to Find Info
  - By Organization Chart
  - By Function
  - By User Type
  - FAQ
  - Search
  - Site Map

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## Features to Consider

- Regular Blog
- Online Forms
- Online Payment
- RSS
- Maps
- Rich Media (video and audio)
- Comments and Feedback

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## Now What?

- Keep the content **current**
- **Check** for broken links and updates
- Keep it **simple**
- Involve the **community**



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## One More Time

- Before technology, **make a plan**
- A website is a **writing project**, not a technology project
- Get as much **participation** as possible



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## One More Time

- Choose a technology partner that will **empower** you
- Keep it **simple**
- Keep it **current**
- Engage the **community**



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## Questions or Comments?

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