

⇒ Strategy Development

Why and when

In order to have an effective website - one that is both usable and that meets the aims of the organization - there has to be clarity about:

- The target users
- The goals they wish to achieve
- The user goals the site is to support

What matters is that target users can quickly and easily achieve their goals, and achieving these meets the site owner's strategy and is seen as valuable by the user. Therefore, a website needs a clear strategy that should be developed at the start of a project.

Our approach

We offer a range of services to help organisations develop appropriate site strategies including user research – to understand user goals – and workshops for senior managers to develop site strategies.

One cost effective solution is a one day 'Strategic Workshop'. This is aimed at senior managers with responsibility for setting, or who can influence, web strategy. In order that participants gain a first hand understanding of user goals and behaviours, we inform these workshops by filming a number of users on the site and showing this at the start of the workshop.

The workshop is highly participative; participants record issues using cognitive mapping techniques in order to capture their immediate reactions to the testers' experiences. Subsequently, a WUP consultant facilitates a discussion so that participants develop a collective view of the key issues to be addressed, the implications of these, and the required actions and priorities.

How we do it

Workshop objectives

The workshop objectives are typically:

- To gain a shared understanding of the principal problems with the site
- To agree user types and identify the main user goals for each type
- To agree organisational site aims and user goals to be supported
- To make recommendations about the process for site development

Participants

The workshop is most effective if it is attended by a range of personnel from across the organisation including:

- Managers responsible for developing web strategy or who influence this
- Web team staff responsible for implementing the outcomes
- People who have direct contact with the organisation's customers or users

Workshops work well with 10-15 participants, but up to 20 can be accommodated.

User testing

Prior to the workshop, WUP will record a small number of users (typically three) from different target audiences to obtain video footage to illustrate the key issues.

The profile of the testers is agreed with the client. WUP recruits the testers and conducts the testing sessions at our premises, capturing an image of the tester, sound and a screen shot of the site as it is viewed.

The testers are asked to explore the site and undertake tasks relevant to the user by an experienced WUP moderator. These tasks are agreed in advance with the client's project manager.

Workshop Agenda

A typical workshop agenda is as follows:

Timing	Activity
10.00-10.10	Welcome
10.10-11.15	Video clips of 3 different users to demonstrate the major issues/cognitive mapping of issues by observers
11.15-12.45	Facilitated workshop discussion of issues arising from video leading to identification of major site problems and key user groups
12.45-13.30	Lunch
13.30-14.15	Breakout groups to identify user goals
14.15-14.45	Group presentation of user goals – workshop discussion
14.45-15.15	Cognitive mapping and facilitated discussion about site aims, and discussion leading to agreement about user goals to be supported
15.15-15.30	Discussion on how to produce a user centred web site (illustrated by case study)
15.30-16.00	Development of recommendations for a process for site development
16.00	Close and depart

Practical issues

Usually, the client provides the venue, refreshments and audiovisual equipment (though we can arrange these if required at additional cost). The following is required:

- LCD projector and screen
- Sound
- Laptop with internet connection (we can bring our own but need to be able to connect to the internet)
- 4-5 flip charts

Outputs

Following the workshop we would produce a short report that captures the key issues to emerge from the workshop.

Fees

Prices depend on the amount of research required and the number of participants but are in the range £3-5,000. This includes:

- Tester recruitment and payment
- User testing the site
- Workshop preparation and video editing
- Running the workshop
- Preparing workshop minutes

Client examples

We have run strategic workshops for a variety of clients including:

Client	Project	Date
University Of Glasgow	UoG wished to make internal stakeholders more aware of usability issues with the site in order to encourage a more user centred approach to site and content development. 'Website Workshop' was held and attended by 20 internal stakeholders.	Feb 2009
Avon and Somerset Constabulary	Workshop with 5 senior managers and stakeholders to agree site redevelopment of their intranet based on user research.	March 2008
University of Westminster	Workshop with 18 stakeholders including senior academics to develop a site strategy.	Feb 2008
London Fire Brigade	Workshops with 17 key stakeholders to develop a new site strategy.	August 2007
Museum, Libraries and Archives (MLA)	Workshop with 19 stakeholders to develop a site strategy for MLA and their regional partners.	May 2007

Terms & Conditions

- VAT will be added to all fees at the prevailing rate.
- Payment due within 30 days on the invoice. date
- Work not identified in the proposal would be charged at WUP's standard rates (£950/day for directors, £750/day for consultants, £600/day for facilitators, £3000/day for support staff). Additional would be charged at cost
- The rates quoted assume tester remuneration of £40 plus travel expenses up to a maximum of £10. If tester remuneration needs to be greater than this for any reason (e.g. securing individuals with high time value or on short lead times) then any costs above the basic charge will be invoiced at cost.
- It is assumed that the client will invite the participants to the workshop