

Notes on Writing Proposals Flanagan 2002

- 1) write by going from general to specific. A list of specifics is not organized or useful without a big picture. A big picture without detail seems fluffy and vague.
- 2) Speak in future tense, not conditional. "The site will provide and opportunity" not "the site could" or "the site might"
- 3) What does the client specifically need to site to do, and how is your design going to get this to happen?
- 4) Make arguments, not assumptions. "the client needs flash." The site needs more graphics. WHY? are you sure the client needs these things? explain how you came to these decisions.
- 5) DO NOT criticize the client. DO not say "your current site sucks" or "right now the site is terrible, and ugly." Say "A new design will allow the strengths of the organization, x, y, and z, to be communicated more effectively to the audience <and if you need a because WHY, put it here>
- 6) "A flash site will have more interaction." WHY?
- 7) The client must clearly have a role. This is your chance to define it. "the client will be allowed to see x and be reassured" -- they are paying you, so this language is insulting.
- 8) the site doesnt have to do everything. Saying the site will promote the organization all over the world sounds like fluff. "The site will increase local and regional participation, and could take a national or even international role if XX happens ". How would the XX club or craft center or lane arts council actually TAKE an international role? Do they want that, is that a main goal of the site?
- 9) Might want to think about main goals and minor goals, so you attack the main goals (increase enrollment, increase membership) and the minor goals might be offshoots of the good work (attract national attention, win awards, etc). Remember, businesses and organizations often have concrete goals (we need to fundraise, we need more members, we need to help more people).
- 10) You must define when you will get feedback from

clients!

11) In budget detail per mile costs, per hour costs, per day costs, or percentage costs (computer use, materials) supplies...

12) client vs target audience/user. IN our case the client was an organization in existence.

13) proofreader's marks

14) "I will put more images on the page to make it interesting. I will use flash to make it interesting." Don't start out with the assumption that your site isn't by its very nature interesting! If it is not an interesting idea or design, change the DESIGN! Yes content can dictate some of that, but ultimately "interesting" is up to YOU!!

15) Justify the mood, the choice of graphics. "I want the website to be illustrated so that users will feel warm and happy and will want to give to those in need." Well that's not an argument, that's a wish. If you are designing a site for donations, look at ones that are out there, ones that are working. Red cross: not very warm and fuzzy imagery is getting donations. Someone did a proposal on child abuse and wanted the site to be warm and family feeling - is that a good design choice? In fact it might be read as ironic or insulting. Historic use of starving children for UNICEF and other charities. Sometimes a "good feeling" is not what works, even if you wish it would. Really see the context as a design issue, not as a "my opinion" issue.

16) vocabulary: user, client, link, structure / architecture, overall design, look and feel, functionality, usability, web page vs web site vs section of the site; upon entering the site, user will choose a flash or nonflash *version*. Clients give feedback (never plural). Text (rarely (texts). The client's requirements (generally they have several). Navigation (how users maneuver around the site: goal is for simple navigation.) Technical specifications (often a separate document, separated into user specifications and development specifications); "porting" (porting code from mac to pc, porting content from existing site to new;

prototype
demo
alpha

beta
gamma
final
launch