

# Unit 9

Publishing

Your

Web

Page

**After completing this unit, you should understand the following:**

How to implement your site

How to aid visitors using your site

How to encourage repeat visits

How to use graphics most effectively

How to promote your efforts properly

## Implementing Your Web Design

The implementation stage of Web site development is exciting but sometimes frustrating. This is when you put the pedal to the metal. Implementation not only involves actually writing the HTML, it also eventually involves getting your page(s) onto a server.

### Keeping Your Web Files Organized

If your Web presentation is uncomplicated (hopefully this is the case for your first site), save everything in the same directory. This makes it easy to upload files and maintain internal links. If your Web site is a complex array of icons, photos, and other elements, consider creating graphic and icon subdirectories. Remember that regardless of how you organize your files, always use relative addressing for internal links. (See “Relative Versus Absolute Addresses,” pages 69–71.)

## Authoring Your Web Page

Are you ready? Let’s get busy.

1. Quickly review the tutorial exercises at the front of the book. They’ll remind you what you’ve already learned.
2. Create a Web directory for all your Web pages and graphics. Unless your site becomes complicated or overly large, save everything in the same directory. This simplifies your links as well as the transfer of the files to a Web server.
3. Start simple. Create the basic Web pages without detailed content.
4. Test each page in the browser as you create it. Save often. This makes it easier to catch mistakes.
5. Once you’ve created a home page and one or more topic pages, begin linking them.
6. Build on one or two pages at a time. Don’t spread yourself too thin.



7. If you're in a classroom situation, be sure to save your page(s) on Drive A so you can take them home.
8. Read Appendix E for details about uploading your site to an HTML server.

## Helpful Hints for Stand-out Web Pages

Designing an effective Web presentation means learning and remembering a wide assortment of recommendations. The following lists categorize many of these seemingly unrelated bits of good advice, making them easier to reference and hopefully more likely to be implemented.



### Encouraging Repeat Visits

- Cater to what your audience wants and expects. If the audience is children, your writing style, layout, and graphics should be playful, bright, very easy to use, and energetic. If the audience is stockbrokers, your site should be solid, more formal, smart, and obviously well researched.

- Keep the links up to date and make sure your text is timely. This shows that you care about the site and that you'll keep it current.
- Include an update reference on appropriate pages (last updated: *date*). This tells visitors how current you really are.
- Clearly note what's new. This is characteristically accomplished on the home page by placing a link to the page(s) of new material. A small graphic often highlights the "What's New" link.
- Change your site periodically. Update information, add new links, and expand your format.

### Helping Visitors Scan

- Make sure your information is logically organized.
- Maintain links in easy-to-reference menu lists.
- Make links as self-explanatory as possible.

- Include a home page (or high-level index page) link on almost every page.
- If your Web page is long:
  - Include a table of internal links to help readers jump through the document.
  - Make sure readers can jump back to the top of the page at the end of each logical section.
- Use horizontal rules (or graphics) to visually separate topic areas.
- Use the <TITLE> to identify the presentation as well as the content of the page.
- Make your page transitions as snappy as possible. Try not to weigh down the top levels of the presentation with time-consuming downloads.

### **Adding a Professional Touch**

- Design your presentation around a theme and specialize in only a few topics. If you include too many unrelated topics, you'll seem like a dilettante and you won't inspire confidence in the quality of your information.
- Use small, tasteful graphics instead of browser-defined bullets and lines.
- Use repeating elements to create a unified look and feel on all your Web pages. For example, design a footer that includes your address, a small business logo, a home page link, and a horizontal rule. Use the footer consistently.
- Use icons as easily identifiable repeat links. For example, use repeating icons to identify the home, index, previous, and next pages.
- Use "express" links to help readers bypass introductory material. Help them get right to the heart of the presentation.
- Have someone else proofread your pages for typos. They'll catch the mistakes you can't see.



- Stay contemporary. When new HTML bells and whistles become widely available, implement them appropriately.
- Test your pages on at least two different browsers to be sure your pages are interpreted properly. If you employ a tag or feature that is browser-specific, be sure to inform users appropriately.
- Use HTML verification software (see the “Online Resources” section of Appendix E) to check the accuracy of your tags.

## Using Graphics Most Effectively

- Use thumbnail graphics as links to bigger graphics.
- If appropriate, make your graphics transparent and interlace them.
- Offer an alternative for text-only browsers. Include a text description of the graphic and, if appropriate,

design duplicate pages without graphics. Offer visitors a link to either page.

- Don’t include a graphic unless there’s a specific need for it.
- Make sure the graphic clearly relates to the content of the page.
- Don’t burden a page with too many graphics. It’s annoying to wait for a bunch of graphics to download.
- Include descriptive size and file format information in ALT text.  
*Example:* `<IMG SRC="art.gif" ALT="Face.10K GIF">`.
- Include WIDTH and HEIGHT attributes to prevent the Web page from resizing itself as graphics download. This also speeds up the transfer.  
*Example:* `<IMG SRC="art.gif" WIDTH=100 HEIGHT=130>`.

## Using Web-friendly Writing

HTML authors sometimes forget that someone has to actually read their writ-

ing. It's easy to get so busy with structure that you lose sight of content. Here are a few general suggestions to make your digital prose inviting, succinct, and easy to understand.

- Keep paragraphs and sentences short. Long sentences tire and puzzle your readers. Average sentence length should be 10 to 14 words, less if you're writing a sales ad.
- Use short, simple words. Big words are supposed to impress people but they rarely do. If you are writing to communicate, use words that communicate easily.
- Be concise. Avoid vague antecedents.  
*Bad:* "It has been determined that the easiest way to . . ."  
*Good:* "The easiest way to . . ."
- Write in a friendly, conversational tone, talking to the reader by:
  - Using pronouns (I, we, you, they).
  - Using colloquial expressions on occasion (a sure thing, a rip-off, okay, and the like).
  - Using contractions (they're, you're, it's, here's, we've, I've).
  - Using simple words.
  - Using second person (you) instead of third person (the reader).
  - Varying sentence length.  
*Example:* "It's time we discussed conversational writing. Not the boring, jargon-filled stuff you read in trade journals. No, I'm talking about warm, simple words and sentences. The kind of writing Ann Landers does. (And she makes big bucks at it!)"
- Avoid clichés like the plague, especially the terms "cool," "surf," or "information superhighway." They've been beaten into the ground.

- Keep adjectives to a minimum. Too many adjectives weaken the message and bloat the sentence. If possible, use verbs instead of adjectives and adverbs.

*Okay:* He walked quickly across the street.

*Better:* He dashed across the street.

*Okay:* The asphalt was very hot.

*Better:* The asphalt sizzled.

- Avoid sexist language. The days of the advertising man, stewardess, mailman, and fireman are over. Now we have the advertising professional, flight attendant, mail carrier, and fire fighter. To write nonsexist language, try the following:
  - Use plurals
  - Avoid reference to gender
  - Alternate gender references
  - Use “he and she” and “his and her” (avoid “he/she,” “his/her”)
  - Create an imaginary person

## Promoting Your Web Page

Good promotion is critical to increasing Web site traffic. Here are few suggestions to help galvanize your promotional efforts:

- *Tastefully* announce your page to the Internet; don’t blast intrusive advertising hype into newsgroups around the world.
- Include your Web URL (and email address) on all business stationery and correspondence.
- List your URL with every free Internet search engine, list, and catalog you can find. (Many good locations are listed below.) This may take you a few hours, but the increased visibility is well worth the time.
 

Because many site administrators have backlogs of URLs to add, you may find a delay in getting listed. For this reason, some folks begin advertising their sites a few days to two

weeks before they're actually ready. They put up placeholder pages with "under construction" notices. The only problem is that when users hit an "under construction" notice, they might not return when it's ready to go.

*Important:* Carefully read each list's submission rules before posting your site.

- If you have an advertising budget, considering investing in a few high-traffic spots. Yahoo! is a good example of an immensely popular Web site that charges for some (not all) of its promotional placement.
- Check Usenet and include appropriate announcements to targeted groups. (Make sure the group is amenable to the information you want to share; otherwise, you risk getting flamed.)
- Check local publications. Many newspapers and journals include weekly columns listing interesting new URLs.
- If you're a writer (and who isn't these days?), write articles for journals, newspapers, even e-zines and include your URL in the byline.
- If your site is especially interesting or unique, get someone to recommend it to Cool Site of the Day and other major traffic lists.
- If possible, monitor your site's traffic by checking access logs. This can be fairly complex, so check with your server administrator for details.
- The following are a variety of good locations for Web page promotion and announcements. (Remember, these URLs might be different by the time you're ready to promote yourself, and this list is by no means exhaustive—there are many more ways to get the word out than are listed here.)

*Submit It!:*

<http://www.submit-it.com>

*Promoting Your Pages:*

<http://osu.orst.edu/aw/promote>



*VirtualPROMOTE:*  
<http://www.virtualpromote.com>

*WWWPromote:*  
<http://wwwpromote.hypermart.net>

## Skills Check

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1. List five suggestions for encouraging repeat visits.
2. List five aids in helping visitors use your page.
3. List five ways to use graphics most effectively.
4. List seven ways you might promote your Web page once it is complete and ready.