

The Principles of Successful Website Management

Shane Diffily

A word cloud of various terms related to web development and publishing, arranged in a roughly circular pattern. The words are in a red serif font. The largest words are 'Publishing', 'Design', 'Testing', 'Coding', and 'Development'. Other prominent words include 'Usability', 'Security', 'Feedback', 'Editing', 'Accessibility', 'Information Architecture', 'Performance', 'Analytics', 'DNS', 'Legal Review', 'Privacy', 'QA', 'Website Infrastructure', 'Web Standards', 'Web Policies', 'Change Control', 'Disaster Recovery', 'Multimedia', 'Hosting', 'Site Planning', 'Content Creation', 'Publicity', 'SLA Review', and 'Information'. The words are scattered across the page, with some overlapping or positioned close together.

Usability
Disaster Recovery
Security Feedback
Publishing
Multimedia
Hosting
Accessibility Information Editing
Architecture
Performance Site Planning
Design Testing
Web Policies Analytics DNS Coding
Content Creation Publicity Legal Review
SLA Review Change Control Privacy
Website Infrastructure QA
Web Standards

Our agenda this afternoon

1. Introductions
2. The Principles of Website Management
3. Q&A

What you will learn:

- A means for evaluating if your website is being **managed appropriately**.
- If not, some **ideas for how to fix it**.

What are these principles?

There are just three

#1 Identify **all the activities** of website management

#2 Invest in **people & tools** to support these activities

#3 Implement a **management structure**

Simple, right?!

But there is evidence that it is not happening...

How to recognise a badly managed website

- **Confusing** homepage
- **Poor quality** content and many mistakes
- **Bleeding edge** technology

How did things get this way?

Sins of omission - not commission

- The **chaos** of the early internet still persists
- Not '**cool**' to manage too tightly
- Little **guidance** is available
- Trust the **web-guy** to look after it all!
- Little **support**
- **Budgets** are inadequate

It is time to change!

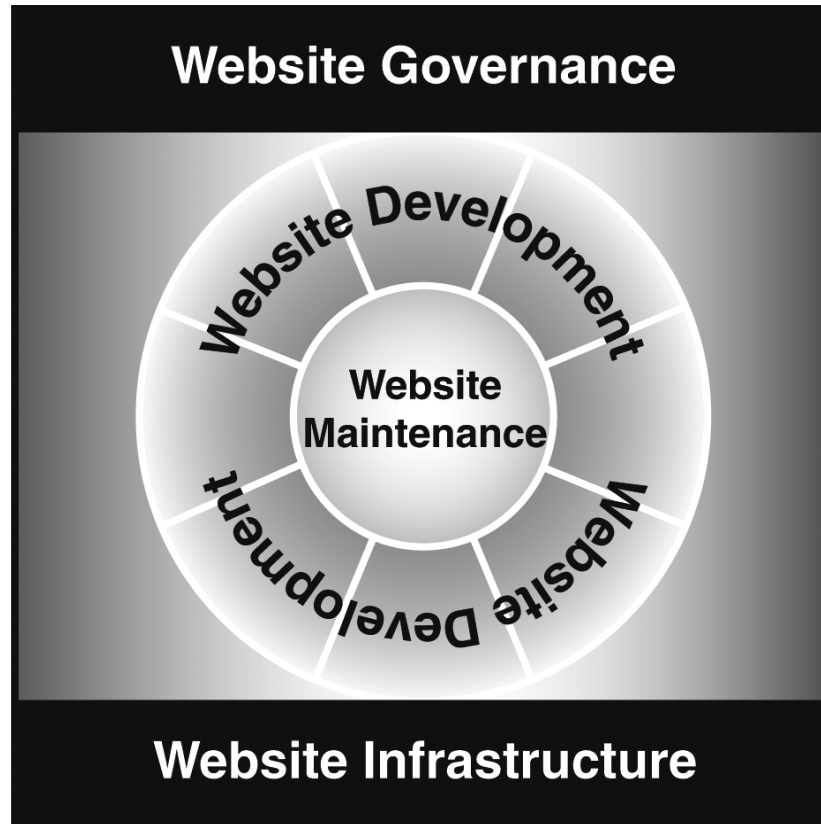
First step is to know what you are doing...

#1 Identify all the Activities of Web Management

A word cloud of various web management activities. The words are arranged in a circular pattern around a central phrase. The central phrase is 'And more!' in a large, bold, red font with a white outline and a drop shadow. The surrounding words are in black, sans-serif fonts of varying sizes. The words include: Usability, Disaster Recovery, Security, Feedback, Publishing, Multimedia, Hosting, Accessibility, Information, Editing, Architecture, Performance, Site Planning, Design, Testing, Coding, Web Policies, Analytics, DNS, Content Creation, Publicity, Legal Review, Development, SLA Review, Change Control, Privacy, Website Infrastructure, QA, and Web Standards.

Organise all the activities into categories...

A model for organising the activities of web management



Start at the coal face...

The tasks needed to ensure operational integrity

Website Maintenance

1. Publishing
2. Quality Assurance (broken links, spelling, etc.)
3. Feedback Monitoring
4. Performance Monitoring (KPIs, analytics, etc.)
5. Infrastructure Monitoring (availability, reliability, etc.)
6. Change Control

Major new developments are handled separately...

A continuous cycle of growth & enhancement

Website Development

1. Planning
2. Content
3. Design
4. Construction
5. Testing
6. Hosting
7. Publicity
8. Review

These need a secure foundation...

Especially where hosting is done internally

Website Infrastructure

1. Selecting and building an infrastructure
2. Infrastructure Maintenance
(Hardware, Software, Data, Security)
3. Extension management and new technology

These activities are often done **externally** via Website Hosting companies.

Ensure a controlled approach to site management...

The true centre of gravity on a website

Website Governance

1. Setting website goals
2. Setting website standards
3. Policing operations, development & technology
4. Planning and allocating resources

Investing in appropriate resources is key to success

#2 Invest in People & Tools to Support Activity

People

Need skills to match all the activities of site management.

For example:

Writing, Editing, Design, Coding, Multimedia, Technical, Marketing, Lawyer, etc. etc.

Tools

Need tools to help staff carry out their duties.

For example:

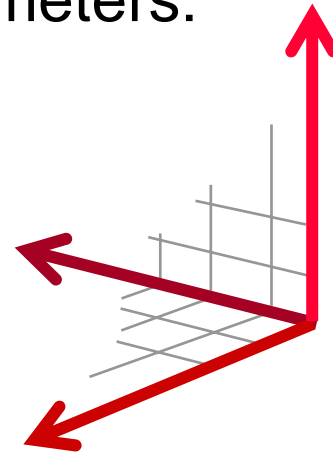
WCM, Image-Editing, Code authoring, Website analytics, Performance monitoring, etc. etc.

But how many?

A useful system for planning manpower needs

'Website Scale' based on 3 parameters:

1. Size
2. Complexity
3. Levels of Activity



How to measure the size of a website?

'Size' is measured in effort NOT pages or Gigabytes

Small Website

<4,000 hours

Medium Website

<10,000 hours

Large Website

10,000+ hours

Technology has a profound impact on manpower

‘Complexity’ reflects the infrastructure used for hosting

Basic Website (Webserver)

Basic skills

Dynamic Website (PHP, Database)

Advanced skills (1 or more people?)

Transactional Website (Application servers, security, etc.)

Advanced skills (1 or more people?)

And finally, the true driver of manpower planning

Activity is a measure of the 'busy-ness' of a site



Morrison Hotel Dublin
(Small, Basic & Quiet)



SAS Radisson USA
(Big, Complex & Busy)

How to manage all these people?

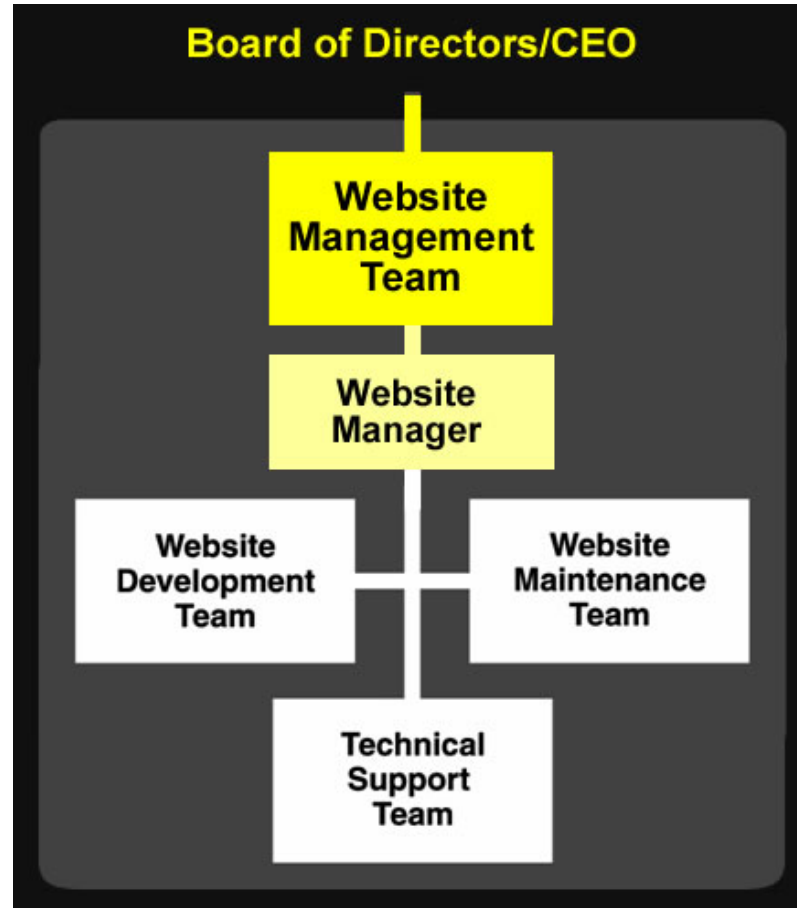
#3 Implement a Management Structure

No consensus on a single system
but there are some common traits:

- Get **director level** support
- Ensure **strong central governance**
- **Empower** your webmaster/ team-leader/ editor/ etc.
- **Centralise** design & development resources

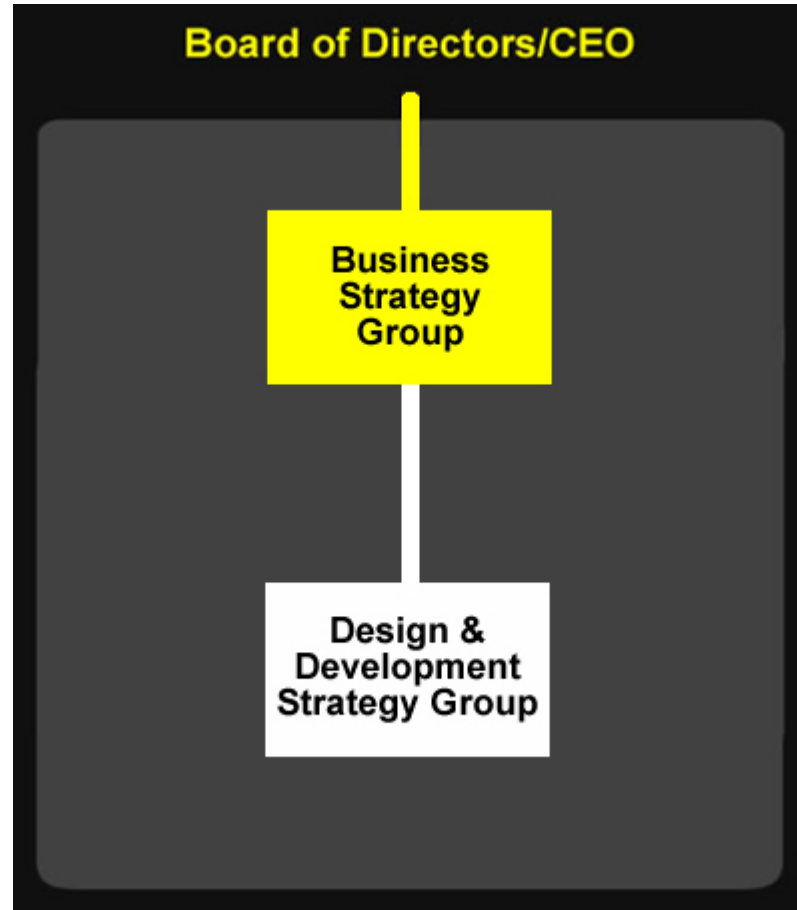
Here is one idea...

Create discipline-based teams with centralised guidance



And another...

Governance team is directly involved



In the end you decide

Do what works for your organisation

Use the 3 principles as a starting point

#1 Identify **all the activities** of website management

#2 Invest in **people & tools** to support these activities

#3 Implement a **management structure**

Some final tips

Things I have learned

- #1 Understand the **impact** of the activities of site management
- #2 Get as much **authority** as you can for your Editor/ Webmaster/ Website Manager
- #3 Keep tabs on **environmental** changes (law, technology, industry practice, etc.) that affect website management
- #4 Be thorough and don't forget the **donkey work**
- #5 Good **tools** can help

Any questions?

More advice in

The Website Manager's Handbook

Download a FREE chapter at

www.diffily.com

or buy online for \$19.99 (excl. P&P)

Available soon in HodgesFiggis Bookstore

