

# Creating Website Content

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## CS 4640 Programming Languages for Web Applications

[Steve Krug, "Don't make me think", Chapter 2-3]  
[Sean McManus, "Web Design," Chapter 3]

# Ideals for Content

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- Essential content for every website
  - About us/me
  - Contact page
  
- Content ideas for business sites
  - How to find us
  - Meet the team
  - Product and service descriptions and photos
  - Customer service information
  - Customer testimonials
  - Behind the scenes
  - Presentations

# Ideals for Content (2)

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- Content ideas for any website
  - Blog
  - What's new
  - Tutorials
  - Games
  - Calculators and tools
  - Interviews

# Things to Keep in Mind

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- If you publish an email address online, it will attract junk mail
- Create content before designing website
- Create content based on the site's purpose
- Consider using a mixture of different formats
- All content is automatically protected by copyright

# How Web Writing Differs

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- Users scan the page, not read
  - Good use of subheadings and lists is essential for getting your message across
- Search engines will deliver people to the page that most closely matches their query, not necessarily your homepage
- Sometimes people arrive at your site after following a link they've seen elsewhere
- People can take any path through your content, following links to explore other sections at any time, not navigate
- Don't assume that people are reading every word from page one
- PDFs preserve the look of a brochure, not web content

# Information Foraging

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- Three ways to enhance information scent
  - Ensure that links describe precisely what user will find
  - Use common English instead of made-up words
  - Remind users that are on the right path (feedback)
- Pitch abandonment: keeping users hunting here
  - Old: trap users on your site – it is expensive to browse elsewhere
  - New: there are no cost to search to a new site
- Do not keep users on-site, keep them coming back
  - Give lots of information snacks for short visits
  - Emphasize search engine visibility

# Top Web Writing Tips

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- Keep web pages reasonably short
- Put readers first
- Use a strong headline
- Create a lively pace
- Be consistent
- Be specific
- Avoid jargon
- Make every word meaningful
- Avoid passive voice

# Images that Work

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- Web pages without any pictures look bland
- The number and size of pictures on a website is often the biggest factor in determining how long it takes to download
- The best pictures are those that inform or entertain, and that help you to tell your story
- Make sure your photos look good
  - Beware of people who have trees growing out of their heads
- Pictures are protected by copyright



# Adding Map to Your Site

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1. Open Google Maps (<http://maps.google.com>)
2. Search for your address. Make sure the map, Street View image, or directions you'd like to embed shows up on the map. Zoom and adjust the view so that you can see as much detail as you want
3. Click the Menu (top left corner)
4. Click Share or Embed map.
5. At the top of the box that appears, choose Embed map
6. Choose the size you want (small, medium, large, custom size), then copy the HTML embed code and paste it into the source code of your website

# Summary

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Make your website

- **Easy to catch**
- **Easy to find**
- **Easy to read and understand**