
ESTIME Methodology for Web Site Publishing

Rudy DEMO / Javad K. HESHMATI ♦ 30-4-2006 ♦ 13 Pages

Dixite
Av. Louise 179, P.B.: 3, 1050 Brussels ♦ www.dixite.com

Preface

Any web site, no matter how big or small, can benefit from a systematic approach to its design and implementation. The ultimate aim is to build a web site that meets the client's requirements and expectations. This aim can not be accomplished without a systematic approach. In this document, we present our *process* for web site design and development.

Scope

A complete account of a comprehensive, full project life-cycle is beyond the scope of this document¹ The main objective of this document is to define and describe our *process* for web site development. This process is code named Explore, Sketch, Tipography, Imagery, Make-up, Execute (ESTIME).

Audience

ESTIME process can be used by anyone involved in the development of web sites. It's primely intended and addressed to members of the web site development team who deal with the process life cycle.

Guide to Readers

This document has two main chapters:

Chapter 1 describes the ESTIME phases including *roles* involved along with a short list of their *activities* and *deliverables*.

Chapter 2 describes the roles and deliverables in details.

¹Refer to Software Production Process using Open Source Software (SPPOSS) in section 2.2.7 for such a coverage.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1	ESTIM Phases	5
1.1.	Explore the Business Challenge	5
1.1.1.	Activity Checklist	6
1.1.2.	Roles and Deliverables	6
1.2.	Paper Sketching	6
1.2.1.	Activity Checklist	6
1.2.2.	Roles and Deliverables	6
1.3.	Typography	7
1.3.1.	Activity Checklist	7
1.3.2.	Roles and Deliverables	7
1.4.	Imagery	7
1.4.1.	Activity Checklist	7
1.4.2.	Roles and Deliverables	7
1.5.	Make-up	7
1.5.1.	Activity Checklist	7
1.5.2.	Roles and Deliverables	8
1.6.	Execution	8
1.6.1.	Implementation	8
1.6.2.	Testing	8
1.6.3.	Activity Checklist	8
1.6.4.	Roles and Deliverables	9
CHAPTER 2	Roles and Deliverables	10
2.1.	Roles, Skills and Techniques	10
2.1.1.	Business Analyst	10
2.1.2.	Information Architect	10
2.1.3.	Project Manager	10
2.1.4.	Programmer	11
2.1.5.	Art Director	11
2.1.6.	Web Designer	11
2.2.	Deliverables	11
2.2.1.	Website Glossary	11
2.2.2.	Website Architecture	11

2.2.3. Sketch Book	11
2.2.4. Typeface Collection	11
2.2.5. Image Album	11
2.2.6. Website Mockup	11
2.2.7. Website	11

CHAPTER 1

ESTIM Phases

This chapter describes ESTIME's phases. What is ESTIME ?

ESTIME is a methodology, a process. That is *who* is doing *what*, *when* and *how*. In Website publishing, the goal is to *craft* a site or enhance an existing one. ESTIME provides guidelines for the efficient development of *quality* web sites. It captures and presents the best practices that the current state of art permits.

Table below outlines the ESTIME phases along with their deliverables.

Phase	Deliverables
Explore the Business Challenge	Website Glossary and Website Architecture
Paper Sketching	Sketch Book
Typography	Typeface Collection
Imagery	Image Album
Make-up	Website Mockup
Execution	Website

Table 1.1: *ESTIME Phases and Deliverables*

1.1 Explore the Business Challenge

One needs to know enough of the business to examine the users' requirements. To get to know the business challenge:

- Read the User Requirement Document (URD).¹

¹Refer to the *Analysis* and *Specification* chapters of the SPPOSS document mentioned in section 2.2.7 to learn more about the URD.

- Study other existing materials (including pre-existing web pages) about the business.

Once familiarized with the business domain, the Website Glossary containing terms and concepts about the target site should be compiled. Another helpful task in this phase involves looking at pre-existing ideas and designs created by gurus and competitors. A careful analysis of these pre-existing ideas and materials reveals the strengths and weaknesses of those existing designs and ideas. The ability to study what others have designed for the same (or similar) problem lends a sizable advantage, since a great deal can be learned from their successes and failures.

1.1.1 Activity Checklist

1. Compile the web site glossary. This glossary should contain relevant words, topics, and phrases. Some maybe abstract and loose (e.x. Open Standards), some are concrete and tightly related (e.x. LAMP).
2. Work out the site layout, structure and navigation, that is Website Architecture

1.1.2 Roles and Deliverables

Roles Involved : Information Architect and Business Analyst

Deliverables : Website Glossary and Website Architecture

1.2 Paper Sketching

Once Website Architecture and Website Glossary finalized, we can continue to sketching phase. What's a sketch ?

A small drawing (on a piece of paper) as small as your thumbnail. Sketches are intended to capture the basic ideas for page makeup and composition, like header placement, column structure, and text alignment without allowing the temptation to focus on small details too early in the process.

1.2.1 Activity Checklist

1. Paper drawing
2. Redo them until you get them right

1.2.2 Roles and Deliverables

Roles Involved : Web Designer and Art Director

Deliverables : Sketch Book

1.3 Typography

Being precise is important. The mere addition or subtraction of a text decoration can make a world of difference. Now that we have the Sketch Book and their composition, we can begin studying *typefaces* and letter forms that best fit the target site.

1.3.1 Activity Checklist

Select typefaces and typography.

1.3.2 Roles and Deliverables

Roles Involved : Information Architect and Art Director

Deliverables : Typeface Collection

1.4 Imagery

Depending on the requirements and design goals of the target site, imagery can be an important phase.

Well chosen photography or illustration can create enormous visual impact for a design, adding dimension, implication, and a deeper level of understanding far beyond a well-written headline or paragraph of text.

1.4.1 Activity Checklist

Photography selection.

1.4.2 Roles and Deliverables

Roles Involved : Web Designer and Art Director

Deliverables : Image Album

1.5 Make-up

Integrating typography and imagery into a design requires an awareness of balance and tension. Compact areas of motion and activity, countered with spaces for the eye to rest and relax. The overuse of photography can quickly create a crowded and clumsy design.

1.5.1 Activity Checklist

1. Work out Sketch Book into the digital form.
2. Combine Sketch Book and Typeface Collection.
3. Compose a draft composition.
4. Select and fine-tune final color sets.

1.5.2 Roles and Deliverables

Roles Involved : Web Designer and Art Director

Deliverables : Website Mockup

1.6 Execution

1.6.1 Implementation

At this stage, the site's architecture and design are captured. The primary purpose of the implementation is to flesh out the Website Mockup as a Website. We not only make sure that the site looks good, but also check its performance and backend functionality. We follow the World Wide Web (W3C) recommendations and deal with the Website *structure* and *presentation* separately.

Structure

Web pages content is split into a meaningful structure: headline, secondary headline, paragraphs, lists and so on. The content is authored correctly to make sure that resulted markup is completely portable, it displays correctly on: web browsers, screen readers and even wireless devices (if required). The markup is crafted so that the *content* and *navigation* are wrapped in appropriately labeled tags to allow an optimal presentation.

Presentation

The Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) is used to control the web pages format such as typography, placement and compositions, color and so on. We separate the presentation from the structure to be able to change one without negatively affecting the other.

1.6.2 Testing

Finally, we need to test ² and re-test to make sure that the newly crafted Website is bug free, W3C and Web Standards (WASP) compliant.

1.6.3 Activity Checklist

1. Design and code CSS stylesheets.
2. Validate CSS stylesheets.
3. Markup the site in Extensible Markup Language (XML) or HyperText Markup Language (XHTML).
4. Validate the XHTML output.

²Refer to the *Testing* chapter of the SPPOSS for a good in-depth coverage of our testing approaches and tools.

1.6.4 Roles and Deliverables

Roles Involved : Programmer

Deliverables : Website

CHAPTER 2

Roles and Deliverables

2.1 Roles, Skills and Techniques

This section describes each role along with its required skills and techniques.

2.1.1 Business Analyst

An experienced person in the business domain. Knows how the business operates and can answer questions about how things are done; what is stable; what is changing; what is essentially attached to each concept and term.

- *Skills*: knowledgeable in the operation of the business and its plans

2.1.2 Information Architect

Knows how to structure and organize the Website into one or more hierarchies depending on the requirement and specifications.

- *Skills*: ability to evaluate the entire system in his or her charge; ability to make global and detailed technical decisions
- *Techniques*: System analysis and modeling

2.1.3 Project Manager

Knows how to gather and integrate information from all stakeholders in the project (project sponsors, architects, developers, testers, etc.) and put it together into a workable plan. Knows how to fend off “feature creep” and other hazards of running the project. Responsible for the process, with input from the other roles.

- *Skills*: motivation, observation, communication and planning
- *Techniques*: project estimation, management by team building and spirit

2.1.4 Programmer

Knows how to translate a technical design into an implementation.

- *Skills:* programming

2.1.5 Art Director

2.1.6 Web Designer

2.2 Deliverables

This section describes the main deliverables of ESTIME phases.

2.2.1 Website Glossary

Web site Glossary contains a collection of terms (related to the core activities of the web site business) and brief descriptions or definitions of those terms.

2.2.2 Website Architecture

specifies and explains the web site:

- divisions and sections
- structure and layout
- navigation elements

2.2.3 Sketch Book

Contains a set of small sketches that are intended to capture the basic ideas for the web site page makeup and composition, like header placement, column structure, and text alignment without allowing the temptation to focus on small details too early in the process.

2.2.4 Typeface Collection

A selection of typefaces and letter forms.

2.2.5 Image Album

Contains a set of photographs illustrating the web site identity and business challenge .

2.2.6 Website Mockup

A proof of concept that covers architecturally significant functionality of the web site.

2.2.7 Website

A website is a collection of web pages organized into one or more hierarchies.

Document Information

This document was typeset by the authors using L^AT_EX¹.

Revision

Revision	Date	Modified Sections
0.1	04-06-2005	Initial Revision

Table 2.1: *Document Revision History*

Related Documents

Title	URL	Description
SPPOSS	docs.dixite.com/spposs	Software Production Process Using Open Source
LAMP	docs.dixite.com/lamp	Software Architecture based on Linux, Apache, MySQL, PHP

Table 2.2: *Related Documents*

Copyright

This document can be freely redistributed according to the terms of the GNU Free Documentation License (GFDL). To learn more about GFDL, visit the following *URL* ↗ www.gnu.org/copyleft/fdl.html.

¹L^AT_EX ↗ www.latex-project.org

Acronyms

URD User Requirement Document, described in the *SPPOSS* document.

ESTIME Explore, Sketch, Tipography, Imagery, Make-up, Execute is a methodology used for web site development.

SPPOSS Software Production Process using Open Source Software Online version of the document is available at: docs.dixite.com/spposs

W3C World Wide Web The *World Wide Web Consortium (W3C)* ⇆ www.w3.org develops interoperable technologies (specifications, guidelines, software, and tools) to lead the Web to its full potential.

XML Extensible Markup Language *Extensible Markup Language (XML)* ⇆ www.w3.org/XML is a simple, very flexible text format derived from SGML (ISO 8879). Originally designed to meet the challenges of large-scale electronic publishing, XML is also playing an increasingly important role in the exchange of a wide variety of data on the Web and elsewhere.

XHTML HyperText Markup Language *XHTML* ⇆ www.w3.org/MarkUp 2 is a general-purpose markup language designed for representing documents for a wide range of purposes across the World Wide Web. To this end it does not attempt to be all things to all people, supplying every possible markup idiom, but to supply a generally useful set of elements.

CSS Cascading Style Sheets *CSS* ⇆ www.w3.org/Style/CSS is a simple mechanism for adding style (e.g. fonts, colors, spacing) to Web documents.

WASP Web Standards Founded in 1998, The *Web Standards Project (WaSP)* ⇆ www.webstandards.org fights for standards that reduce the cost and complexity of development while increasing the accessibility and long-term viability of any site published on the Web. We work with browser companies, authoring tool makers, and our peers to deliver the true power of standards to this medium.