Introduction to Web Page Design
Using Microsoft FrontPage 2000

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Part 1

What is a Web Page Anyway?...........................................1
  HTML: The Backbone of the Web....................................1
Why Create a Web Site?..................................................3
  Examining Other Library Pages.................................3
Using Microsoft FrontPage 2000
  Naming Files..........................................................4
  Using the Toolbar..................................................5
  Creating Your Own Look & Feel.................................5
  Using Shared Borders...........................................6
  Adding a Navigation Bar........................................7
  Applying Paragraph Formats....................................7
  Adding Links........................................................8
What is a Web Page Anyway?

The term “Web page” can be a bit misleading for newcomers to the World Wide Web. Unlike a page in a book, a web page can be of any length, and is not a single entity. Instead, a Web page is more like a picture frame...looking through it you can see several distinct items which have been arranged (as in a collage) in a particular way.

OK, Then What’s a Web Site?

A Web site is simply two or more Web pages that you conceive of as a set, and relate to one another through common design elements, hyperlinks, and storage on a common server.

HTML: The Backbone of the World Wide Web

HTML is a set of codes that is added to a text document in order to permit a Web Browser to do the following:

- Apply styles to the text (differing fonts, sizes, styles like bold and italic)
- Organize paragraphs (such as creating bulleted lists, numbered lists and outlines, etc.)
- Allow text and graphics to serve as Hyperlinks (clicking on the hyperlink displays another page or graphic)
- Insert graphics, movies, sounds, etc. into the Web page
- A Web Browser, such as Netscape Navigator, interprets the code embedded in the HTML file that contains the text so that it can display the page with the graphics and other elements that you want.

To see how this works, compare the screen shot of a web page on the following page with the underlying text and its HTML coding.
An HTML page consists only of text. If the Web page displays pictures, that is because the HTML code includes a link to the picture, which gets displayed along with the text, but the image is not actually part of the HTML file.

Finally, keep in mind that a Web page can be much longer than a physical page. There is no limit, really, to how much text can be contained in a single document, and adding pictures only adds to the length of the page. So when you print out a web page, it might actually be several physical pages long.
Why Create a Web Site for a Library?

A Web site is able to provide you with some important tools in furthering the mission of your library. As you plan your web site, keep in mind that mission and let it guide you in creating and organizing information for your public. Some of the specific ways that a Web site can aid you are:

Public Relations - Your Web site is your presence on the Web for all of your patrons who are online. By making your Web site attractive and easy to use, you also make your library more attractive.

Advertising - Your Web site is available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week to let people know what’s going on at your library and how patrons can take advantage of your programs and resources. Unlike a flyer or ad in the local paper, this method doesn’t get crumpled up and thrown out, used to line pet boxes or otherwise discarded. By getting other Web sites with a local interest to link to your site (other libraries, local school and town sites, regional bodies like the Chamber of Commerce) you can promote your Web site, and thus your library, effectively.

Organizing Information - The World Wide Web is confusing for many of your patrons. There’s no comprehensive card catalog, there’s fear about “bad stuff” and it can be hard to find resources. By creating pages that link to good information resources, you can help bring some organization and helpful direction to the Web for your patrons.

Boosting Circulation - By linking to the automated network such as CLAMS or OCLN you provide your patrons with the ability to browse your catalog and place holds for books. You effectively boost your hours without having to open the door to your building, and thus let your patrons have greater access to your collection and the resources of the regional library system.

Sharing Library Programs - Book discussions and reviews, reports on past library events, and providing a forum for author talks are all easily adapted for “life on the Web”.

Examining Other Library Pages
There are many features that make a web page “work”; the following three principles are key to a good web page:

- good design
- good organization, and
- appropriate information

Below are some library web pages from our area that all look very different, but which showcase at least one of the three principles cited above.

SEMLS Home Page
http://www.semls.org/
Microsoft FrontPage is a program that allows you to create or edit web pages (also known as *HTML documents*) without having to actually type in HTML codes. This type of program is also referred to as a “graphical web page editor”. With FrontPage you can type in text and format it much like you would use a word processing program. You can also insert graphics into your web pages, and create links to other pages you create as well as to web pages anywhere else on the World Wide Web.

**Naming Files**

When naming files (including images) and folders, note the following:

- Be sure to use only the characters A to Z, a to z, 0 to 9, - (hyphen), and _ (underscore). Don’t use accented characters, spaces, colons, question marks, slashes, or backslashes. It’s also better to keep everything in lower case, as it will be easier for people to type in your URL; most web servers are case-sensitive. If you name a file or folder with a prohibited character, FrontPage changes the character to a special code starting with a percent sign (%). To remove the special code, you must rename and then relink the file.
Using the Toolbar
FrontPage has two main toolbars along the screen under the menu bar, which gives you quick access to several of the most frequently used FrontPage commands.

Creating Your Own Look and Feel
FrontPage 2000 takes a “site” approach to building Web pages. While a set of Web pages do not have any “real” connection with each other, FrontPage allows you to manipulate and make changes to sets of pages when you create a FrontPage Web (other programs would refer to this as a Web site).

Themes are designs composed of background images, graphics, fonts and layouts that help create a unified look for the pages you create. You can choose from more than 60 predesigned themes in FrontPage 2000. These designs are all editable, of course, so you can change basic colors, etc.

To add a theme, click on the Format menu, and select the Themes command. Then use the scroll bar to look through the many choices of themes. Click once to see a sample of the theme, double-click to apply the theme to your page.
Using Shared Borders to Unify a Web Site’s Look & Feel

FrontPage 2000 includes a feature called “Shared Borders” that allows you to designate a portion of the page (top, bottom, left or right margin) as a common area that will be similar on all pages on your site. Examples of elements that might be included in a Shared Border are: copyright information, business name, and links to other pages on the site.

To add a Shared Border to a page, click on the Page View icon on the left side of the screen, then click on the Format menu and click on “Shared Borders”. Select the part of the page you wish the border to appear on. If it is the top or left side, you can also click to have links appear automatically in the Shared Border.
**Adding a Navigation Bar**
A Navigation Bar is an automatic set of links to other pages on your site that FrontPage creates for you. Adding a Navigation Bar to a Shared Border is a good design choice because it gives your Web site a consistent look - your site visitors will know where to look for links and those will be somewhat separate from the body of your page. It also makes it easier for you to link the various pages of your Web site!

When you create a Shared Border and check the “Include Navigation buttons” a Navigation Bar is automatically inserted into the Shared Border; you can also have a Navigation Bar on another part of your page.

To change the the types of pages that a Navigation Bar links to, edit the Navigation Bar Properties. Right click on the Navigation Bar and select “Navigation Bar Properties...”. Select the type of pages to be linked to (same level, child, etc.), whether any other pages (Parent or Home) should be linked, and whether the links will be displayed horizontally or vertically, as text or buttons.

![Navigation Bar Properties](image)

**Applying Paragraph Formats**
Paragraph formats structure HTML pages. You apply different formats to parts of a page that serve different functions, such as headings, paragraphs of body text, and lists. Applying a format changes an entire paragraph. (To change the appearance of individual words or characters, select the word or characters and choose a font, size and/or style for the selection.)

With all formats except Preformatted, browsers collapse multiple spaces, tabs, and line-break characters into a single space.

To apply a paragraph format:

In Page view, click in a paragraph or select several paragraphs and then click on the Style pop-up menu in the toolbar. Click on a format (i.e., normal, heading 1, etc.) and the format is applied to your text.
Adding Links
When readers click a link to a Web page, they jump to the destination specified by the URL. Links usually appear on a Web page in a different color (blue for a link that has not been used, purple for a link that has been used), and underlined.

A link to a page leads to the top of that page. (To link to a location elsewhere on a page, you must first create a “bookmark”, and then create a link to the bookmark).

You can create two types of links: a link to a local Web page (that is, a page on your hard disk), or to a external Web page (that is, a page on the Internet or on an intranet). To create a local link, select the text you want to designate as a link, then click on the Link button on the FrontPage tool bar; in the dialog box choose a file from the file listing in the Create Hyperlink dialog box. To create a link to an external Web page, select the text for the link, click on the Hyperlink button, and type in the complete URL of a remote Web page in the “URL” field (spelling counts, so you should always test any link to a remote page). Alternately, you can click on the icon of a globe and use your Web browser to select a URL.