

George Jaros Design Services

Website Design & Configuration

Questionnaire and Guide

At George Jaros Design Services, my web development philosophy is to create simple, clean sites with obvious navigation, a consistent layout, and, most importantly, the information your customers are looking for. I want to make your customers' visits to your web site as trouble free as possible. That all begins with a good site design.

Answering the questions in this questionnaire will help me to determine how to design your website. I will use the information you provide here as a first step in designing the look and feel of your web site. I will highlight many of the key elements of a web site, and provide you with several configuration/design options.

In addition to the questions, I will attempt to explain some of the more confusing areas of deciding on a site design, like Page Size, Alignment, etc. I cannot cover everything here, but at the end of the questionnaire, I have a list of several useful links if you want to learn more. Also searching the web will provide countless sites with tips and ideas about web site design.

Please keep in mind, this questionnaire is a guide to help you help me to design and configure your web site. Some questions you may not be able to answer and some you may not understand. If you find yourself struggling with a question, please continue with the next one, or give me a call. When I contact you to discuss the design I will go over everything in this questionnaire in detail to make sure that everything is correctly configured to meet your business needs.

Please answer the questions to the best of your ability. If you have any questions, feel free to contact George Jaros at (815) 787-7355 or George@Jaros.com. When you are finished, please return this to me as soon as possible so I can begin the process of creating and configuring your new web site. Thanks.

Company Information

Please take a few minutes to fill in the company information below so I can keep all of my records together. Thank you for your cooperation.

Company: _____

Store Name: _____

Web Address: _____

Store Address: _____

Contact Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Fax Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Comments: _____

Section I

General Site Design

Page Size: Generally, websites are designed for one of three size displays; *800 x 600*, *1024 x 768*, or stretch-to-fit. These sizes refer to the display size, or resolution of the visitor's monitor. The term "screen resolution" refers to the number of individual pixels that fit within a given space. When I am discussing an *800 x 600* resolution, the number 800 refers to the number of pixels that the monitor can display horizontally, while the number 600 refers to the vertical limit.

When I design a website, I can design it so that it is fixed at a specific size (see <http://www.basbleu.com>) or so that it expands to fill the entire page (see <http://www.scooterworks.com>). Depending on your content and your target customers, one option may work better for you than the other. How should you determine the size that your site should be designed?

Once upon a time, most monitors had a standard resolution of 640 x 480 pixels and websites that wanted to display the best for the greatest number of visitors were designed to fit in a window of that size. As monitors become bigger and cheaper, more people are able to use higher resolutions. In the past 5 years, the standard minimum resolution has increased to *800 x 600* pixels and as larger monitors become increasingly popular, the trend is toward *1024 x 768* displays. A quick search of the web shows that in January of 2004 about 40% of users were using screen resolutions of *800 x 600* or less. Current statistics (as of January 2006) show that number has dropped to about 20% while *1024 x 768* or greater has jumped from about 55% to 75%.

However, just because more and more people are viewing the web at resolutions of *1024 x 768* does not mean that everyone is. Even those customers that have screen resolutions of *1024 x 768* (or even larger) may not have their browser window maximized. Generally, it is a good idea to design a web site so that it will display fine on the lowest resolution site that your visitors will have. Typically, this is *800 x 600*, but if your business is aimed at customers who tend to be more advanced, you may want to consider a site design for *1024 x 768* resolutions.

One way to avoid resolution constraints completely is to design your site so that it expands to fill the entire screen regardless of the resolution. The major downside to designing your site like this is formatting. As the page is resized, text and images will rearrange to fill the available space. Unfortunately, this can drastically change the way a site appears depending on the customer's screen resolution. However, having an expanding site design allows you the flexibility to have product images that do not have to conform to a standard size. Some clients find this style of site to be untidy while others appreciate the flexibility.

If you have questions about page dimensions and alignments, see the examples in the appendix or visit some of the links provided. If you still have questions, feel free to contact George Jaros.

1. Site Dimensions – What size do you want your site designed? *See the appendix for examples.*

.....*800 x 600* – recommended []
..... *1024 x 768* []
..... Stretch-to-Fit []
..... Other _____

Site Alignment: If you selected *800 x 600* or *1024 x 768* above, you can now select how you want the page aligned in the browser window. You have several choices depending on the look and feel you want to go with on your site. Horizontally, you can have your page centered (with equal margins on each side) or aligned to the left or right side of the window. Center and Left aligned are the most common choices. Vertically, you can have your page set to fill the screen from top to bottom; start at the top and only expand downward as far as the content requires; or have the page sit in the middle of the window. NOTE: These settings are mainly for pages with content that is not long enough to fill the browser window.

2. Site Alignment – Choose an alignment for your site. *See the appendix for examples.*
 - Centered Horizontally / Fill 100% Vertically []
 - Centered Horizontally / Top Align Vertically []
 - Centered Horizontally / Middle Align Vertically []
 - Left Horizontally / Fill 100% Vertically []
 - Left Horizontally / Top Align Vertically []
 - Left Horizontally / Middle Align Vertically (uncommon) []
 - Right Horizontally / Fill 100% Vertically (uncommon) []
 - Right Horizontally / Top Align Vertically (uncommon) []
 - Right Horizontally / Middle Align Vertically (uncommon) []

Margins: When there is enough content on a page to fill a browser window you may want to force a margin around the content, specifically at the top and bottom of the page. This can give the impression that the web page is floating over a background, particularly if you have the page center aligned horizontally.

3. Margins – Enter *Yes* or *No* if you want any of the margins below, or if you know exactly how big of a margin you want, enter the size below. *See the appendix for examples.*
 - Top Margin _____
 - Bottom Margin _____
 - Left Margin (uncommon) _____
 - Right Margin (uncommon) _____

Section II

Navigation and Component Layout

The most important part of your web site is providing an understandable site that your visitors can easily navigate. Most web sites are laid out in a relatively rectangular pattern. Because the site is designed in HTML, it is laid out in a series of invisible tables. The tables have rectangular cells laid out in rows and columns. Graphics can be used to soften these edges and give the appearance of curves. A common framework for a web site has six main cells:

- Row 1:
Cell 1 - Header Banner
- Row 2:
Cell 2 - Top Navigation
- Row 3:
Cell 3 - Left Navigation
Cell 4 - Main Content
Cell 5 - Right Navigation
- Row 4:
Cell 6 - Footer

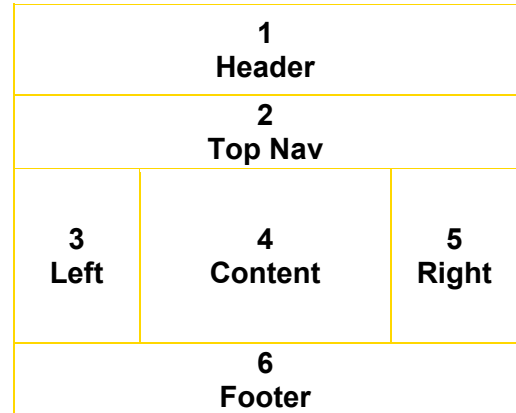


Figure 1

Each of these cells can be customized to look exactly how you want, and they are just the default layout, a good guideline. And you don't have to include all of the cells here. In fact, many of my clients choose not to include the Right Navigation cell and a few chose to hide both the Left and Right Navigation cells. A few examples of sites where you can easily see all these cells, especially the Right and Left navigation panels, are:

[http:// www.buffertech.com](http://www.buffertech.com)
<http://www.williamsbrewing.com>
<http://www.dejouxminiatures.com>
<http://www.bigdweb.com>

Again, within the constraints of HTML I have a lot of flexibility. Here are a few other sites that show how the different designs can be used:

<http://www.abundantlifeseeds.com>
<http://www.celticseasalt.com>
<http://www.naturalhealthpractice.com>
<http://www.territorial-seed.com>
<http://www.scooterworks.com>
<http://www.basbleu.com>
<http://www.americanscreeningcorp.com>

And here are some non-eCommerce sites that use various layouts:

<http://www.glidden-florist.com>
<http://www.dekalbknolls.org>
<http://www.mcnaughtondevelopment.com>
<http://www.milwaukeeeroadtrip.com>
<http://www.northlakebuilders.com>

Depending on the desired site design and the amount of custom coding involved, there is a lot of flexibility possible in the layout of a web site. Sites can be designed with much more non-standard or organic layouts. I can design sites that vary greatly from the above layouts, however non-standard designs may require a lot more work and code customizations.

One other thing that I do not do on a standard site is incorporate Flash. Because Flash uses languages and techniques that are very different than a standard HTML web site, incorporating Flash is a very large customization that is not included in a standard quote. I can however, include Flash components, like animations and simple navigation, in a web site. See <http://www.abundantlifeseeds.com> for an example of incorporating a Flash animation on the homepage. Web sites can include more Flash and can incorporate Flash easier, but again, Flash animations are not included in standard design quotes. If you would like more information about incorporating Flash components in your site, please call or e-mail George Jaros.

OK. Now that I have that out of the way, here are a few questions to consider when deciding on the look and feel of your site. Please answer these questions as well as you can, they will give me a good idea of the direction I should take your site. If you do not know exactly what you want, let me know other web sites that you like or dislike and why. I will work from those ideas to get something you are happy with. The more detail you can provide here, however, the quicker the design process will be. Feel free to use more space than I have provided. More detail is better.

Site Designs and Graphics:

1. Company Logo and/or Artwork

Do you have a company logo or artwork that you are using on your current website or in printed material? Do you want to carry the logo, designs, and color scheme through to your new website? I will need you to forward the logos/images to me in either digital format (preferred) or by mail. I also have the ability to create a new logo or custom graphics.

2. What color scheme do you want to use?

Typically, a web site should match the colors in the company logo and/or the colors in any current marketing materials or catalogs. You do not have to match these colors, but doing so will help build company identity. If you have a catalog or any marketing materials that you would like me to work from, please send them to me via mail, e-mail, or point me to a web site where I can view/download them. If you want to mail me information, contact George Jaros for the address to get your materials to me the quickest.

3. What general feel do you want your site to have?

This could be a series of descriptive words, like 'clean, corporate, sleek' OR 'soft, inviting, warm'. Different companies want to portray a certain feel when visitors come to their site. It is important that the feel of your site match your company. A gardening site would not necessarily want a clean, sleek look, but an electronics site would not necessarily want a rustic, natural feel.

4. **Are there other web sites which you like the look and feel?**

A great gauge of how your site should look is other sites on the internet. Browse through a few sites (competitors are a good source of industry designs) and let me know a few that you like. I will try to incorporate ideas and aspects of those sites into your design without looking like it is a copy. You will get your own unique design. In addition, if you have any sites that you definitely do not like, it always helps to see what not to do, too.

Navigation and Layout Features: I can replicate many of the navigation features you see used on other web sites, or design completely new navigation structures and tools.

5. **Page Header** – The Page Header (Cell 1 in *Figure 1* above) appears on every page in your site. Most customers will put their logo and company name here. Please let me know the information you would like to appear in this header.

6. **Top Navigation** – What links do you want to include in your top navigation bar (Cell 2 in *Figure 1* above). Keep in mind that these links must fit into the width of the page determined in the above section. Adding more links will require smaller sized text.

<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

7. **Page Footer** – The Page Footer (Cell 6 in *Figure 1* above) also appears on every page in your site. Most customers will put their contact information, copyright statement, and links to informational pages, like About Me, Privacy Policy, etc. Please let me know the information you would like to appear in this footer.

8. **Side navigation features?** What kind of navigation structure would you like on the left and right sides of your page? Common navigation features include a Search Panel, News Items, Useful Tools, Site Links, or custom navigation that changes with the section of the site you are in. You can even have a combination of navigational features.

Left Navigation (Cell 3 in *Figure 1* above):
 Navigation Links (list links below)

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Comments: _____

9. **Right Navigation** (Cell 5 in *Figure 1* above):
 Navigation Links (list links below)

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Comments: _____

10. **Consider any custom features that you have requested for your site and how you would like them incorporated.** Custom features can/may include a Blog, Forum application, Guestbook, News Manager, etc. Check any of the customizations that you have purchased or would like to include on your site. The features below require inclusion somewhere on your website. I have other components that are only available through a private admin section of your site. For more information on my features and enhancements, contact me or visit <http://www.web2market.com>

..... Blog []
 Forum []
 Guestbook []
 Photo Gallery []
 Email Marketing (user subscribe/unsubscribe interface) []
 Information/Catalog Requests []
 News Manager []
 Custom Admin Interface []
 Other Customizations (describe below) []

APPENDIX

Information, Examples, and Additional Resources

Site Dimension Examples



800 x 600 formatted site in a 1024 x 768 browser window.



The same site stretched to fit the 1024 x 768 browser window.

NOTE: A 1024 x 768 formatted site will look similar to the left image on screens that are larger than 1024 x 768 and similar to the right image on 1024 x 768 screens. On 800 x 600 screens, a 1024 x 768 formatted site will require horizontal scrolling.

Page Alignment Examples (Centered)



Centered Horizontally
Fill 100% Vertically



Centered Horizontally
Top Align Vertically



Centered Horizontally
Middle Align Vertically

Page Alignment Examples (Left Aligned)



Left Horizontally
Fill 100% Vertically



Left Horizontally
Top Align Vertically



Left Horizontally
Middle Align Vertically

Page Alignment Examples (Right Aligned - uncommon)



Right Horizontally
Fill 100% Vertically



Right Horizontally
Top Align Vertically



Right Horizontally
Middle Align Vertically

Margins



Top No Margin



Bottom No Margin



Top Margin



Bottom Margin

Example Navigational Links

Navigational Links help your visitors find information easily on your site. Below is a list of possible locations that you can link to. This list will be helpful when deciding what links to include in your Top Navigation, Left Navigation Links Panel, Right Navigation Links Panel, Header, or Footer.

- **Suggested Webpages** – These are common webpages that companies like to include with their store. You may want to include some of these on your store. You will have to provide the content for any pages that you want.
 - o About Us
 - o Become a Member
 - o Contact Us
 - o Customer Reviews
 - o Customer Service
 - o Disclaimers
 - o FAQ – Frequently Asked Questions
 - o Guarantee
 - o Help Center
 - o Join a Mailing List
 - o Letters of Recommendation
 - o Link to Additional Resources
 - o Link to Associate Company Website(s)
 - o Link to your other Company Website(s) – like Forums, Blogs, etc.
 - o Mission Statement
 - o Partners
 - o Physical Store Information
 - o Portfolio of Clients
 - o Privacy Policy
 - o Return Policy
 - o Shipping Policy
 - o Technical Support
 - o Testimonials
 - o Warranties

Additional Resources

If you search the web, there are tons of resources about web site design. Below are some links to some excellent resources.

- **George Jaros**

- o <http://www.georgejaros.com> – George Jaros Home Page
- o http://www.georgejaros.com/Web_Tips.cfm - Help and Tutorials
- o <http://www.web2market.com> – Web 2 Market Home Page – the company I work for regularly.
- o <http://www.web2market.com/Tutorials.cfm> - Additional Help and Tutorials

- **Web Design Resources**

- o <http://www.w3schools.com> – W3 Schools Web Developer Community
- o <http://www.webstyleguide.com> – Web Style Guide
- o <http://www.wpdfd.com> – Web Page Design for Designers
- o <http://www.webdesignfromscratch.com> – Web Design From Scratch
- o <http://www.digital-web.com> – Digital Web Magazine
- o <http://webdesign.about.com/od/htmlxhtmltutorials> - About.com HTML/Web Design

- **Browser & Display Statistics**

- o <http://www.w3schools.com/browsers/default.asp> - W3Schools Browsers Home
- o http://www.w3schools.com/browsers/browsers_stats.asp - W3 Schools Browser Statistics
- o <http://www.upsdell.com/BrowserNews/stat.htm> - Browser News - Statistics
- o http://www.digital-web.com/articles/designing_for_the_web - Digital Web - Designing for the Web