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**Website Audit Guide**

This guide is meant to support your audit of the menu structure and content for your AC site.

If it’s been a while since you’ve audited your site, it is recommended that you imagine the site as if it you are building it from scratch to ensure you are truly looking at it with a fresh perspective. It is often easier to imagine what you need and identify next steps from that, rather than to manipulate what you already have. Of course, referencing your existing site will still be an important step within the process.

**Complete this guide in order for the best results.**

Questions? Email [webservices@algonquincollege.com](mailto:webservices@algonquincollege.com).

**Start with Data**

Generate Google Analytics reports and consider heat mapping tools and other key performance indicators for existing content to analyze the current performance of your site. This should give you helpful insight as you work to improve your content. Summarize any key learnings, pain points and opportunities. Review competitors or others in the industry for inspiration.

You can request help with Google Analytics and heat mapping by completing our [Marketing Project Request Form](https://www.algonquincollege.com/acmarketing/project-request/), selecting “Reporting” as the project type.

**Target Audience(s)**

Define who you are trying to reach. It is difficult to be all things to all people, so make sure to think critically about who you really need to communicate with. These are your end users and their experience, combined with your goals, should drive your content.

**Primary Audience:  
Secondary Audience(s):**

**Goal(s)**

Define what you want to achieve with your website. Remember to make your goals SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-Based).

**Key Message(s)**

What information is critical for your target audience(s)? If they walk away remembering just one or two things, what should they be?

**Menu Structure**

Based on the above, what is the hierarchy of information for your site? Do you require multiple pages or just one to achieve your goals? If multiple, what are the sections and/or pages you need within your site?

The fewer clicks there are for your target audience to find the information they need, the better. Naming conventions for pages and items in your menu should be clearly interpreted at first glance.

Think about what you must have, should have and could have when determining your information hierarchy, then think critically about what makes the cut beyond the must have elements.

See two examples below.

**EXAMPLE 1:**

* Home/Landing Page
  + Section 1
    - Page 1
    - Page 2
    - Page 3
  + Section 2
    - Page 1
    - Page 2

**EXAMPLE 2:**

* Home/Landing Page
* Page 1
* Page 2
* Page 3

**Content**

Now break down specific plans for each of the pages within your site. What topics/content needs to be included and in what order? Some top tips for building your content are below:

* Start with an Accessibility lens in mind – all individuals, regardless of ability should be able to clearly navigate and understand content on your site.
  + Make sure to use meaningful and description text for links and alt text for images.
  + Learn what else you need to know in our [Web Service Tutorial for Accessibility](chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https:/www.algonquincollege.com/acmarketing/files/2020/10/Web-Service-tutorial-Accessibility.pdf).
* Consider AC WordPress templates and supporting features and widgets to help organize your content, including heading styles and formatting options like bulleted lists and buttons.
* Ensure your content is relevant and accurate for your target audience(s).
* Less is more; opt for quality over quantity and remember your goals.
* Put the most important information at the top – generally, people will only scroll once or twice on any one page to find what they are looking for.
* Include clear Calls to Action where applicable – what do you want your target audience to do?
* Avoid duplicating content within your site. If needed, link to content on related AC pages.
* Watch for spelling and grammar – [Grammarly](https://www.grammarly.com/) is a great and free resource to help with this.
* Set meaningful meta descriptions (limited text that appears under your page title in search engine results).
* Include graphics, imagery and/or videos if relevant to your content – how do these help advance your goal/key message? Only use these if they add value to the experience.

**Now it’s time to actually write your content.** If you have existing content that addresses your need, review it to make sure it is as streamlined, clear and accurate as possible, and that it meets your defined goals and target audience needs.

Look for and resolve broken links, spelling and grammar issues and accessibility concerns. Request a SiteImprove report to easily identify these areas that may require your attention – complete our [Marketing Project Request Form](https://www.algonquincollege.com/acmarketing/project-request/), selecting “Reporting” as the project type.

**Once you are finished writing, ask someone else to review your content before publishing.** Fresh eyes can help to catch any spelling or grammar issues and ensure that your intended message is clearly understood.

**Archive Outdate Content**

Based on your defined audience(s) and goal(s), and your menu structure, archive outdated/irrelevant pages, videos, images, forms, form entries and blog posts.

**Web Team Review (Optional)**

Once you implement revisions to your site, you can choose to request a review by the Web Team to ensure your site is fully optimized. Complete the [Marketing Project Request Form](https://www.algonquincollege.com/acmarketing/project-request/), selecting “Web Design and Development” as the project type.

**Evaluation**

Revisit the data to ensure your goals are being met. Give your revised site some time to collect valid results. Tweak as necessary to continue your optimization journey for the end user.

**Continuous Review and Improvement**

Regular maintenance to keep your content relevant and accurate is best! Look at your website at least monthly to ensure it is meeting your goals and achieving optimal performance.