Navigation Setup Worksheet

Directions: How to Use This Worksheet

Below are several templates of typical website setup for navigation. Feel free to change the names, add more entries, etc. The goal with this worksheet is to determine 1) What items you want on your main level of navigation (e.g. Home, Online Store, Contact Us), and 2) What items you want in the drop lists that display as you move your mouse over those main level pages, if any. Prior your Site Setup appointment with Andy, he will enter all of the Navigation items for your main menu, and he will help you with the how-to on anything else you might need.

Good Form

1) Keep your main-level Navigation items at one word or at most two words if you have a menu bar running across the top. For sites that have left side navigation, the names can be as long as three or four words. For your drop list items, just about any length will be okay.

2) Your drop lists can go down multiple levels, and there is really no limit to how far down they go. All of our examples below have only the first level of drop lists. Wherever possible, minimize the levels of navigation on your website. If you are an online retail seller, it is really not necessary (for most organizations) to list anything more than your major product categories in the drop list under your online store. You do not want to overwhelm your visitors with too many choices. It is better to get them quickly to the category of goods they are interested in, and then let them search more visually on the pages of your online store with actual product images for reference.

3) It is considered good form to have the first link in the list to be the Home page and for the last one to be Contact Us. If you are striving for originality and want to depart from this doing so can be a wonderful way to set yourself apart. Even so, please be careful when going in that direction; feel free to give us a call and let us help you express your originality in a way that will be appreciated by your website visitors.

4) For search engine purposes it is best to have links throughout your site that link to other pages in your site. The more ways for search engines to find your pages, the better. You can do this by putting links on your Home page to featured products, new items of news, or anything else you want your customers to see. While it is important to set up your site properly for search engines, it is more important to set it up well for customers. When analyzing your site setup, consider what will provide your customers with the best experience.

Types of Navigation

There are two major types of website: Online Retail and Informational. Within each type, the focus is the same; to drive business your way. Please read through the summaries below and look at the styles of navigation that appeal to you. Once you find a style you like, change the sample titles for the pages to fit your needs, and then save this file and e-mail it to andywheeler@onyxwebsites.com.

Simple Layout

This style is good if you don't intend to have a huge amount of products in your online store. It is a simple menu and most often doesn't require any drop lists at all. For simplicity, this style is best and will quickly get your visitors to the main starting pages for topics such as Online Shopping, Events, Classes, etc. This is also the easiest of the navigation styles to maintain.

Click here to explore further for Online Retail navigation.

Click here to explore further for Informational navigation.

Standard Layout

The standard style of navigation is a nice balance of simplicity and functionality, offering your visitors the option of either going to the starting pages for your Online Shopping, Events, News, etc., or the ability to go to one of the major categories of your products (or other pages) by using drop lists. This style of navigation is easy to maintain and is very flexible.

Click here to explore further for Online Retail navigation.

Click here to explore further for Informational navigation.

Simple Layout with Sidebar Sub-Navigation

This style is like the Standard Layout but makes excellent use of the left side of your pages to display navigation choices that can be different for each page. Usually, the pages that would be in a drop list for a given page would be duplicated in this area. It offers your visitors more choices and makes your drop list items more visibly accessible. Abundantly linking in this way is good for your Search Engine Optimization but is also more work to maintain.

Click here to explore further for Online Retail navigation.

Click here to explore further for Informational navigation.

Any Style Layout with Graphical Sidebar Sub-Navigation

This style makes use of the left side-bar of your pages in a visually appealing way. It can be applied to any of the above styles of Navigation, but requires that you have skill and resources to work with graphics to create the buttons you will need. While this is visually impressive, it is also the most difficult and time consuming of the navigation styles to maintain.

Click here to explore further for Online Retail navigation.

Click here to explore further for Informational navigation.

Online Store Templates

Simple Layout (Drop list items; few to none. Example; Minky Couture)
In this style, the Home page contains picture links to products/services/events that the shop is actively promoting. This simple style with no drop-lists is good for shops with low numbers of online products. When using this style, your Search Engine results will not be hurt, but your results will be dependent on your content completely, so this style of Navigation will not especially help you there.

- Home
- Online Store (or Shop, Shop Online, Store, etc.)
- About Us (or About [Organization Name])
- Events (or Calendar, News, etc.)
- Blog (or [Blog Name])
- Newsletter (or [Newsletter Name])
- Contact Us

Standard Layout (Drop lists for major categories of products. Example: Scott James Jewelry)
In this style, underneath your Online Store in the navigation is an item for each of your major categories in your Products module. Other elements that warrant drop lists (e.g. under About Us having items such as The [Organization Name] Difference, Quality, Our Promise to You, etc.) are also present, but only one level of drop lists is used. This style will help your search engine results a little more than the simple style, but your results will still primarily rely on your content.

- Home
- Online Store (or Shop, Shop Online, Store, etc.)
    - Item Type 1 (e.g. Fabric, Living Room Furniture, Toys, Gift Baskets; whatever you sell)
    - Item Type 2
    - Item Type 3
    - Item Type 4
    - Item Type 5
    - Item Type 6
- About Us (or About [Organization Name])
    - The [Organization Name] Difference
    - Quality
    - Our Promise to You
    - Join Our Team
- Events (or Calendar, News, etc.)
    - News
    - Online Promotions
- Blog (or [Blog Name])
- Newsletter (or [Newsletter Name])
- Contact Us

Simple Layout with Sidebar Sub-Navigation (Drop-lists optional; all items that would normally go in drop lists would be manually created links in the left column of the page. Example; [Heart to Heart](#))

This simple style can display or not display drop-lists, depending on your preference. Having all normal drop-list items on the page as well as in the main menu as drop-lists can be good for your search engine optimization, but can also be extra work for you. Note: Any time you need to change your main menu, you must also update the side-bar links on the page in question, so this style of navigation is maintenance-intensive.

- Home
- Online Store (or Shop, Shop Online, Store, etc.) All drop list items are also in the sidebar on the main Online Store Page.
    - Item Type 1 (e.g. Fabric, Living Room Furniture, Toys, Gift Baskets; whatever you sell)
    - Item Type 2
    - Item Type 3
    - Item Type 4
    - Item Type 5
    - Item Type 6
- About Us (or About [Organization Name]) All drop list items are also in the sidebar on the main About Us page.
    - The [Organization Name] Difference
    - Quality
    - Our Promise to You
    - Join Our Team
- Events (or Calendar, News, etc.) All drop list items are also in the sidebar on the main Events page.
    - News
    - Online Promotions
- Blog (or [Blog Name])
- Newsletter (or [Newsletter Name])
- Contact Us

Any Style Navigation with Graphical Sidebar Sub-Navigation (Drop-lists optional; all items that would normally go in drop lists would be manually created links in the left column of the page. Example; Dirt)

If you have the graphical skills to create your own button graphics, this method can be very visually appealing to your visitors. Note: This style is time and effort-intensive in setting up and maintaining! This style can display or not display drop-lists, depending on your preference. The graphical sidebar buttons will not help your SEO, so your search engine results will depend on whatever style of Navigation you choose as well as on your content. Any time you need to change your side menu, you must edit the original button graphics in a program such as Photoshop and you must update the links.

- Home
- Online Store (or Shop, Shop Online, Store, etc.) All drop list items are also in the sidebar on the main Online Store Page.
    - Item Type 1 (e.g. Fabric, Living Room Furniture, Toys, Gift Baskets; whatever you sell)
    - Item Type 2
    - Item Type 3
    - Item Type 4
    - Item Type 5
    - Item Type 6
- About Us (or About [Organization Name]) All drop list items are also in the sidebar on the main About Us page.
    - The [Organization Name] Difference
    - Quality
    - Our Promise to You
    - Join Our Team
- Events (or Calendar, News, etc.) All drop list items are also in the sidebar on the main Events page.
    - News
    - Online Promotions
- Blog (or [Blog Name])
- Newsletter (or [Newsletter Name])

Contact Us

Informational Site Templates

Simple Layout (Drop list items; few to none. Example; [Admiral Plumbing])
In this style, the Home page contains picture links to services/events that the organization is actively promoting. This simple style with no drop-lists is good for organizations that don't need to present a huge amount of information. When using this style, your Search Engine results will not be hurt, but your results will be dependent on your content completely, so this style of Navigation will not especially help you there.

- Home
- Gallery (or Services, What We Do (whatever your organization is about / is promoting)
- About Us (or About [Organization Name])
- Events (or Calendar, News, etc.)
- Blog (or [Blog Name])
- Newsletter (or [Newsletter Name])
- Contact Us

Standard Layout (Drop lists for major categories. Example: [Stitchin' Memories])
In this style, underneath your page for your organization's main focus in the navigation (e.g. Gallery, Services, What We Do, etc.) is an item for each of your major areas of focus. Other elements that warrant drop lists (e.g. under About Us having items such as The [Organization Name] Difference, Quality, Our Promise to You, etc.) are also present, but only one level of drop lists is used. This style will help your search engine results a little more than the simple style, but your results will still primarily rely on your content.

- Home
- City Government (or Services, What We Do (whatever your organization is about / is promoting)
  - Service Type 1 (e.g. Cleaning, Repair, Catering; whatever you sell)
  - Service Type 2
  - Service Type 3
  - Service Type 4
  - Service Type 5
  - Service Type 6
- About Us (or About [Organization Name])
  - The [Organization Name] Difference
  - Quality
  - Our Promise to You
  - Join Our Team
- Events (or Calendar, News, etc.)
  - News
  - Online Promotions
- Blog (or [Blog Name])

- Newsletter (or [Newsletter Name])
- Contact Us

Simple Layout with Sidebar Sub-Navigation (Drop-lists optional; all items that would normally go in drop lists would be manually created links in the left column of the page. Example; Seal Source)

This simple style can display or not display drop-lists, depending on your preference. Having all normal drop-list items on the page as well as in the main menu as drop-lists can be good for your search engine optimization, but can also be extra work for you. Note: Any time you need to change your main menu, you must also update the side-bar links on the page in question, so this style of navigation is maintenance-intensive.

- Home
- Gallery (or Services, What We Do (whatever your organization is about / is promoting)
    - Service Type 1 (e.g. Cleaning, Repair, Catering; whatever you sell)
    - Service Type 2
    - Service Type 3
    - Service Type 4
    - Service Type 5
    - Service Type 6
- About Us (or About [Organization Name]) All drop list items are also in the sidebar on the main About Us page.
    - The [Organization Name] Difference
    - Quality
    - Our Promise to You
    - Join Our Team
- Events (or Calendar, News, etc.) All drop list items are also in the sidebar on the main Events page.
    - News
    - Online Promotions
- Blog (or [Blog Name])
- Newsletter (or [Newsletter Name])
- Contact Us

Any Style Navigation with Graphical Sidebar Sub-Navigation (Drop-lists optional; all items that would normally go in drop lists would be manually created links in the left column of the page. Example; Dirt)

If you have the graphical skills to create your own button graphics, this method can be very visually appealing to your visitors. Note: This style is time and effort-intensive in setting up and maintaining! This style can display or not display drop-lists, depending on your preference. The graphical sidebar buttons will not help your SEO, so your search engine results will depend on whatever style of Navigation you choose as well as on your content. Any time you need to change your side menu, you must edit the original button graphics in a program such as Photoshop and you must update the links.

- Home
- Gallery (or Services, What We Do (whatever your organization is about / is promoting) All drop list items are also in the sidebar on the main Online Store Page.
  - Service Type 1 (e.g. Cleaning, Repair, Catering; whatever you sell)
  - Service Type 2
  - Service Type 3
  - Service Type 4
  - Service Type 5
  - Service Type 6
- About Us (or About [Organization Name]) All drop list items are also in the sidebar on the main About Us page.
  - The [Organization Name] Difference
  - Quality
  - Our Promise to You
  - Join Our Team
- Events (or Calendar, News, etc.) All drop list items are also in the sidebar on the main Events page.
  - News
  - Online Promotions
- Blog (or [Blog Name])
- Newsletter (or [Newsletter Name])
- Contact Us