Develop a Communications Brief

A new website should begin with a plan that lays out how you intend to use the Internet to meet your organization’s objectives as well as the needs of your audience. Taking time to ask and answer some specific questions before you begin will help ensure you have the content and functionality that visitors to your website expect.

**Summarize your project**

State general project information, goals and relevant background information. This should be an overview of the project as a whole. Here are some questions to ask:

* What is the primary purpose of the website?
* What are the secondary goals of the site?
* What organizational units will be promoted by this website? (List all that apply)
* Who will be the primary contact for website administration?
* How will content be developed initially and managed later?

**Profile your target audience**

Provide enough detail to enhance everyone’s understanding. Include some audience demographic information. UAB websites often have multiple target audiences. Using the questions below as a guide (or others you think would be appropriate), answer for each recognized target audience.

* Who is your target audience?
* What is a typical task the visitor might perform? For example: apply, register, log on, search for information, submit an email address, request more information.
* What brought them to the site? Why would they be enticed to return?

**Map out a site plan**

A site plan can be as simple as a sketch on a piece of paper or an outline that resembles the table of contents of a book.

**Establish a timeline**

Plan time for gathering content, building the site, testing, revision, user feedback and final approvals.