

Personal website making: Quick basics

Carl Thibault

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Every researcher should have their place on the web. The basic purpose is to enable interested individuals to contact you and get an idea if your work, can be of use to them.

1 The process

The process of effectively creating a website that gets results is as follows. The following sections will assist in accomplishing these in the proper order and examples will be included where ever possible.

1. Purpose
2. Site plan
3. Domain name and web hosting
4. Tool selection
5. Logo creation
6. Web site creation

2 Before you do anything else

Everyone wants to start coding right away, I certainly did. Because of a lack of planning I have had several failed attempts at a personal webpages in the past. Please use this to help you and use you time to create one great page not a bunch of bad ones.

2.1 Purpose or objective

You need to define a clear objective or purpose to your website this will define how everything goes together from this point.

2.2 Whats going to get and keep visitors there

Do a little research of sites that you like or researcher that you find have useful/ attractive websites and keep them close by. take some notes about what keeps you there.

Grasp Lab's Daniel Mellinger has a simple web site with the basics that is easy to navigate.
<https://fling.seas.upenn.edu/dmel/wiki/index.php>

Things to notice:

- Links to the Lab's research page

- Picture on the front page
- Projects are visible and easily assessable
- Publications are visible and easily assessable
- Images are very clear and high quality
- videos are imbedded from youtube
- Press items including podcast interviews are listed

Things that could improve:

- A brief introduction on the home page would be nice
- Including videos on the home page gives a good introduction
- Overly simplistic site feel

2.3 Site feel

It is worth deciding early what feel and features you desire of your website as this will dictate what tools you will be able to use to create it. For example there are hundreds of simple thml templates available if you are going for a small site or flash based sites that add a lot of glamor. Deciding now will save rebuilding your site later because you changed your mind half way.

2.4 Site structure

Start by outlining the sections and important pages you will need in you site.

Typical ones include

- Home or index page (make it a good first impression)
- About you (it should be technical and reflects the feel of the page)
- Links
- Resources (something useful for them)
- Publications
- CV

A good tool here is some mind mapping software that allows you to quickly create the outline in a web form.

3 Domain name and web hosting

Hosting is available to all UNB students for free using their H drive. This made the choice very simple however eliminated the possibility of using a content management system type site. If you would like to use a specific tool make sure it will be supported by your host.

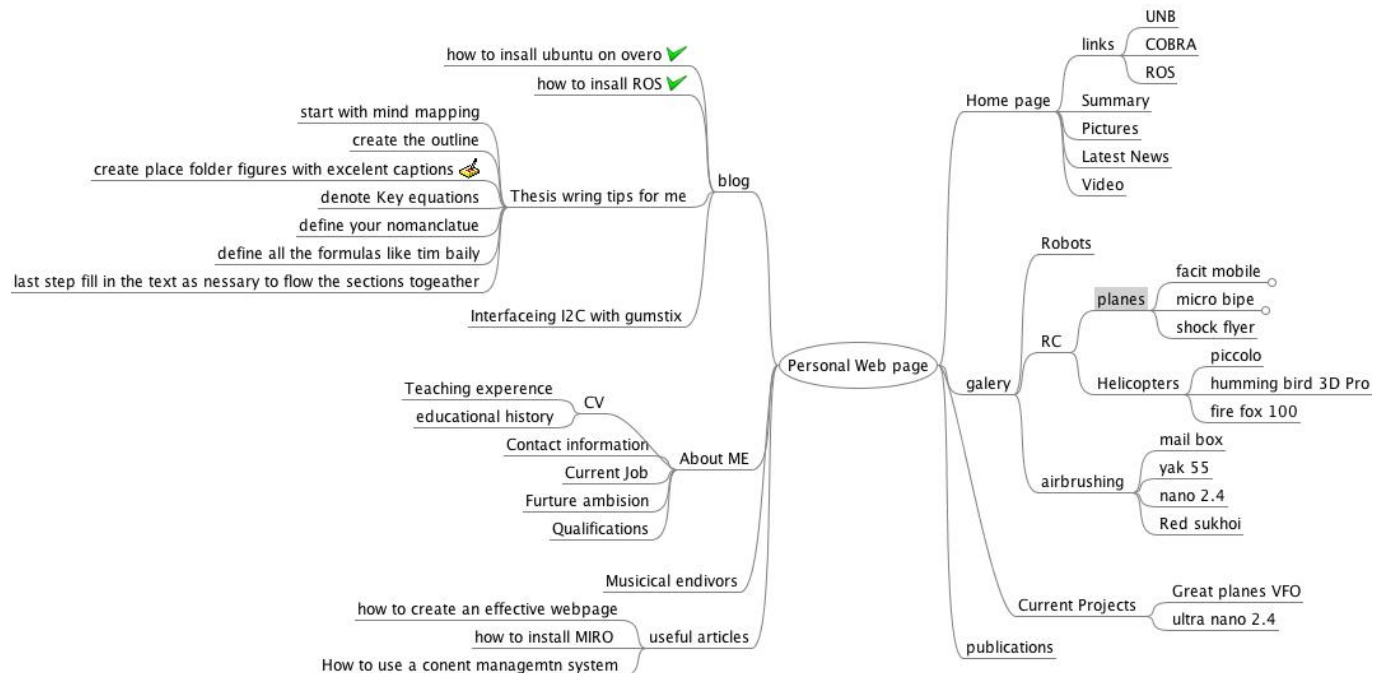


Figure 1: The starting of a web site using mind mapping with free mind software

3.1 UNB web hosting

At UNB we have free web hosting and domain names but the domain name is horrible. The cost of free is that visitors receive a disclaimer page and the website is located at this address <http://people.unb.ca/~loginid> it is very easy to upload when logged into a UNB computer however it can be very time consuming when uploading over the internet to your h drive

3.2 Getting a UNB hosted site setup

This is a simple process of placing your web page in a folder called `public_html` on your H drive quoting from the 2009 student guide.

Place any html or image (jpg or gif) files you wish to have appear in your Professional Pages in the `public_html` folder in your Novell home directory (H drive). Your first web page MUST be called `index.html`. Note that there is a one-time overnight wait the first time you place files in this directory before your web pages will appear. After the initial overnight set up period, you may access your web page at <http://people.unb.ca/~loginid>. For example, if your UNB login ID is `ej5t7`, your professional page URL is [http:// people.unb.ca/~ej5t7](http://people.unb.ca/~ej5t7).

For more details IT services has posted more information including SFTP file transfer details at the address below.

- Creating your own web page <http://www.unb.ca/its/students/creating-own-webpage.html>
- File management <http://www.unb.ca/its/students/manage-files.html>

4 Tools

There are many tools available for website development and a few of the free ones are listed below. This list is by no means complete and is constantly changing. another thing to consider is where the site will be hosted that may dictate what type of files can be uploaded.

4.1 Mind mapping

Free Mind - Open source, java based, idea web tool

4.2 Website design

There are more tools available every day it seems here are a few I have looked at

4.2.1 Windows

- Dream weaver (Premium software)
- FancyPlus from fancycms.com
- AuroraFlash (Free wysiwyg flash creator)
- Flashmint
- Microsoft web expressions

4.2.2 Mac

- iweb (comes included in the OS)

4.3 Picture editing

- PhotoShop (windows)
- Gimp (linux and windows)
- SeaShore (mac version of Gimp)

4.4 File transfer

- winSCP (windows)
- Fetch (Mac) should be down loaded from UNB to get registration code

5 Logo

This is not often a simple task to compete however is important. Remember the style you decided to create should be reflected in the logo. It does not have to be complicated remember most popular logs are very simple. The recommendation would be to start with you name and experiment with fonts and slogans that relate to you. adding a very simple graphic afterwards can result in a very professional result.

An example of simple text and font work would be the following example



Figure 2: Simple logo created using fonts and text in SeaShore

6 Go do it!

At this point a style is in your mind already a logo is forming and the site plan is not very difficult to put on paper. Look into a few of the tools available for assisting you create the site and follow the steps to create your own page.

the page currently under construction using the above mind is located at
[http:// people.unb.ca/~196qn](http://people.unb.ca/~196qn)

7 Getting better Google rating

This topic is not complete however is very important to include things into your webpage that will allow search engines to locate you page and display it to the interested party. Currently I would recommend doing a goolge search for getting better ratings since that grant you the latest recommendations