



Web Site Content Inventory Process

Purpose

The content inventory involves documenting every web page on your site. Some problem sites could be so out of date it's not even worth conducting this inventory. If that's the case, just create your new site and when you're ready to launch, just take down the old files and put up the new. But many sites do have valuable content that you don't want to lose in the shuffle. And the content inventory can teach you a great deal about the site's content issues.

The content inventory enables you to identify:

- All the content on your site.
- Web pages that should remain.
- Web pages that should be deleted.
- Web pages that should be updated.
- Who "owns" the content on specific pages.

Process

To conduct the inventory, use an Excel spreadsheet. Starting at the home page, navigate your school or office web site, clicking through the major pages, down to the minor pages. As you go to each page, copy and paste the web page address (url) from the browser's Address field into your spreadsheet and make notations about its content.

Site Content Inventory Worksheet

The spreadsheet should have the following fields -- you may add others that are useful to your particular project. As you navigate your site's pages, fill in the fields in the spreadsheet.

- Page Title: The title or name of the web page.
- Page Web Address (URL): Copy and paste the url from Internet Explorer's Address field into your spreadsheet. It should look something like this: <http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/boe/>
- Page Owner: The name of the person responsible for the content on the page.
- Retain/Delete/Update: Mark which of these actions need to be taken during the overhaul.

Your worksheet would look like this:

WEB CONTENT INVENTORY (sample)

PAGE TITLE	URL	RETAIN	UPDATE	DELETE	OWNER
Top level pages					
OGAT home page	departments/ogat/index.shtm	x	x		Central staff - J.Burke
Org chart page	departments/ogat/organization.shtm	x	x		Central staff - J. Burke
Vision/Mission	departments/ogat/mission.shtm	x	x		Central staff – J. Burke
Resources	departments/ogat/resources.shtm		x	x	Central staff – J. Burke
Search page	departments/oscs/search.html			x	Central staff – J. Burke
Entouch site					
Entouch home	departments/ogat/entouch	x	x		Editor N. Pearson

While you conduct the inventory, keep in mind:

- **Small is good:** Be ruthless. Delete anything unnecessary. And as you begin thinking about the new site, be conservative. It's better to have a small, well-structured, focused and up-to-date site than a large, unwieldy one that is too large to maintain and keep up-to-date.
- **Site structure:** Think about how remaining and "new" content can be grouped into 3 – 5 categories. You could even begin to create an outline for the new structure of the site, and list files that will remain as well as new content that will be added. To expose problems in your existing navigation, put your site through this nifty Navigation Stress Test <http://keith.instone.org/navstress/>
- **Harvest content:** If new content will be added to the site, begin thinking about who the source will be (who can supply the up-to-date staff list?) and whether the content exists in electronic and web-friendly format (e.g. Word, PDF, gif/jpg images)
- **Home page:** Begin thinking about what you want to say on the home page. Do want or need to update the content, perhaps each month or when you have an announcement? Web Services has a NewsBox publishing tool that enables anyone (no need to understand html) to publish content to a small space on a home page.
- **Designate Content Manager:** Think about your office staff and who would be the most appropriate "go-to" person to make decisions about content and to vet content on the site every year to ensure it stays up to date.