

# Beyond Website Basics: talk resources



STREAMLINE

## Pictures

### Photos

- Unsplash.com (beautiful photos with a good search engine)
- Pexels.com (wide variety, good search engine)
- Picjumbo.com (good selection of business related images)

*Pro tip: don't use clipart or graphics when the design calls for an image (for example, large home page feature)*

### Icons

- Iconsdb.com - wide selection of icons that can be changed to any color on the site and downloaded
- iconmonstr.com - ability to download in formats including SVG or PSD, which can be edited

### (info)graphics

- easel.ly (online infographic creator)
- snappa.com (quick and easy online graphics tool)
- Adobe Creative Suite (Illustrator, Photoshop, etc)

*Pro tip: infographics can be useful in this day of short attention span. Use them for factoids related to data, like # of customers served, years of service, # of service calls, average minutes to respond to service requests.*

### Video

- Your smartphone or laptop, YouTube
- Open Media Project (free for agencies serving < 5,000 citizens) - YouTube (can be affordable!)
- Granicus, home grown solutions (can get expensive)

## Words

### Content: general guidelines

- Width of online content = 10-15 words per line.
- Long vs. short reads: long reads should be broken up into sections when possible.
- Scrolling is no longer taboo ... but don't use that as an excuse to bury important content.
- Break related content into bite size teasers to allow scanning for pertinent info as a user scrolls, then allow them to click for more information. (Visitors typically scan pages quickly.)

### Content: Searchability

Why it matters: AB 2257 requires all agencies to have a link to a "searchable / indexable," text-based agenda directly on your homepage by 2019.

- In **MS Word**: Save as > PDF format (creates a text based PDF instead of image based scanned PDF). This is important for compliance with AB 2257.
- If it's already in scanned / image-based format:
  - **free-online-ocr.com** - a free service that allows you to easily convert scanned documents, PDFs, scanned invoices, screenshots and photos into editable and searchable text, such as DOC, TXT or PDF.
  - **onlineocr.net** - Extract text from PDF and images (JPG, BMP, TIFF, GIF) and convert into editable Word, Excel and Text output formats. Service supports 46 languages including Chinese, Japanese and Korean. (*Note: don't get distracted by the Download ad for Fileconverter*)
  - **Adobe Acrobat Pro** - If you want a convenient, local tool, this is your best friend. Great for creating text-based PDFs from Word \*and\* scans/ image-based files. *Enhance scans > Recognize text*

*Pro tip: save your agenda in searchable PDF format, and keep the agenda packet separate as a big scanned document if needed. (AB 2257 only applies to the agenda, not the whole packet.)*

## Content: findability (aka Information architecture)

- Use broad “buckets” with scannable, bite-sized chunks of info instead of including too many choices in your navigation. Put short snippets on your pages so visitors can scan quickly for what they need and click to get more detail.
- Don't mirror your org chart, think like a visitor (they don't care about titles or departments!) For example, do not bury the most looked-for content (like Bill Pay) on the Finance Department page.
- Test! You can ask friends, random strangers.
  - usertesting.com - live people poke around your site to try and complete tasks (\$100/user)
  - treejack.com - invite users to test your navigation before you make your site live (monthly fee)

## Search Engine Optimization

- Google Webmaster Tools: [google.com/webmasters](http://google.com/webmasters)
- Bing Webmaster Tools: [bing.com/toolbox/webmaster](http://bing.com/toolbox/webmaster)
- SEO Report Card: [app.upcity.com/free-tools/seo-report-card](http://app.upcity.com/free-tools/seo-report-card)

**Pro tip:** don't use “black hat” techniques like keyword stuffing, or hire shady SEO companies. Instead, craft good content that naturally weaves in the use of keywords your visitors might be searching for. Be careful with acronyms, unless you think your visitors are searching using them.

## Site testing

### Accessibility

- Section 508 and WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) 2.0 Level AA
- Information: [section508.gov](http://section508.gov)
- Testing resources: [wave.webaim.org](http://wave.webaim.org), [achecker.ca](http://achecker.ca)

### Other tools

- Check My Links (free Google Chrome extension)
- Hubspot Website Grader: [website.grader.com](http://website.grader.com)
- Found Website Audit tool: [found.co.uk/seo-tool](http://found.co.uk/seo-tool)
- Nibbler, for testing site content, accessibility and more: [nibbler.silktide.com](http://nibbler.silktide.com)

## Site tracking

- Google Analytics (free) – [google.com/analytics](http://google.com/analytics) (note that you will need to plug in the GA number to your website. Your web vendor should be able to help).
- Embedded site analytics (varies depending on your platform)
- SiteImprove (expensive) – you may need help from your web vendor to get set up.

*Pro tip: Google Analytics is not only free, it's also very powerful and can be a bit overwhelming. But once it's set up you can use it to send automated reports every month with statistics you can share with your GM or board.*

## Engagement

- Email campaigns - GovDelivery (Granicus) on the expensive end, Mailchimp on the cheaper (or free) end.
- FlashVote - quickly take the temperature of your constituents on important issues, or use it to reach out on a regular schedule..
- Surveys - SurveyGizmo, SurveyMonkey - can be sent via email or embedded in your site. Great for when you have multiple questions to ask, infrequently (aka for a website redesign, or to determine if you should start an email newsletter)..

For more info: [sloane@getstreamline.com](mailto:sloane@getstreamline.com) | (916) 900-6619