



**Wisconsin Agency Content Management**

**System**

**User Guide**

**V 1.5**

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## About this Document

This document provides basic information about editing content in sites using the Wisconsin Agency Site Templates in SharePoint 2013. This document is intended for content authors and approvers, and does not describe all SharePoint 2013 functions.

## Icons Used in this Document



**Governance Note:** Indicates a note about site governance; check with your Agency web content management team for site policies, procedures, and quality assurance standards which may impact the way your Agency uses the Agency template.



**Tip:** Indicates a tip or trick for using the SharePoint 2013 and the Agency template.

## Wisconsin Agencies Templates: An Overview

In 2014, the Wisconsin.Gov Revitalization Project produced a redesigned and re-architected Wisconsin State portal. As an output of that project, NIC Wisconsin produced two templates for Agency sites. Any Wisconsin state agency can implement one of the two templates at no cost to the agency.

Like Wisconsin.Gov, these templates feature a responsive design delivered using SharePoint 2013 as the web content management platform. These templates provide base functionality which allows agency content managers to build and manage page content containing text, images, and links, and to add web parts.

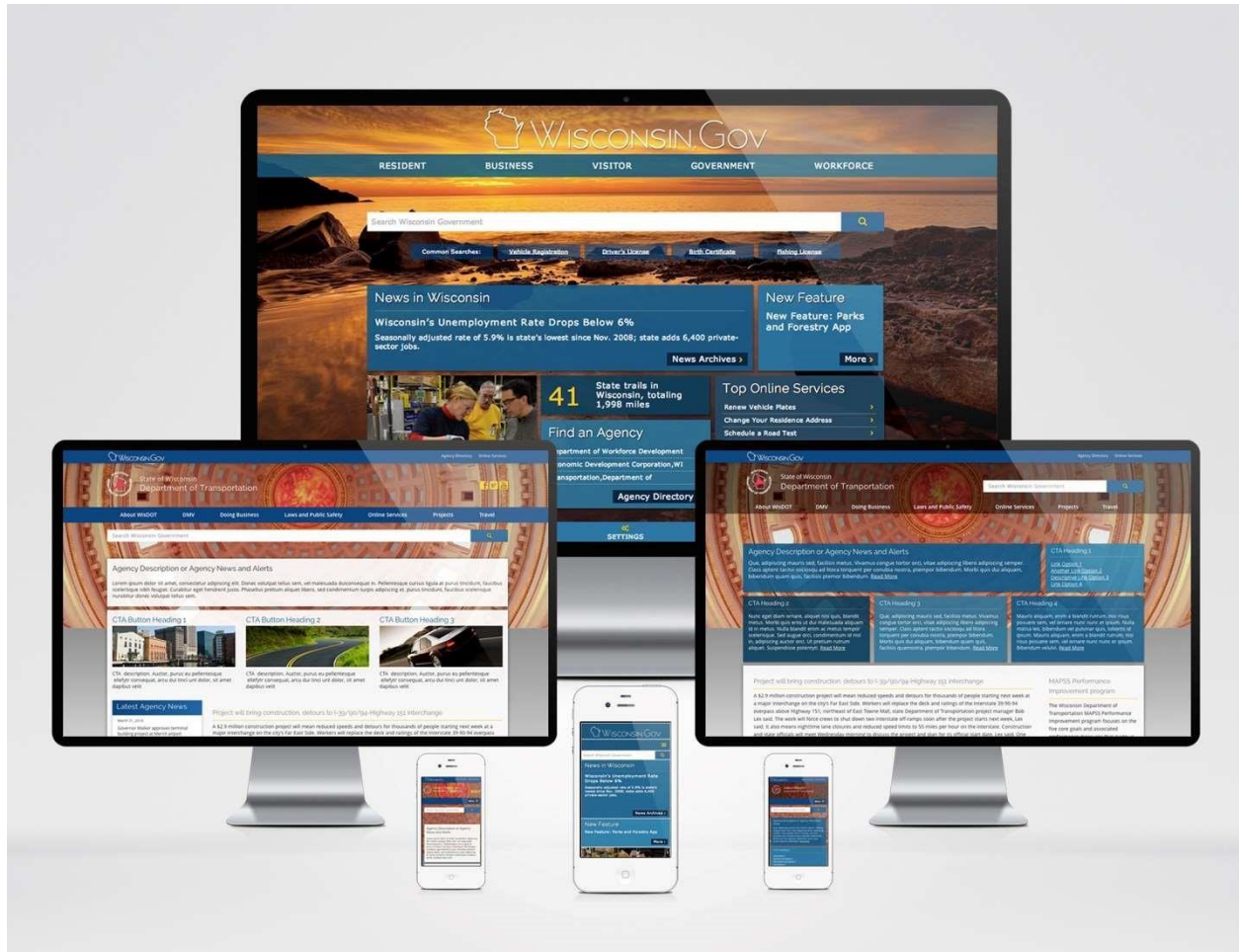


Figure 1: Responsive design on a variety of devices

The templates provide configuration options for the agency as follows:

- Background image
- Agency logo
- Fly-out navigation (three levels)
- Footer links

These configuration options are managed and maintained by NIC Wisconsin on behalf of the agency.



Governance Note: Check with your Agency web content management team to determine your Agency's process for identifying and requesting changes to any of the configuration options.

In addition to the home page layout, each agency template includes three page layouts any of which can be selected for each page on the site. The page layouts include content areas which can be managed and maintained by content editors.

## Simple Design Home Page: A Tour

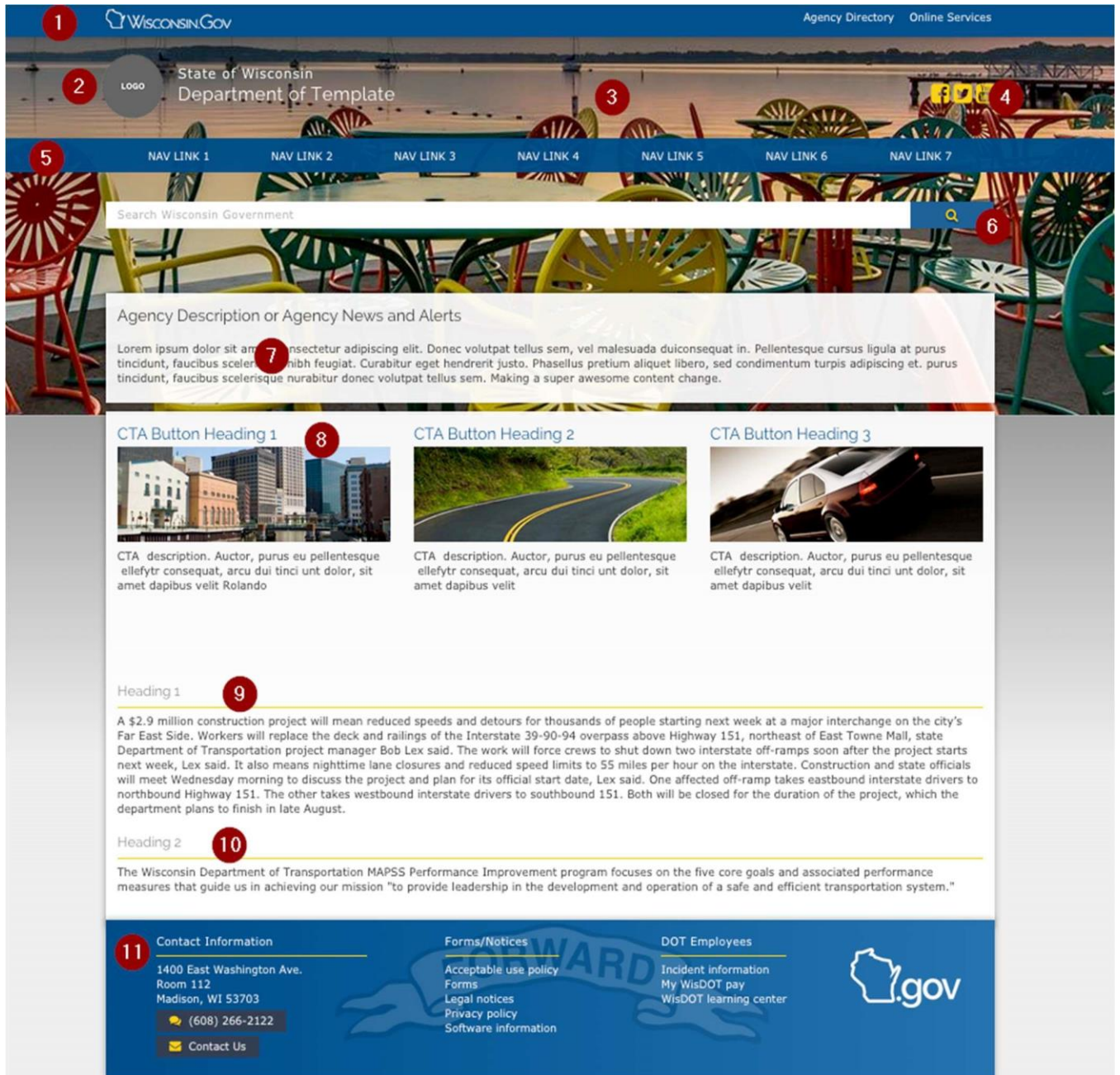


Figure 2: Simple Design Homepage – Annotated

1. Global top navigation (across all agencies)
  - a. Maintained by NIC Wisconsin (Master Page)

- b. Directs user to [www.wisconsin.gov](http://www.wisconsin.gov) links when clicked (Wisconsin.gov home, Agency Directory, Online Services directory)
2. Agency Logo
  - a. Maintained by NIC Wisconsin (Master Page)
  - b. Link that directs a user to Agency homepage when clicked
  - c. Displays throughout the site on every page
3. Background image
  - a. Maintained by NIC Wisconsin
  - b. Selected by agency
4. Social links
  - a. Maintained by NIC Wisconsin
  - b. Up to three
  - c. Social icons linking to up to three agency-designated social accounts
5. Global Top Navigation
  - a. Maintained by NIC Wisconsin
  - b. Seven top-level categories
  - c. Two secondary levels which “fly out” (desktop) or expand (mobile)
  - d. Users will use this area to navigate the website
  - e. Displays throughout the site on every page
6. Search Box
  - a. Scopes maintained by NIC Wisconsin
  - b. Google Search API
  - c. Results from sites specified by Agency
  - d. Displays throughout the site on every page
7. Agency Description Area
  - a. Agency-maintained content area
  - b. Title and text
  - c. Purpose: Description of agency or other important agency info
8. “Call To Action” (3)
  - a. Agency-maintained content areas
  - b. Consist of heading, image and description
  - c. Purpose: provide quick access to any combination of most-sought and/or highlighted Agency services, information, or initiatives
9. Left-column content area
  - a. Agency-maintained content area
  - b. Purpose: Agency News web part
10. Central content areas (2)
  - a. Agency-maintained content areas
  - b. Purpose: Text and image content
11. Agency Footer
  - a. Maintained by NIC Wisconsin
  - b. Intended for content and links specific to the Agency
  - c. Displays throughout the site on every page



## A Word about Variances

Not all agency content can be accommodated by the no-cost agency templates. Therefore, each agency will maintain a list of “variances”, describing content which will not be contained in the templates and defining what will be done with that content in the context of the template projects. Examples of variances may include:

- Large numbers of document and other files
- Interactive images (e.g. images with “hot spots” which animate or link to other content)
- Surveys
- Large tables

Your Agency’s project manager will provide information about reporting and managing variances.

## SharePoint for Wisconsin Agencies

### Site Navigation

The site template provides top “fly out” navigation which appears across the top of each page on the agency site. This top navigation includes seven top-level categories, which include two nested sub levels (“Secondary” and “Tertiary” navigation), for a total of three levels of top navigation. Each navigation label may be up to 30 characters and spaces in length. Your agency will adjust the site map to fit this format. The flyout navigation is hard-coded and maintained by NIC Wisconsin; your agency will determine the process to add or change fly out navigation.

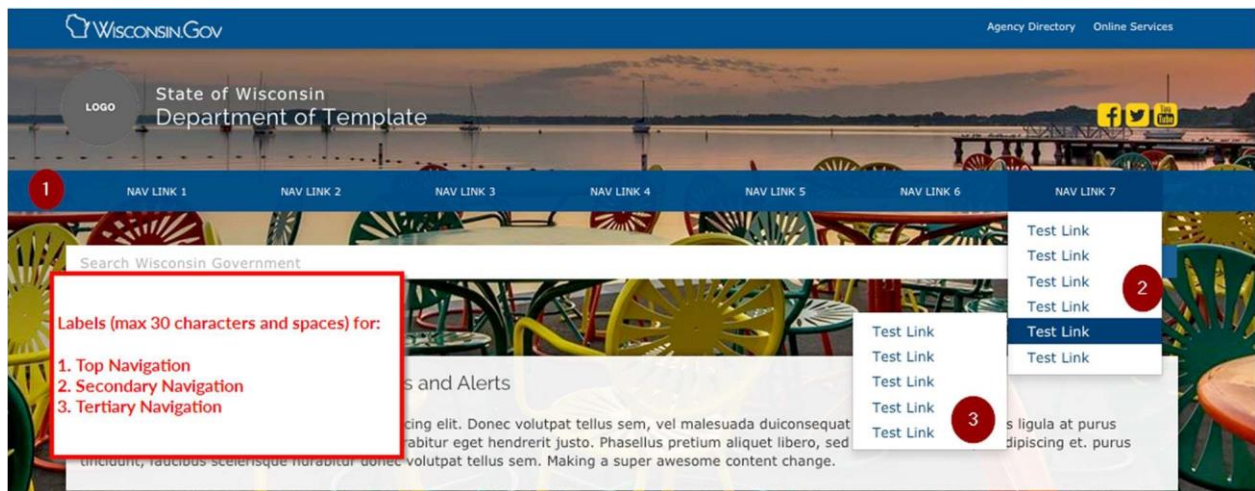


Figure 3: Flyout Navigation - Example (2 levels)

If a page requires levels of navigation that exceeds the three levels provided by the fly-out navigation, you have the option to add links to pages within the content of a page. Links can be added into the content area, or in the right, or left column based on the page layout.



**Governance Note:** Your Agency web content management team will determine how to identify, approve and request changes to the top three levels of navigation, and will establish how to add and manage additional levels of navigation in the content areas of pages.

### SharePoint Ribbon Bar

If you’re familiar with Microsoft Office 2007 or later, you’ve seen the Microsoft Ribbon Bar. The Ribbon is also present in SharePoint. This is where you will be doing most of your page-level editing. From the Ribbon, you can modify page settings, edit and insert content, add web parts, and save or publish your work. You can also access SharePoint’s administrative tools via the Site Actions menu, located on the left of the Ribbon bar. User specific options are located under the User menu, located on the far right of the Ribbon bar.



Figure 4: Ribbon Bar



Tip: Sometimes the Ribbon bar tabs do not show by default. To make the Ribbon bar tabs visible, select Show Ribbon from the Site Actions menu.

### Primary Ribbon Bar Functions

- **Settings (aka “Gear”):** Allows you to view and manage site content, create new pages and sub sites, and administrate site settings.



Figure 5: Settings aka Gear icon

- **Edit Page icon:** Checks the file out to your account as well as activates the Edit command. Note: This icon changes to a “Save” (disk/arrow) icon when a page is in edit state.



Figure 6: Edit icon

- **Browse tab:** Shows the normal view of the page



Figure 7: Browse tab

- **Page tab:** Provides access to functions to edit page content and properties, as well as check page in and out, and save changes

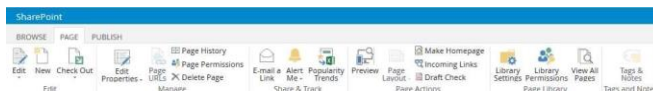


Figure 8: Page tab

- **Publish tab:** Contains functions pertaining to the submitting/approving/publishing workflow



Figure 9: Publish tab

- **User Menu:** Contains items pertaining to the user’s account. Most notably, this menu includes the log out option

# Wisconsin Agency CMS User Guide



Figure 10: User menu

## Getting Started

### Log into SharePoint

You will need your Accounts domain ID (email ID) and password, and Internet Explorer 10 or above.

<http://dot-auth-uat.wi.gov/Pages/home.aspx>

## Navigate the Pages Library

Pages on the site are stored in the Pages library. To create a page, or to edit an existing page, first navigate to the pages library.

1. Sign in to your account.
2. Select the Gear icon (Settings) at the upper right and select Site Contents.
3. The page will refresh and the Site Contents page will be displayed. Select the Pages library icon (blue file). The contents of the Pages library will be displayed as a list.



Tip: Selecting the label (and not the icon) for an item in the Site Contents view will display information about that item, rather than opening the item.

## Add a Page

Navigate to the pages library.

1. Navigate to the folder in which you want to add the page
2. Select the down arrow on the New document icon in the ribbon and select Page. The Create Page page is displayed.
3. Enter a title for the page with no spaces between words and tab to the Description field. The Title you entered will be automatically populated to the URL name field.
4. Select Create. You will be returned to the pages library and your new page will appear with a green checkmark icon indicating it is checked out to you.



Your Agency web content manager will establish the structure for organizing pages on your site.



Tip: The file will only be visible to the person who created it and until the first time it is checked in.

## Check Out Feature

In order to work on a file, it must first be checked out. This ensures that no one else is working on the same file at the same time you are in order to avoid conflicting updates.

To check out a file, sign in to your account.

1. Access the Pages library and locate the file you want to check out.
2. Select the name of the page you want to edit. The page is displayed and you'll see the Ribbon bar at the top of the page. Select the Page tab from the Ribbon bar.
3. The option to check out the file is now visible on the Ribbon bar on the left. Select the Check Out button to check the file out to your user account.



Tip: The file will remain checked out to you until you check it in, or discard the checkout. No one else can edit a page which is checked out to another person.

## Edit Mode

1. After checking out the page, you can then enter Edit Mode by selecting the Edit icon under the Page tab.
2. Once you enter Edit mode, you will see page content areas outlined and have access to page editing tools. After entering Edit mode, the Edit button will change into a Save icon.

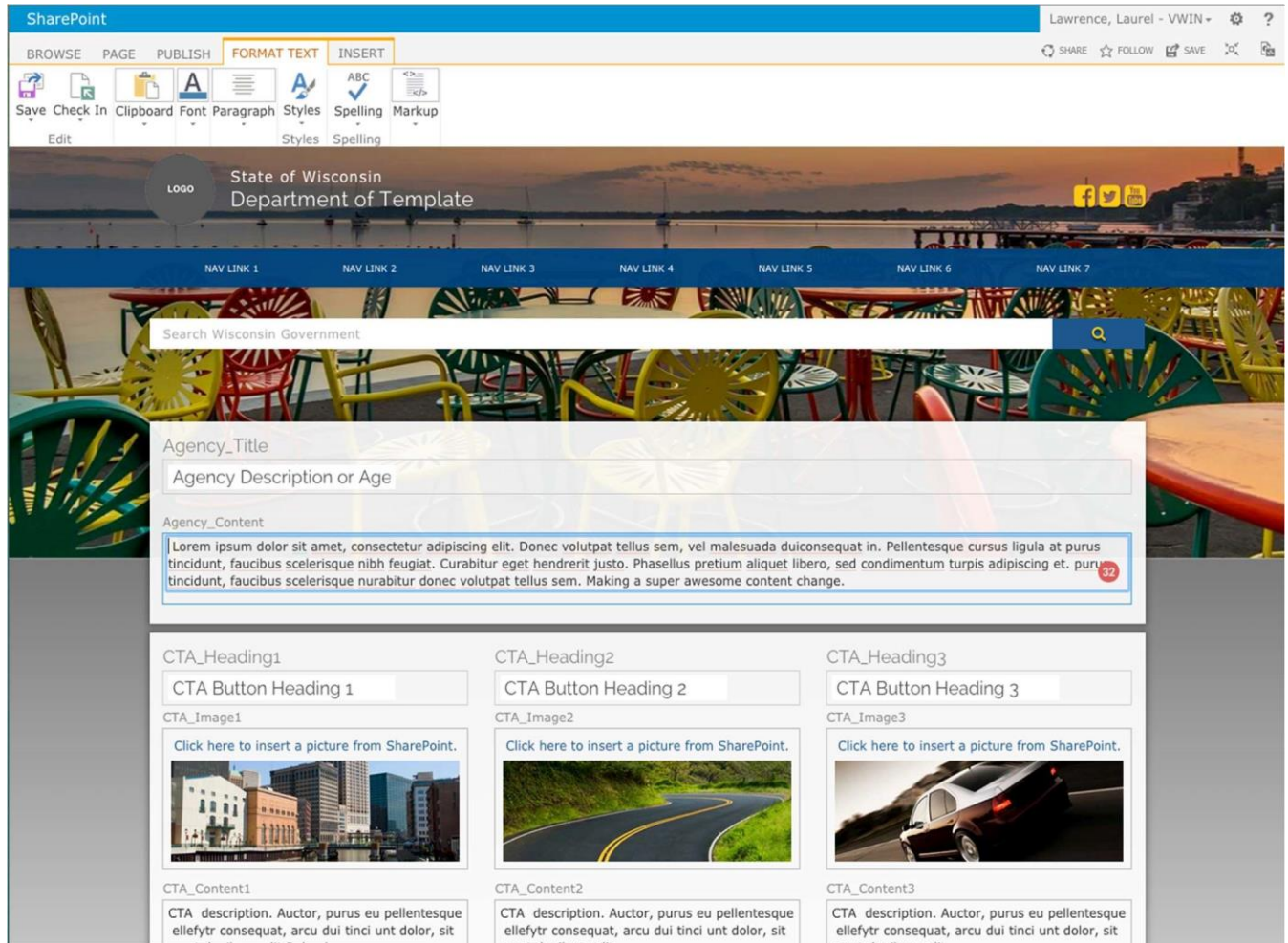


Figure 11: Page in Edit mode with Save button visible

## Edit a Page Title

The page title is the text that shows in top of the tab or browser window, identifying the page to the user.

1. To edit a page title, select Edit Properties from the Page tab.
2. In the Edit Properties screen, edit the Title field and select Save at the bottom of the page.



The screenshot shows the 'Edit Properties' page for a SharePoint content type. The 'Name' field is highlighted with a red box and contains the text 'Accountability.aspx'. The 'Title' field contains 'Accountability'. Other fields include 'Content Type', 'Comments', 'Contact', 'Contact E-Mail Address', and 'Contact Name'.

Figure 12: Edit Properties Page - Title field



Tip: Do not edit the Name field. This will change the file name of the web page itself and can break the navigation.

## Add Content

To add content (text, images, links, etc.) to your page, select the Page tab, then select Edit. The content areas are outlined and the ribbon provides access to editing tools. A standard Microsoft Word-style text editing menu will appear in a tab called Format Text in the Ribbon bar.

## Clean Up Text with Notepad

When you create content in them, Microsoft (and other word-processing applications) insert hidden formatting code which can affect the way that content is displayed and behaves in SharePoint. To avoid these problems, you should paste copy from other applications into Notepad before pasting it into SharePoint. Notepad strips out the hidden code so you're pasting "clean text" into SharePoint.



Figure 13: Access Notepad

### Add Text Copy

1. Start typing in a content area, or paste your text from Notepad into a content area using the Paste function in the ribbon bar.



Tip: You can copy text between Word and Notepad, and between Notepad and SharePoint, using Control+X for Cut, Control+C for Copy, and Control+V for Paste.

2. Format the copy using the Styles in the ribbon as specified in Appendix A.

### Format Copy

You can format copy in SharePoint just as you would in Word, but with limitations. Below are a few examples of common text formatting tasks in SharePoint.



Tip: We've provided a Style Guide in Appendix A for you to reference when formatting text.

### Format a Headline

Select the text that is to be the headline. From the Markup Styles menu, choose Heading 1. The selected text becomes larger and bold.

### Format a Bulleted List

Paste or type the text you want to turn into a bulleted list, using the return key to create breaks between bulleted items.

Select the entire list. Select the bullet list item under Format Text in the Ribbon bar.

## Insert an Image

1. Place your cursor where you would like to insert an image. From the Editing Tools menu, select Insert. The Insert selection menu will appear on the Ribbon bar. You can insert a table, picture, link to another website, or document from this menu.

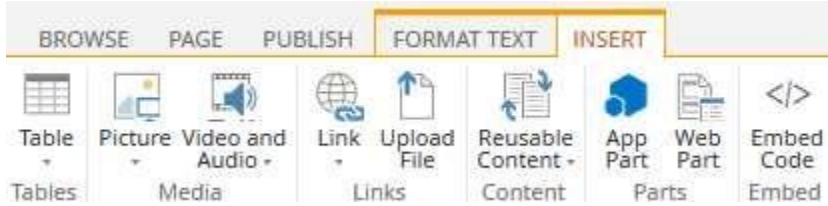


Figure 14: Insert selection menu

2. Select the arrow under the Picture icon, and then choose From Computer. The Upload Image window will appear. This will allow you to upload an image from your local computer to SharePoint.

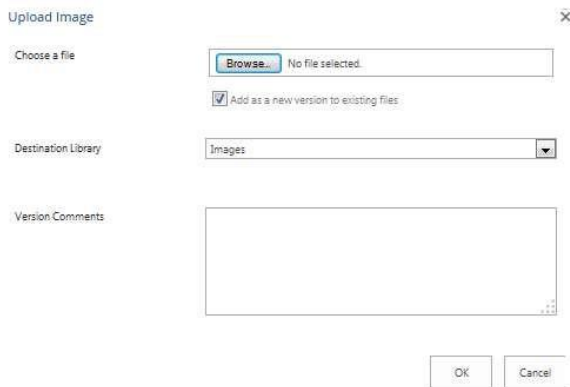


Figure 15: Upload Image window

3. Use the Choose File button to navigate your computer and select the image you wish to use. Change the dropdown to Images. When you are finished, select OK. Another screen will open, which will allow you to add a title, keyword, and other information. All data is optional in this metadata properties screen except the filename, which is pre-filled.

EDIT

Save Cancel Paste Copy Cut Delete Item

Commit Clipboard Actions

The document was uploaded successfully. Use this form to update the properties of the document.

Content Type: Image

Upload an image

Name \*: IMG\_0321.JPG

Title

Keywords

Comments

Author

Date Picture Taken: 7/15/2014 6 PM 27

Copyright

Figure 16: Metadata properties screen

4. When you are finished, select Save.



Tip: It's not a good practice to add a picture from an Address unless you have control over the website you are linking from. If the site owners move the image, your link will be

## Embed a Video

1. Access the video on Youtube, e.g. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yyC7Ut3pU6I>
2. Select Embed in the ribbon bar.

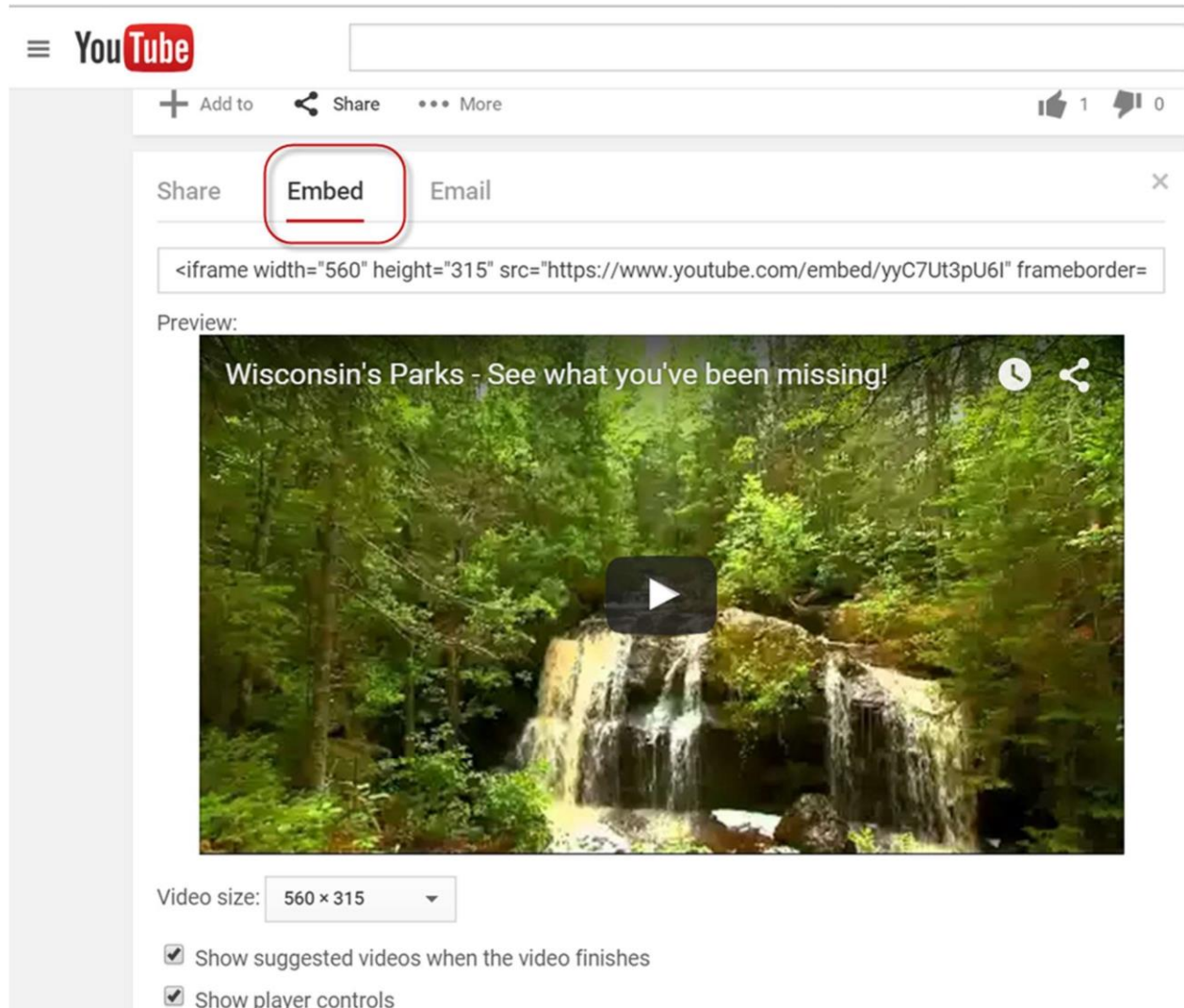


Figure 17: YouTube Share Embed tab

3. Select Options.
4. Copy the URL
5. Access converter to generate valid XHTML, e.g.  
[https://www.tools4noobs.com/online\\_tools/youtube\\_xhtml/](https://www.tools4noobs.com/online_tools/youtube_xhtml/)
6. Generate the code.
7. Strip out the unneeded code. Retain `<object>` code.
8. Copy the code, e.g.  

```
<object type="application/x-shockwave-flash" style="width:560px; height:315px;" data="//www.youtube.com/v/yyC7Ut3pU6I?color2=FBE9EC&ver sion=3">  
  
  <param name="movie"  
  value="//www.youtube.com/v/yyC7Ut3pU6I?color2=FBE9EC&ve rsion=3" />
```

```
<param name="allowFullScreen" value="true" />  
<param name="allowscriptaccess" value="always" />  
</object>
```

9. Open the page where you want to add the embedded video.
10. Choose Insert from the Toolbar, then choose Embed Code.
11. Paste in the code. The window will refresh and display a preview of the video.

## Embed a Google Map

1. Locate the address in Google.
2. Select the Menu => Share or embed map

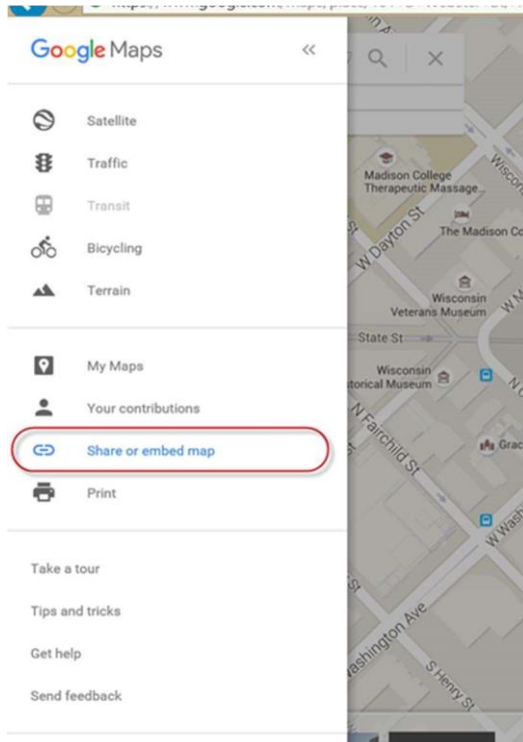


Figure 18: Menu - Share or embed map

3. Select the Embed Map tab; copy the URL.

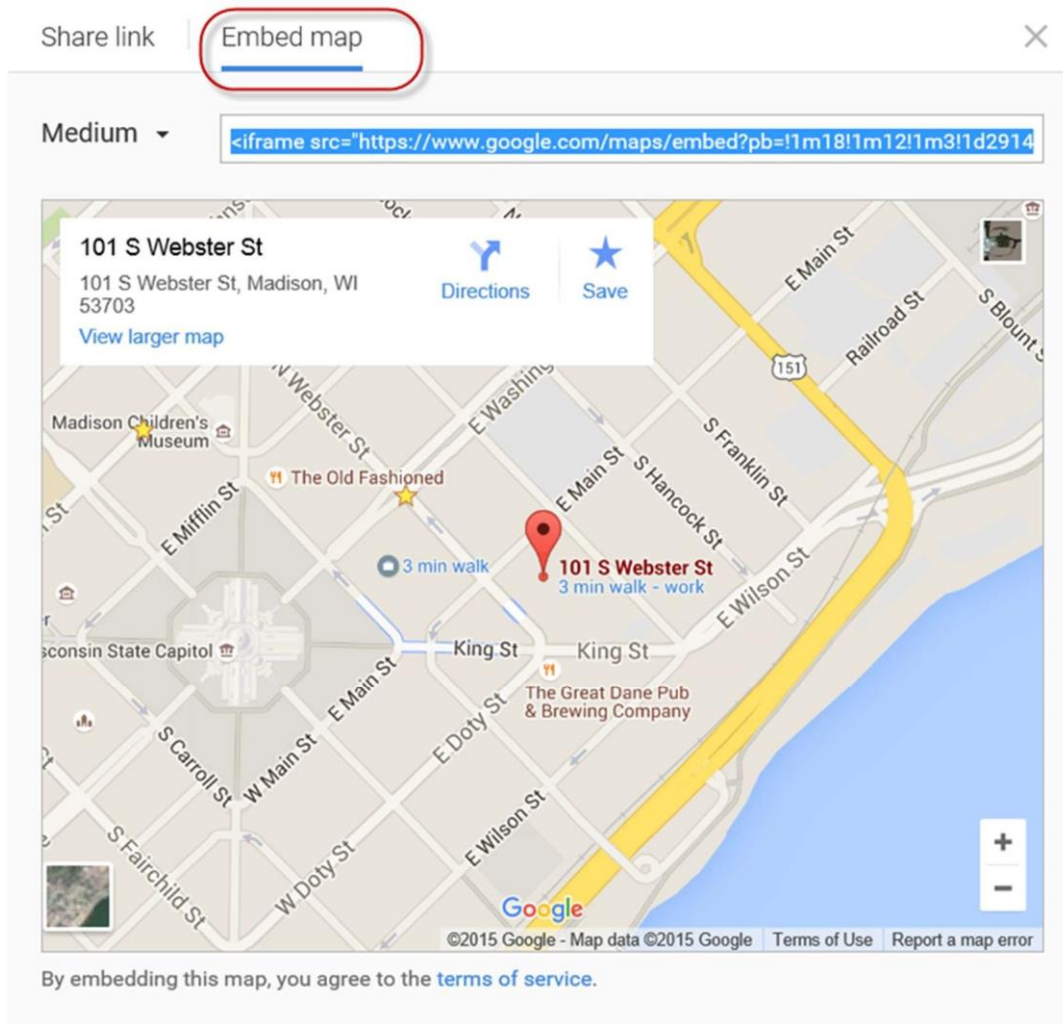


Figure 19: Embed map tab and URL

4. Open the page where you want to add the embedded map.
5. Insert => Web Part => Script Editor
6. Edit Snippet
7. Paste the URL; a preview of the map will appear below the text field.

## Link to a SharePoint Page or Item

1. Place the cursor on the page where you want the link to appear.
2. Then, from the Ribbon bar, select Insert under Editing Tools. Select the From SharePoint option in the dropdown menu under the Link button. A popup window titled Select an Asset will appear where you can navigate to the item you want to link to.



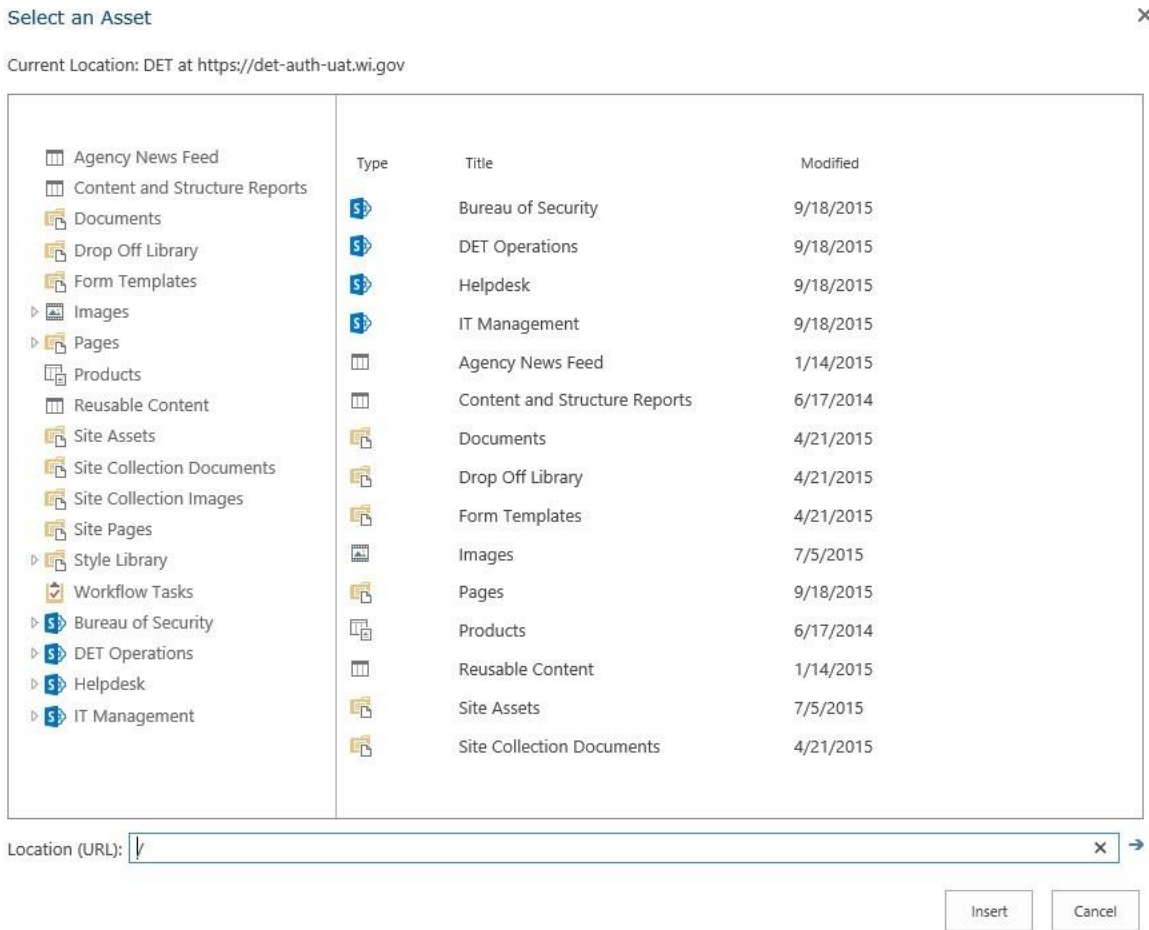


Figure 20 Select an Asset window

## Link to an External Website Page or Document

**Important Note:** If you are linking to an item in SharePoint, do not use this method of linking; use the “Link to a SharePoint Page or Item” steps.

3. Place the cursor on the page where you want the link to appear.
4. Then, from the Ribbon bar, select Insert under Editing Tools. Select the From Address option in the dropdown menu under the Link button. A popup window titled Insert Hyperlink will appear where you can enter the label text and the full URL of the page or document you are linking to.



Figure 21: Insert Hyperlink window

5. Type your link the label text (e.g., “Search Google”) in the Text to Display field and type the URL of the site in the Address field.



Tip: Don't forget the http:// in front of the URL (<http://www.google.com>).

6. Select OK to continue.

## Edit Links

### Edit a Link Destination

After creating a link, you can update the destination without starting over.

1. Place the cursor somewhere in the link; do not select the entire link. The Link menu will appear on the Ribbon bar.



Figure 22: Link menu

2. Update the URL by updating the link in the URL field. Text in the Description field will create the title tag, which is visible when a user hovers their mouse over the link and is used by some accessibility tools.

### Edit a Link Label

Edit a link label the same way you would edit normal text on the page.



Tip: If you are replacing an entire link label with a new word, sentence, or phrase, do not select the entire current label and start typing over it as you may lose the link. Leave at least one letter of the old link present until you've typed or pasted the new label, then go back and remove the remaining letter. This keeps the link intact.

## Add a Document

Adding a document to your page is very much like adding an image.

1. Place your cursor where you would like to insert the document. From the Editing Tools menu, select Insert. The Insert selection menu will appear on the Ribbon bar.
2. Select Upload File. The Add a document window will appear.

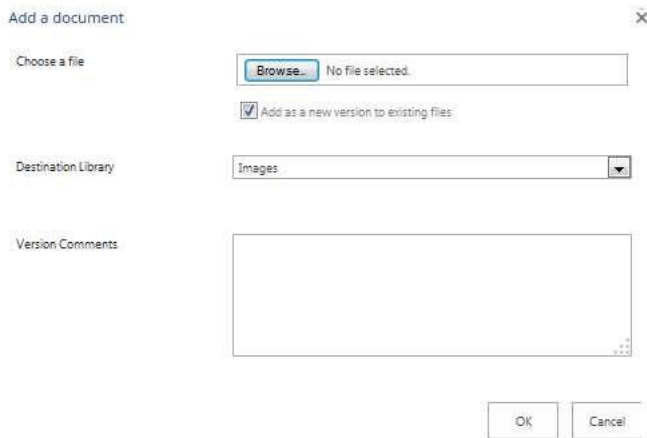


Figure 23: Add a document window

3. Use the **Browser** button to navigate your computer and select the document you wish to use.
4. Change the **Destination Library** dropdown to **Documents**.
5. When you are finished, select **OK**. Another screen will open where you can enter a title for the document or change the filename.
6. When you are finished, select **Save**.



Check with your Agency web content management team for your Agency’s policy about storing documents in SharePoint.

## Page Layouts

The page layout controls the look and layout of the content inside of a page. There are three page layouts preferred for the Agency Templates:

- **Left Sidebar** – Creates a flexible-width content area on the right and a fixed width, 200px column on the left.
- **Full Width** – Spans the full width of the content area.
- **Right Sidebar**– Creates a flexible width content area on the left, and a fixed width, 200px column on the right.

Page layouts, unlike master pages, can be changed on a page-by-page basis.

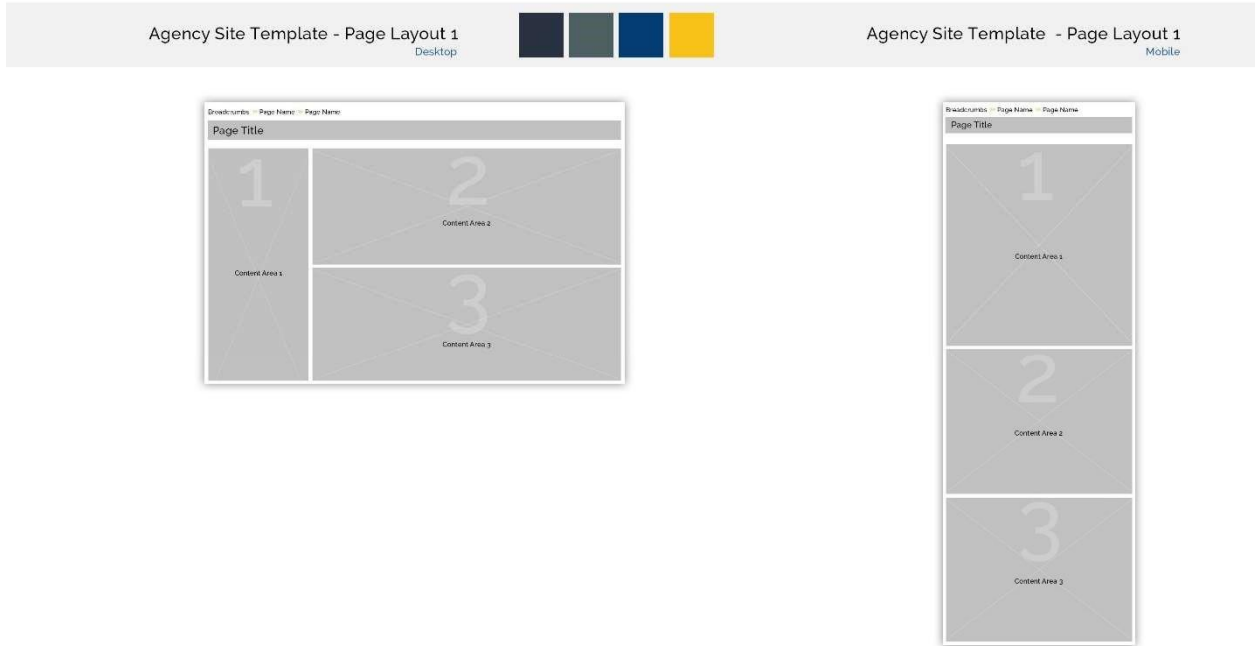


Figure 24: Page Layout 1 - Left Sidebar

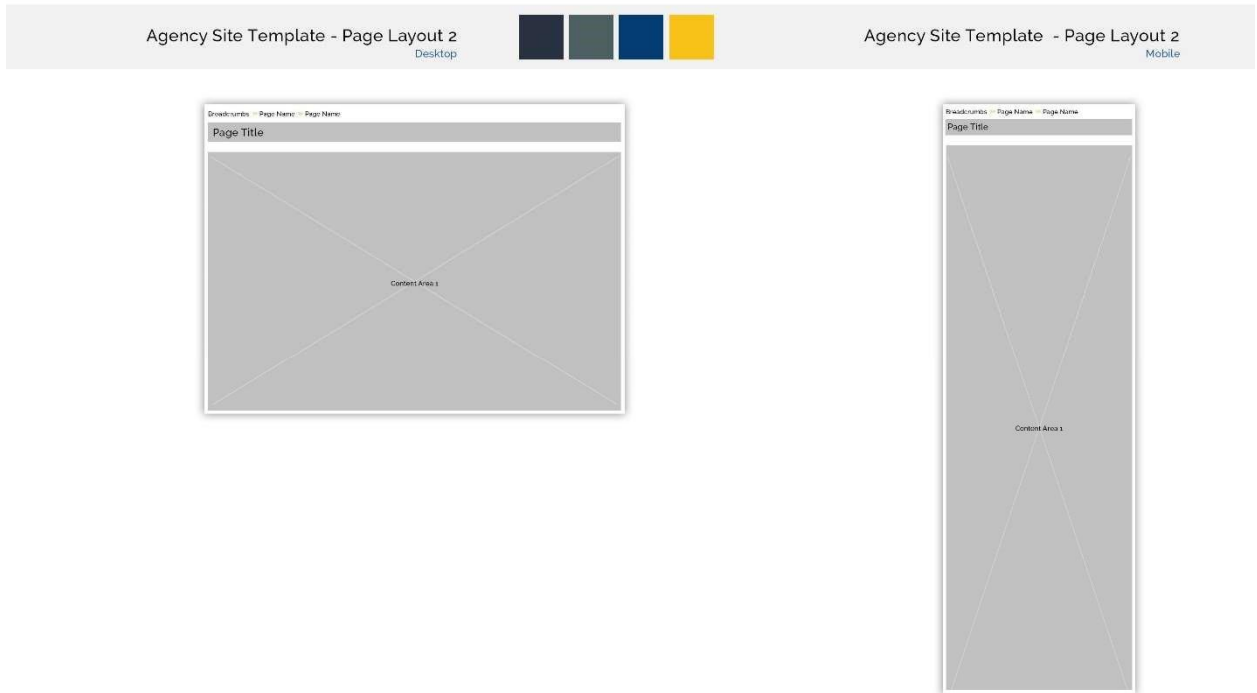


Figure 25: Page Layout 1 - Full Width

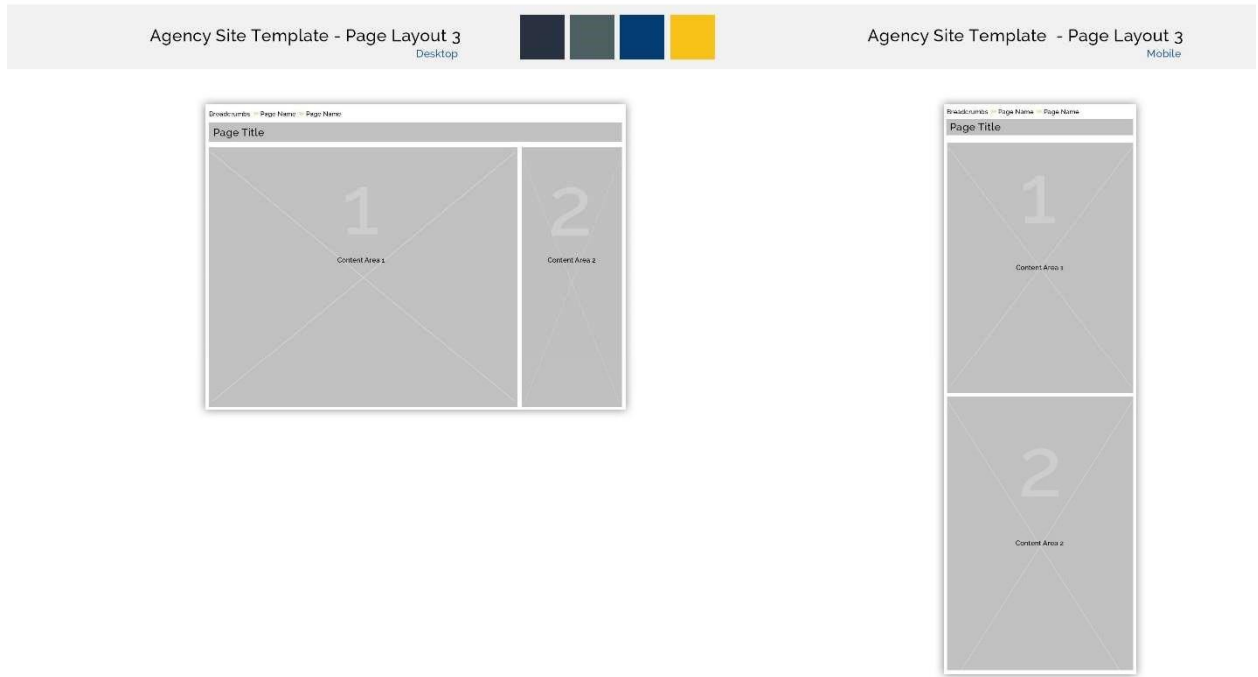


Figure 26: Page Layout 1 - Right Sidebar

### Change a Page Layout

To change the page layout of a page, navigate to the desired page and enter Edit mode. Select the page layout you would like to use from the Page Layout menu on the Page tab. You can then add or edit content, check in, and publish as described in earlier steps.

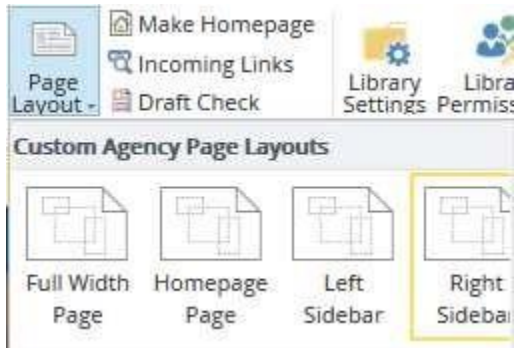


Figure 27: Selecting a page layout in the ribbon

## Check In Feature

When you have finished editing the page, you will need to check it back in to allow others to view your changes or work on the page. Checking in a page does not automatically publish it.

1. To check in, select the Page tab in the Ribbon bar, and select the Check In button. A comments box will appear where you can write a description of your edits (optional).

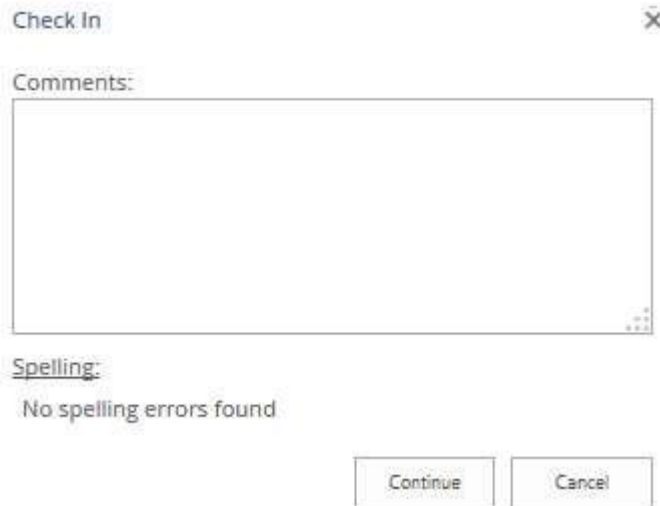


Figure 28: Comments box

2. Select the Continue button to finish the check in process.



Tip: Disregard all changes you made to the page using Discard Check Out in the dropdown menu under the Check In button. This will revert the page to its last check in state, regardless of any saved changes you may have made since then.

## Save Your Work

You can also save your work without checking the document back in. This will allow you to close your browser window and return later to continue editing. Your changes will only be viewable by you, however, until the file is checked in.

1. To save your work, select the Save button from the Pages tab. This will save your work and exit edit mode.

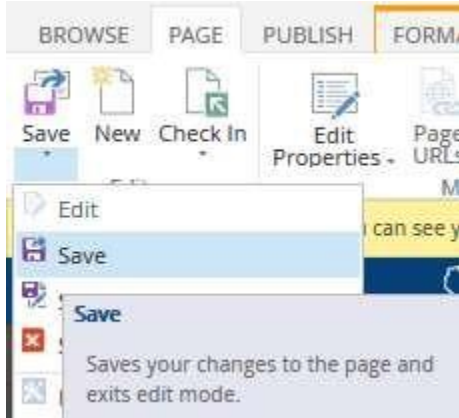



Figure 29: Save button on Pages tab

 Tip: You can also save without closing by selecting Save and Keep Editing from the dropdown menu under the Save & Close button. You can reach the dropdown menu by selecting the down arrow under the Save & Close button.

## Publishing

### Submit for Approval

After your changes are checked in and ready to be made visible for all visitors to your site, you need to publish your changes. Depending on your role, you will have different functions during the publishing process. You will either be a submitter or an approver.

1. To submit a page for publication, select the Publish tab in the Ribbon bar and select Submit.

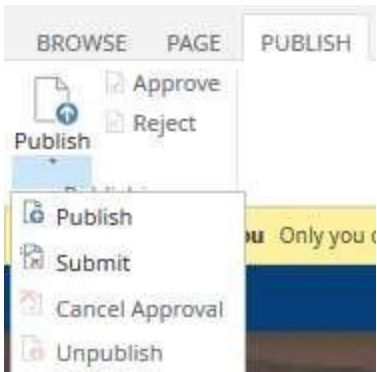


Figure 30: Publish tab and Submit button

The Submit for Approval window will be displayed.



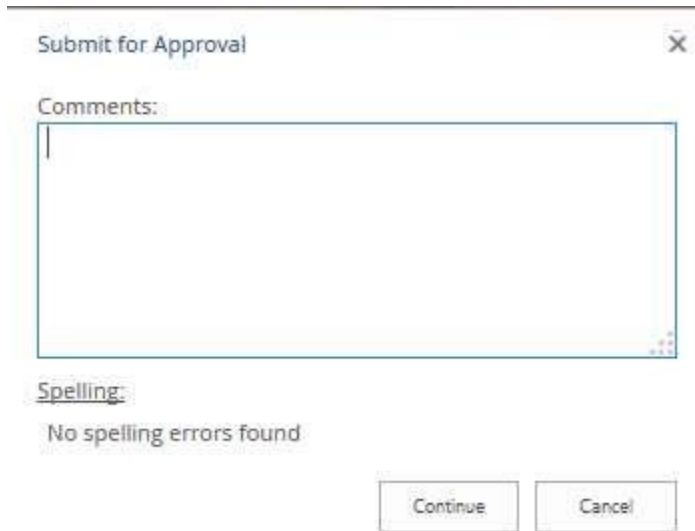



Figure 31: Submit for approval window

2. Select the Continue button to begin the publishing workflow. Users with approval permissions will then be able to view the page, and approve or reject it. If the page is approved, it will be

 Tip: You can choose to undo your submission by selecting the Cancel Approval button that takes the place of the Submit button once you have selected Submit.

immediately viewable to all visitors to your website. If rejected, the page will be available to content editors to make changes.

## Approve or Reject

There are two ways approvers can approve or reject changes. The first is to go to the page that has been edited and needs approval directly. From there, choose the Publish tab. Then, choose either Approve or Reject.

Approvers may also use the list view provided by the Approve/Reject Items view in the Pages library:

1. From Site Actions, go to Site Content. Choose Pages. You will be presented with a list of all pages in the site, along with their approval status and some other information.
2. Select Approve/reject items option at the top of the page.

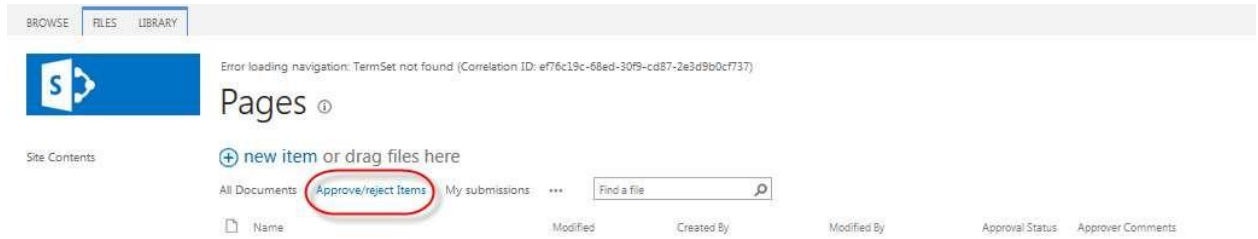


Figure 32: Approve/reject Items option

3. Items submitted for approval appear in the Approval Status: Pending area of the list view.



Figure 33: Approval Status: Pending area

4. Select a page to approve or reject.
5. Review the page and then select the Publish tab.
6. Select Approve or Reject and complete the comments field. Approved items will become public at the next publishing window. Rejected items will not be published and may be edited and resubmitted for approval by the contributor. Comments will appear in the Approve/reject items view.

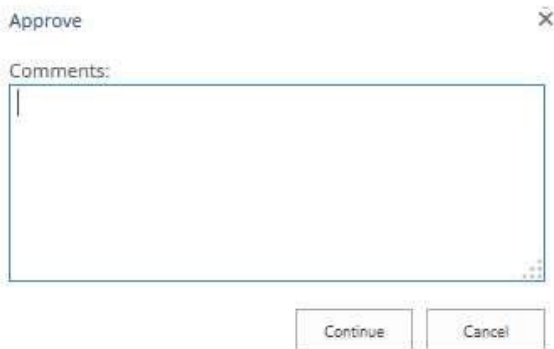


Figure 34: Approve comments field

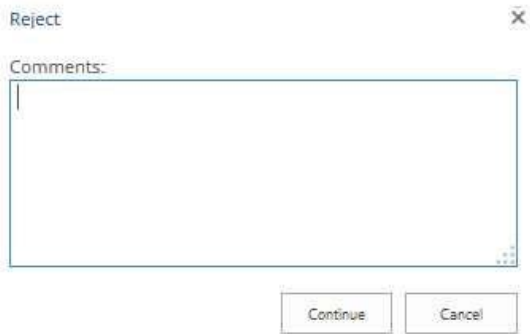


Figure 35: Reject comments field

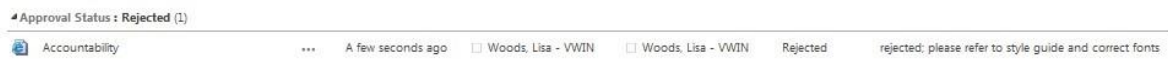


Figure 36: Approve/reject Items view with Rejected comments displayed

## Delete a Page

If you are certain you no longer need a page on your site, you can delete it.

1. Navigate to the page you want to remove.
2. Under the Page tab, select Delete Page. You will be asked to confirm.
3. Select OK to delete the page.

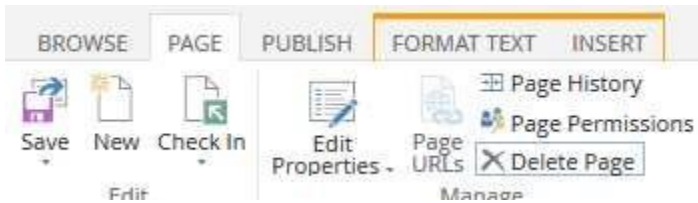


Figure 37: Delete Page on Page tab

You will be redirected to the site home page.

## Appendix A: Agency Template Style Guide

This style guide has been provided as a visual reference to styles available to content creators in SharePoint's content editing interface. Additionally, for those content editors who are familiar with HTML and are editing the code directly, it shows how several common tags will be rendered based on the template's predefined styles. This list should not be considered exhaustive.

### Formatting Copy

**WISCONSIN.GOV GLOBAL NAVIGATION BAR**

Simple Design  
Agency Website Template Style Guide

NAVIGATION BAR

Search Wisconsin Government

Page Title: 1.4em // Raleway Regular // Hex Code: #1D4F81

Horizontal Rule: 1px // Hex Code: #F9C118

<h1> Headline 1: 3em // Raleway Regular // Hex Code: #1D4F81

<h2> Headline 2: 2em // Raleway Light // Hex Code: #1D4F81

<h3> Header 3: 1.25em // Raleway Regular // Hex Code: #222

<h4> Header 4: 1.25em // Raleway Regular // Hex Code: #777

<h5> Header 4: 1em // Raleway Regular // Hex Code: #222

<p> Paragraph: 1em // OpenSans Regular // Hex Code: #222

**Buttons**

Default // Hex: #1D4F81 | Info // Hex: #0A4E73 | Warning // Hex: #F9C118

**Ordered List**

- List item 1
- List item 2
- List item 3

**Unordered List**

- List item 1
- List item 2
- List item 3

**Table**

#	First Name	Username
1	Mark	@mdo
2	Jacob	@fat
3	Larry	@twitter

**Footer**

CONTACT INFORMATION: 1400 East Washington Avenue, Room 112, Madison, WI 53703. Phone: 608-246-2111. Contact Us.

**Online Services**

- Download a Certificate
- Public Address/Name/Seal Change
- Copy of Most Current
- Trademark/Tradename Certificate
- License Registration or Amendment

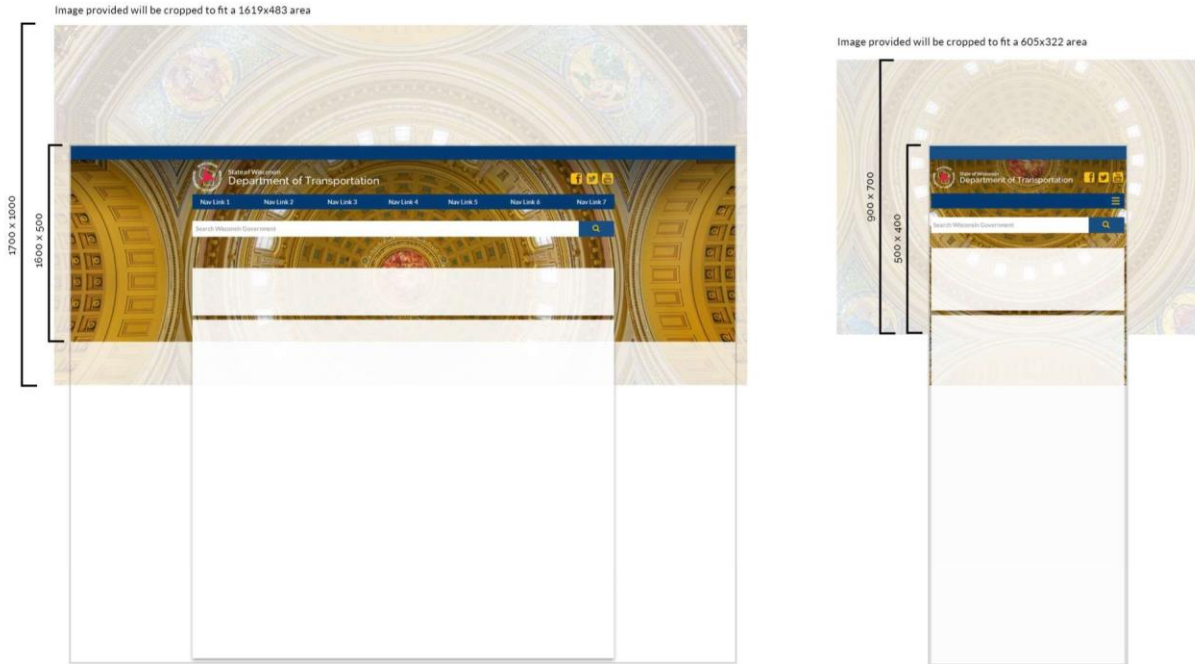
**Policies**

- Disclaimer
- Privacy Policy
- Accessibility Policy
- Unauthorized Use
- Terms of Use

WISCONSIN.GOV

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## Background Image Specifications



If the agency does not want to use one of the pre-approved images, the agencies have the option to use a custom image. It must fall within these specifications:

- Image provided need to be in .tiff or higher resolution (300 dpi) .jpg format
- Minimal size of 1700x1000 (You can check the size by right-clicking on the image clicking on the properties panel and viewing dimensions)
- Image will be cropped to a 1619x483 visible area for desktop 605x322 for mobile – see diagram above for how image will be cropped
- Cannot be “busy” with multiple contrasting colors. Items over the top of the image must remain visible and accessible to users with disabilities.
- Image should be free of informational text. If text in a photograph is present, it must be incidental (e.g. street signs)
- Cannot originate from a Google image search
- Photo cannot be copyright protected by photographer
- All images submitted must be accompanied by written affirmation (photo release) that the agency has rights to use the image

### Image Ideas

**Government** (dome image)

**Business** (cityscape of Milwaukee or Madison)

**Landscape** (rolling farm fields with red barn)

**Travel/Vacation** (Monona Terrace, Wisconsin Dells, Miller Park, Lambeau Field, Summerfest, State Fair)

## Appendix B: Online SharePoint References

SharePoint 911 <http://www.sharepoint911.com/>

EndUserSharePoint

<http://www.endusersharepoint.com/>

SharePoint Community Portal

<http://sharepoint.microsoft.com/>

MSDN SharePoint Forums <http://social.msdn.microsoft.com/Forums/en/category/sharepoint2013>

## Appendix C: Website Usability Guidelines

These guidelines will help you understand the basic usability principles you can employ on your site to provide your users with the best experience possible. Usability encompasses accessibility, but it's much more than that. Usability also involves making sure your website is easy for visitors to use by offering standard, consistent navigation across all site pages, organizing content in an easy to follow manner, using headline tags for scanability, and more (Source: [www.useffect.com](http://www.useffect.com), User Effect, Dr. Peter J. Meyers).

### Accessibility

This section addresses traditional accessibility issues as well as issues that might prevent a visitor from being able to access information on your website. If a user can't get your site to load, or the content is too small to read, all of the usability best practices in the world won't matter.

1. Site Load-time is Reasonable – Call me old-school, but I still like to see sites come in under 100KB (60KB is even better). If a site takes forever to load, most people will just leave. Yes, many of us have broadband now, but that makes our patience even thinner.
2. Adequate Text-to-Background Contrast – Dark-gray on light-gray may seem stylish, but I'm not going to ruin my eyesight to read your blog. Eyes and monitors vary wildly, so keep your core copy contrast high. Good, old-fashioned black-on-white is still best most of the time.
3. Font Size/Spacing Is Easy to Read – Opinions vary on the ideal size for text, but err on the side of slightly too big. Poor readability increases frustration, and frustration leads to site abandonment. Also, make sure your line spacing is adequate - white-space is a designer's best friend.
4. Flash & Add-ons Are Used Sparingly – No matter how great your site looks, people won't wait 5 minutes for a plug-in to load. Use new technology sparingly and only when it really enhances your goals. Sticking to standard HTML/CSS is also a plus for search engines.
5. Images Have Appropriate ALT Tags – Not only do sight-impaired visitors use ALT tags, but search engines need them to understand your images. This is especially critical when you use images for key content, such as menu items.
6. "Website Not Found" is a good way to lose a customer. Create a custom 404 page, preferably one that guides your visitors to content.

### Identity

A key question when someone first comes to your site is "Who are you?" It's important to answer it quickly, and make the paths to obvious follow-up questions ("What do you do?", "Why should I trust you?," etc.) clear.

7. Company Logo Is Prominently Placed – Put your logo or brand where it's easy to find, and that usually means the upper-left of the screen. People expect it, and they like it when you make their lives easy.
8. Tagline Makes Company's Purpose Clear – Answer "What do you do?" concisely with a descriptive tagline. Avoid marketing jargon and boil your unique value proposition down to a few words. This is also a plus for SEO.

9. Home-page Is Digestible In 5 Seconds – In usability, we often talk about the 5-second rule. There's some disagreement over just how many seconds you get, but website visitors are a fickle bunch, and they need to get the basic gist of your home-page in just a few moments.
10. Clear Path to Company Information – The good old "About Us" page may seem boring, but confidence is important on the web, and people need an easy way to learn more about you.
11. Clear Path to Contact Information – Similarly, visitors want to know that they can get in touch with you if they need to. It's also hard to do business if no one can contact you. Preferably, list your contact information as text (not in an image) - it'll get picked up by search engines, including local searches.

## Navigation

Once people generally know who you are and what you do, they need clear paths to the content that interests them. Information architecture is a huge topic, but these points cover some of the basics.

12. Main Navigation is Easily Identifiable – Almost every site on the web has had a main menu since the first browsers came on the market. Make your main navigation easy to find, read, and use. If you have two or more navigation areas, make it clear why they're different.
13. Navigation Labels are Clear & Concise – Don't say "Communicate Online With Our Team" when "Contact Us" will do just fine. Your main navigation should be short, to the point, and easy for mere mortals to grasp.
14. Number of Buttons/Links is Reasonable – Psychologists like to argue about how many pieces of information we can process, but if you start to get past 7-or-so menu items, think hard about whether you need them. If you've got 3 layers of flyaway JavaScript menus, do yourself a favor and start over.
15. Company Logo is Linked to Home-page – This may sound minor, but people expect logos to link to home-pages, and when they don't, confusion follows. I've seen video of users selecting a logo over and over, with no idea what to do next.
16. Links are Consistent and Easy to Identify – The underlined, blue link is a staple of the web. A little artistic license is ok, but consider at least making your links either blue or underlined. Links should stand out, and you should use them sparingly enough that they don't disrupt your content.
17. Site Search is Easy to Access – If you have a site search, make sure it's prominent. Usability guidelines tend to prefer the upper-right corner of the page. Keep the button simple and clear - "Search" still works best for most sites.

## Content

You've heard it before – Content is king. If you don't want the kingdom to crumble, though, content needs to be consistent, organized, and easy to skim through.

18. Major Headings are Clear and Descriptive – Most people don't read online, they skim. Use headings (major and minor) to set content apart and keep it organized. Headings should be clear, and for SEO benefit, using heading tags (<H1>, <H2>, etc.).



19. Critical Content is Above the Fold – The "fold" is that imaginary line where the bottom of your screen cuts off a page. Content can fall below the fold, but anything critical to understanding who you are or what you do (especially on the home-page) should fit on that first screen. Average screen resolution these days is about 1024x768, depending on your audience.
20. Styles and Colors are Consistent – Make sure people know they're still on your site by being consistent - confuse them and you'll lose them. Layout, headings, and styles should be consistent site-wide, and colors should usually have the same meaning. Don't use red headers on one page, red links on another, and red text somewhere else.
21. Emphasis (bold, etc.) is Used Sparingly – It's a fact of human cognition: try to draw attention to everything and you'll effectively draw attention to nothing. We've all seen that site, the one with a red, blinking, underlined "NEW!" next to everything. Don't be that guy.
22. Ads and Pop-ups are Unobtrusive – Ads are a fact of life, but integrate them nicely into your site. Don't try to force ads and pop-ups down peoples' throats. Also, do people a favor and make your ads clear. If you blur the line between ads and content too much, your content may suffer.
23. Main Copy is Concise and Explanatory – This isn't a lesson in copywriting, but look at your homepage - can you say the same thing in half as many words? Try to be concrete and descriptive and avoid jargon - nobody cares if you can "leverage your synergies".
24. URLs are Meaningful and User-friendly – This is a point of some debate, but meaningful keyword based URLs are generally good for both visitors and search engines. You don't have to re-engineer an entire site just to get new URLs, but do what you can to make them descriptive and friendly.
25. HTML Page Titles are Explanatory – More importantly, your page titles (in the <TITLE> tag) should be descriptive, unique, and not jammed full of keywords. Page titles are the first thing search engine visitors see, and if those titles don't make sense or look like spam, they'll move on to the next result.

## Appendix D: Basic Troubleshooting

- Web page appears significantly messed up, or you are editing the wrong page? Discard check out.

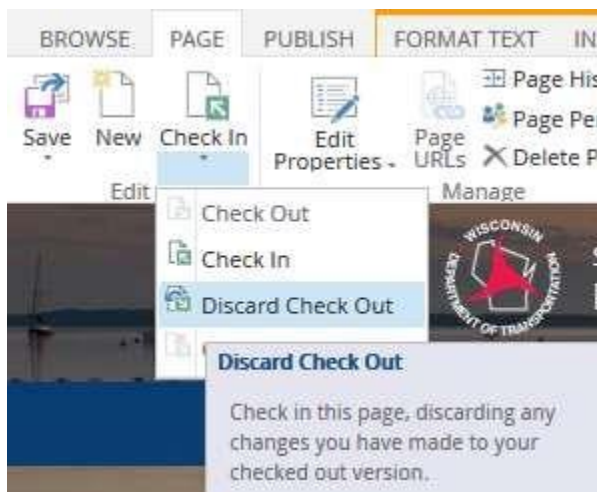


Figure 38: Discard Check Out in the Page ribbon tab

- Page content behaves strangely, or you cannot fix the formatting using the ribbon?
  1. Highlight the troublesome content
  2. Select “Clear Format” icon in the Format Text ribbon tab

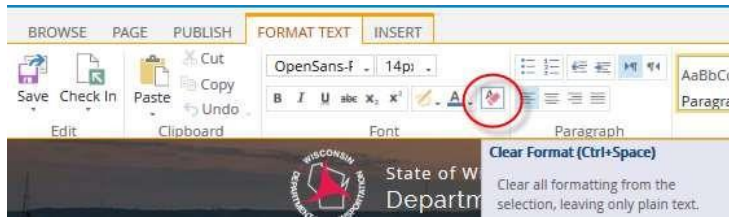


Figure 39: Clear Format icon in Format Text ribbon tab

- Published content in error? Unpublish the page

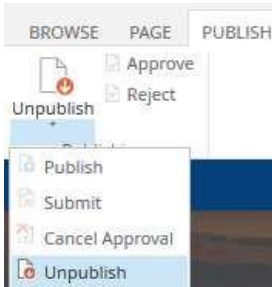


Figure 40: Unpublish page function in Publish ribbon tab

## Appendix E: Technical Support

For technical assistance, contact your NIC Wisconsin project manager.

### Known Issues

- Ribbon may appear “behind” top navigation bar in IE10
- May have to click some functions twice (e.g. gear icon) to invoke their action
- Content cannot be edited and maintained in IE8