The Jumpstart Guide
(to Website Domination)

Hello future web dominator!

In the folowing pages, I will outline
some of the most important aspects
of successful websites, so that you can
plan your own website accordingly.

I've used some screenshots from some
fantastic sites to better explain.

Enjoy!

Table of Contents

Content

As tempting as it is to dump endless information on the viewer, one of the keys to a successful website is simplicity.

Example Website: serioverify.com

Less is more.

Assume you have less than 10 seconds to communicate your value to the visitor. Who are you? What do you do?

Notice how plainly and simply the home page from the above example introduces their service. In one sentence they have identified who they are, what they do, and further validated themselves by using language like "leading" to indicate their advantage over competitors.
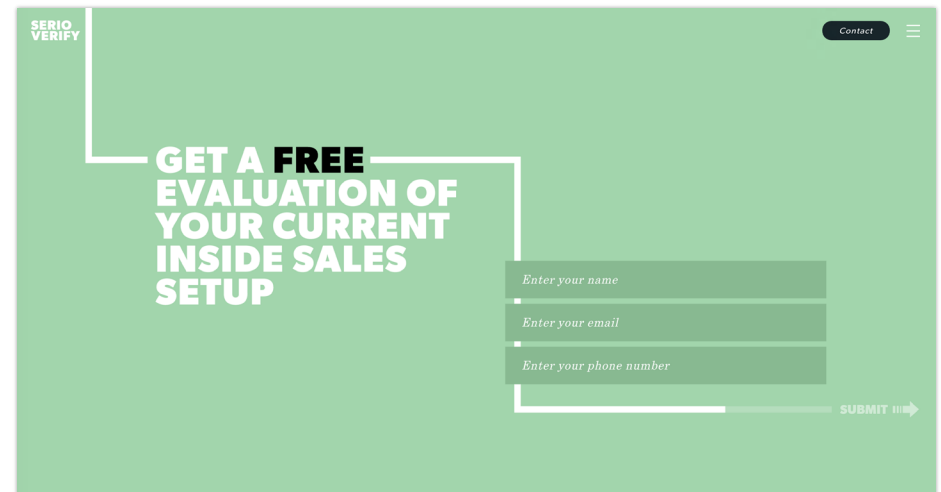
Action is key.

Good websites funnel their visitors towards a specific action on every page.

This is known as the "call-to-action", and should be part of what you think about when planning out your website content. What do you want the visitor to do on any particular page?

Our example features an opt-in form that asks the visitor for their information in exchange for a free evaluation.

Imagery

I cannot overemphasize how important the imagery is on your website. It is just as important (if not more important) than the text.
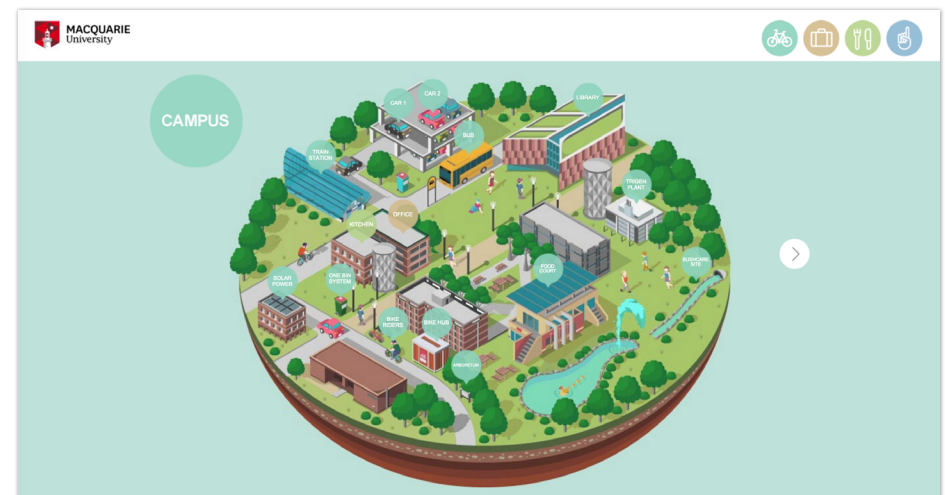
Photography

I highly recommend having a photoshoot with a professional photographer. The level of professionalism that you website will exude with custom imagery is well worth the price.

If you don't know a decent photographer, I suggest googling wedding photographers in your area. They often have experience shooting a wide array of environments (indoors, outdoors, different times of day, etc), and are experts at working with people (think about brides on their wedding days. Eek!).

Whatever you do, DO NOT use images you took on your smartphone!

Illustration

Illustration and/or custom-designed assets are also hugely beneficial, both in addition to, or in-lieu of photography.

Depending on your business, they can add that extra touch that ties together your brand, and sets your website apart from competitors.

If your interested in some custom assets for your site, we can talk about it and see where it goes.

Layout: General

When you think about the layout of your site, think about the overall goal for your site.

Audience-based

If your business is heavily dependent on growing a large following, it makes sense have the blog on the home page, featuring exerpts from posts, and a "sidebar" area for additional navigation.
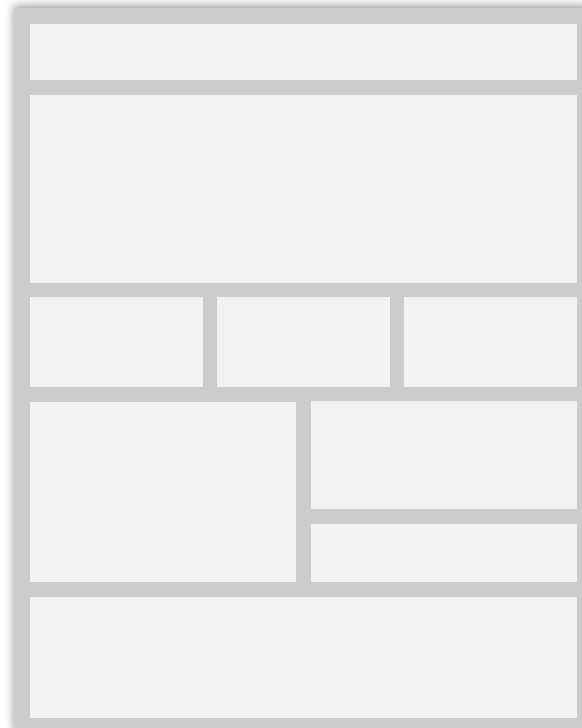
Service-based

If your business is based in a service or product, the home page will serve as an intro to those services, with feature buttons guiding the visitor to more in-depth information.
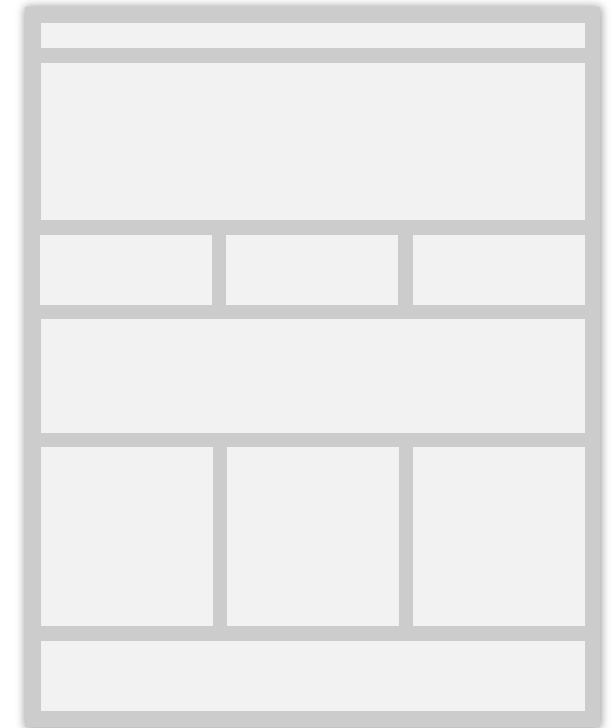
Combination

It is extremely common these days to see home pages that combine multiple layouts. Often they will start with a slideshow, and as you scroll, contain sections for "Featured Posts", "Featured Work", "Testimonials", etc.
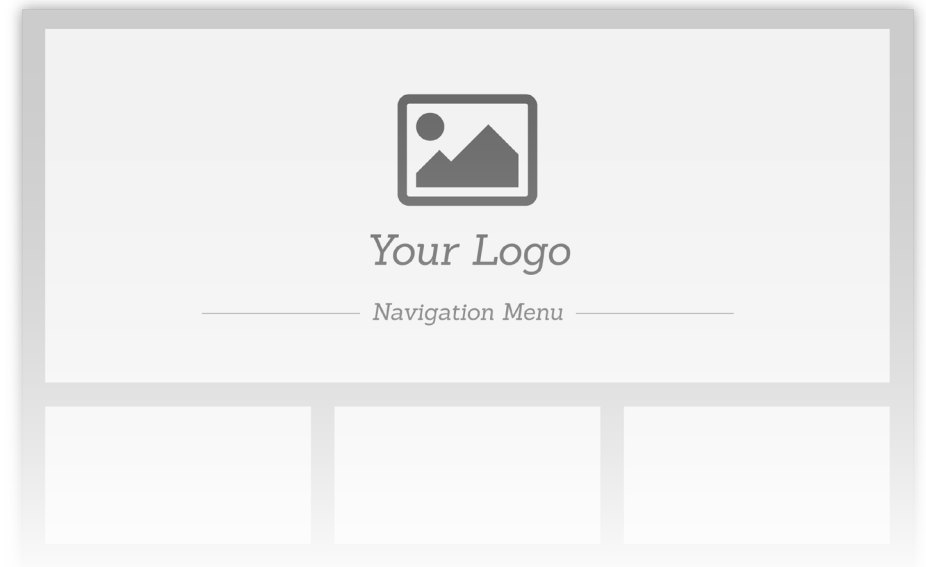
Layout: Header

Your site header sits at the top of the page, and features your logo and navigation. These are some of the different layouts that are commonly seen for the header.
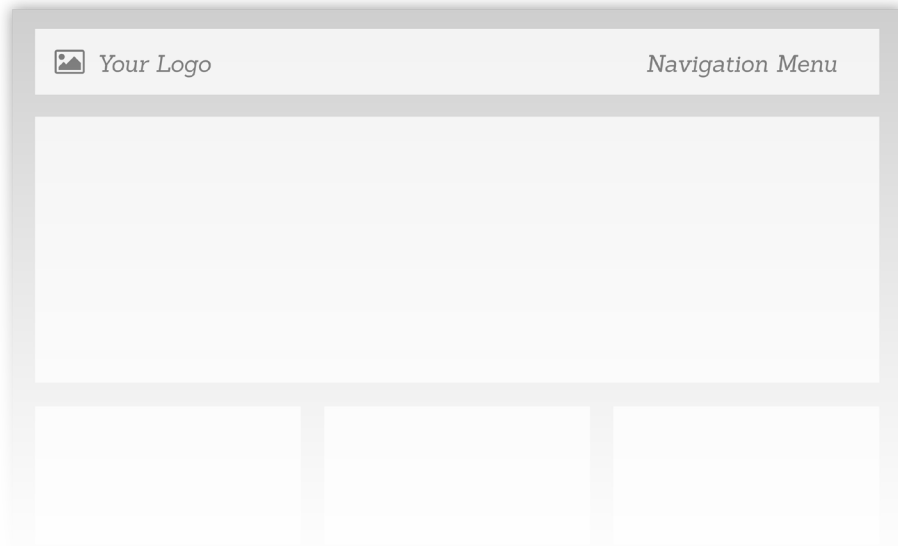
Top Bar Header

The top bar is the most common form of header/navigation. It is convenient and works with most site layouts.

Centered Header

The centered header is visually appealling, however it is best utilized for websites featuring a gallery-style layout.

Color

Colors incite very specific emotions in people, and companies have been using this knowledge for years to further their brands.

Metro United Way has chosen a very bold color palette. Bold, bright colors reference energy and friendliness, which is appropriate for their mission.

Subdued colors might be more appropriate for a corporation.

Main Color:
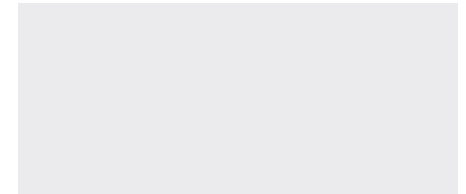This is the color that people associate with your brand.

Secondary Color:
this is a supporting color that usually complements the main color.

Accent Color
You don't always have to have this, but the accent color usually contrasts highly with your main color, thus making everything "pop".

Base Color
This is the "background" color of your website. More often than not it will be white, black, beige, or grey.

Fonts

Similar to color, font choice drastically impacts the "feel" of your site.

Here are the 3 main categories of fonts:

Serif Fonts:

Ovo
Quattrocento
Josefin Slab
Playfair Display

Sans-Serif Fonts:

Open Sans
Lato
Roboto Condensed
Muli Light

Display Fonts:

OSWALD
Ultra
Pacifico
RIGHTEOUS

For web-based applications, it's good to think about all of the different functions your fonts will fulfill. For me, it looks like this:

Header 1

Header 2

Subheading

Paragraph

Link

Resources

Color:

https://coolors.co/

http://www.design-seeds.com/blog/

Fonts:

https://femmebot.github.io/google-type/

http://fontpair.co/

https://www.google.com/fonts