

## Idaho.gov – Templates

<http://www.idaho.gov/webmaster>

### In this document:

#### Planning for your site

- ✓ Plan your content
- ✓ Know the best practices
- ✓ Prepare a test area
- ✓ Use recommended software

#### Design choices

- ✓ Choose a header style. Customize with your own background.
- ✓ Choose a background style. Make sure you have permission to use any photographs.

#### Who do I contact?

A list of roles and contact information for your template and web related needs.

## Plan your content

The questions below are designed to aid you in working with your agency's decision-makers towards creating a site that works for your visitors.

### Know your audience

- Who visits your site and what are they looking for? Think about the different types of visitors that make up your audience and what their goals are.
- Talk to your customer-facing employees for a good peek into your audience, their questions and their needs.
- Is there information people currently have a difficult time finding on your site? Address this in your redesign.
- Looking at the keyword/search portion of your web statistics will show you the words people use when looking for your site.
- You may need to direct visitors to content at another agency that they mistakenly look for on your website.

### Keep the good

- What parts of your site are currently working well? Make sure that you keep the aspects of your website that people find helpful.
- Look at your web statistics. The top entry pages have been bookmarked by your users, so be sure to keep this type of information at the same address, create a redirect, or make a 404 page that takes this type of visitor into consideration.

### Do you need new content?

- Take an inventory of your current website content and see what needs to be updated, what should be archived, and any new content that needs to be written.
- Consider re-launching with minor updates and adding new content in a phased way if you need a lot of new information added to your new website.

### Your message, look and communications

- What is the most important work your agency performs? Communicate this concisely on the homepage.
- If you have a style, logo or color that your agency uses in communications, ensure the website continues this.
- Use the background image and header of the templates to convey your agency's work. Make it yours!

### Hosting and search

- Free hosting for state agencies is available from the CIO's office. <http://cio.idaho.gov/>
- Access Idaho recommends DigitalGov Search: <http://search.digitalgov.gov/>  
This service is administered by the (Federal) General Services Administration. They focus on search for and by government.

## Best practices

### Leave the classes and divs with their current names.

From time to time, we will make small improvements to the CSS to ensure that it works properly in new browsers, to enhance the style, or to add new functionality. If you rename the classes and divs, these future enhancements will not work.

### For agency-specific style changes, add your own style sheet.

Create a style sheet named `youragency.css` and link to it in the `dohead.inc` file below the other style sheets. This will add your style sheet to every page in your website and will give your styles priority.

Add styles or modify existing styles to meet your agency's needs. This way, you can update your templates with any new CSS changes when those are made without the change affecting any personalization you have done.

### You must have copyright to the photos you use

Keep the copyright documents to all photos on your site or obtain written permission from the photographer before using it on your site. Agencies have been sued over photography copyrights.

### Add titles to your pages

The title tag `<title>` on a webpage is used :

- By search engines as the linked results
- By your visitors when they bookmark
- By search engines as key search terms

It is very important that your pages have titles that make sense for that page. The title of a page shows at the top of your Dreamweaver screen to the right of Code | Split | Design. Place the page topic first in your title, followed by your agency name: This Page Topic – Your Agency.

### Do not link "click here"

Make sure your linked words describe where the link goes. Reader software for the blind reads the list of linked words on the page, and the visitor will have no idea where "click here" links to. Search engines also use linked words as search criteria, which has lead accessibility professionals to term Google, "the largest blind user on the web."

### Checklist

Review the checklists posted on the Accessibility page on [www.idaho.gov/webmaster](http://www.idaho.gov/webmaster) to ensure you are meeting standards.

## Start your work in a test area

You will want to work in an area that is not visible to the general public, where you can show others your work, and where you can safely save your work.

To view server-side includes (which the default templates download uses), you will want to put your test website on a server.

This could be:

- A development area on your local server
- A development area on the servers at the CIO's office.

[http://cio.idaho.gov/products\\_and\\_services/website\\_hosting.html](http://cio.idaho.gov/products_and_services/website_hosting.html)

In a pinch, you can also use your own workstation to start the new website. You will only be able to see the server-side includes through Dreamweaver, and not using the "preview" function. It may look a little off, as they work best when a server puts all the pieces together.

## Recommended Software

The Office of the CIO and Access Idaho recommend Dreamweaver as a website editor. Contact the Office of the CIO for information on purchasing within the state's contract.

[http://cio.idaho.gov/products\\_and\\_services/purchasing.html](http://cio.idaho.gov/products_and_services/purchasing.html).

## Domain Names

The Office of the CIO can help state agencies obtain an Idaho.gov, state.id.us or other .gov domain name. Public agencies can request an id.gov domain name. For more information:

[http://cio.idaho.gov/products\\_and\\_services/dns.html](http://cio.idaho.gov/products_and_services/dns.html).

## Dreamweaver Templates or regular html (DIY)

The templates are currently available as both Dreamweaver templates with server side includes (recommended if you use Dreamweaver) or as regular html (recommended for use with a CMS).

## Design Choices

See [www.idaho.gov/webmaster](http://www.idaho.gov/webmaster) to browse styles and for additional information.

» Header & Background	» Header & Background	» Additions
<p data-bbox="207 394 310 430"><b>Header</b></p> <ul data-bbox="256 436 480 842" style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="256 436 407 472">○ One line</li><li data-bbox="256 478 435 548">○ Two lines - top bigger</li><li data-bbox="256 554 480 623">○ Two lines - bottom bigger</li><li data-bbox="256 630 435 699">○ Two equal lines</li> <li data-bbox="256 737 472 772">○ Default (Mtn)</li><li data-bbox="256 779 370 814">○ Plain</li><li data-bbox="256 821 402 856">○ Custom</li></ul>	<p data-bbox="521 394 695 430"><b>Background</b></p> <ul data-bbox="570 436 748 548" style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="570 436 748 472">○ Solid color</li><li data-bbox="570 478 743 514">○ Mountain</li><li data-bbox="570 520 716 556">○ Custom</li></ul>	<p data-bbox="873 394 1024 430"><b>Navigation</b></p> <ul data-bbox="922 436 1133 653" style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="922 436 1019 472">○ Top</li><li data-bbox="922 478 1101 548">○ Top with dropdown</li><li data-bbox="922 554 1073 590">○ Left side</li><li data-bbox="922 596 1133 665">○ Left side with dropdown</li></ul>

## Who Do I Contact?

Content Assistance	<a href="#">Access Idaho</a>	
Design Assistance	<a href="#">Access Idaho</a>	
Best Practices	<a href="#">AI/CIO</a>	
Template Criteria	<a href="#">Office of the CIO</a>	(Bill Farnsworth)
Test Area Server or Hosting	<a href="#">Office of the CIO</a>	<a href="http://cio.idaho.gov/products_and_services/website_hosting.html">http://cio.idaho.gov/products_and_services/website_hosting.html</a>
Software Purchasing	<a href="#">Office of the CIO</a>	<a href="http://cio.idaho.gov/products_and_services/purchasing.html">http://cio.idaho.gov/products_and_services/purchasing.html</a>
Domain Name	<a href="#">Office of the CIO</a>	<a href="http://cio.idaho.gov/products_and_services/dns.html">http://cio.idaho.gov/products_and_services/dns.html</a>
Online Store or Payment Engine	<a href="#">Access Idaho</a>	(Rich Steckler)

### Office of the CIO

[Bill Farnsworth](#), Customer Relations Manager (208) 332-1878

[Abe Thietten](#), Webmaster (208) 332-1855

### Access Idaho

[creative@accessidaho.org](mailto:creative@accessidaho.org)

Marlene Mussler-Wright, Creative Director (208) 332-0102 x114

Julie Smith, Front End Developer (208) 332-0102 x123

Rich Steckler, Marketing Director (208) 332-0102 x113

## Policies

See the webmaster site ([www.idaho.gov/webmaster](http://www.idaho.gov/webmaster)) or the Idaho Technology Authority's site ([ita.idaho.gov](http://ita.idaho.gov)) for state website policies. All webmasters for State of Idaho web sites should read and understand these.