NYSAC Legislative Conference
“County Website Development and Maintenance”
JANUARY 29, 2019
Tell me about your users

- What types of visitors come to your website (citizens, businesses, government, tourists, relocators)?
- What is each type of visitor looking for?
- What does each type of visitor want to do?
Tell me about your users

- Don’t ask about SEO or Social Media synergies or AI or any other secondary concerns until you have a good handle on your users.
Tell me about your users

- Think about who your users are and who you want them to be:
  Are you reaching everyone you want to reach in the way you want to reach them?

- How do you know and verify that your perceptions are accurate?
  Website analytics? Feedback? Focus groups?
Now that we have that out of the way

Plan for Obsolescence

► Accept that whatever you do, your website will be:
  ▪ road-weary in @ 3 years,
  ▪ obsolete (but bearable) within 5 years, and
  ▪ on life support (but you may have to live with it for while longer) within 8-10 years.

► Not a bad thing; it’s just how quickly the technology and environment advances.
So what details should I be concerned with?

- Security, Accessibility, Responsiveness, Data Management, Backups, Design.
- Capability to conduct business and communications interactively (now and in the future).
- Ability to modify and maintain without technical interference:
  - Change design as well as content
  - Add, subtract, modify menu items
  - Refresh the Home Page
  - Easily integrate with overall strategy and mission (social media, routine business, information).
So what should I do?

- Recognize that ongoing maintenance of a website will be 80% (or more) of the effort and perhaps the cost, if not done wisely.
- Evaluate if you have the resources in-house to do it all yourself and more importantly if it’s wise to do it all yourself.
- Research best practices in comparable areas (other NYS counties)
  - Vendors (who understand your county and have a good track record)
  - Flexibility of content management (multiple providers, variety of needs)
  - Accommodate complexity, but think simply
  - Look beyond the sticker price and think about driving the car
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