

Web Strategy

What It Is & Why We Need to Care



About me

- * Jason Pamental *Web Strategist, Designer, Technologist*
- * Have worked as strategist, designer, developer and cat-pixel-wrangler since roughly the launch of Netscape 1
- * Can be found @jpamental in most places
- * Post thoughts, work and pics from Instagr.am @ thinkinginpencil.com



Write this down

- * **What we do as web professionals is awesome** *(and I don't mean just cool)*
- * The web has the potential to be the single most pervasive & transformative development in the history of business
- * But only if we learn enough about that organization to see how it can be applied

**“I need to hire a web
designer”**

*and why this is the worst possible thing to hear from a
potential client*

because when they say

**“I need to hire a web
designer”**

what they really mean is

“I need a web solution”

The bad news first

- * They probably don't know what's involved

The bad news first

business analysis discovery
stakeholder interviews prototyping development
requirements/needs analysis
deployment social media integration
* They probably don't know what's involved
testing visual design
content development HTML/CSS
information architecture
UX user research IxD

Here's the good news

- * They're asking **you** for the solution
- * You're the expert – be one
- * Communicate. Educate. Illuminate.
- * An educated, engaged client is **always** a better client

**This is where
web strategy comes in**

Web strategy: a definition

Web strategy is about using knowledge of your client's business & your fresh perspective to find opportunities that transform your client's business. It's selecting the right technologies to solve problems & create opportunities by applying them with great design

Web strategy is NOT content strategy

- * It's broader than that – it's about leadership and the growth of our industry
- * It's about seeing the whole picture
- * Look across silos – within your client's organization and within your own group
- * Help your client see new possibilities through your lens of design and technology

Head of the tripod

- * We're not just designers or developers
- * We're consultants
(sorry – *wasn't supposed to use profanity*)
- * We must understand our client's business & see the things they can't
- * Use you knowledge of design & intimacy with technology to truly transform
- * Don't forget that your client is likely a user too

Um, OK. How?

Get out of your silo

- * Inspiration and innovation come from looking outward for a better view in
- * FOWD 2008: Hillman Curtis' James Victore movie, Transit maps – look everywhere & at everything
- * Look at new ideas in business education and management (design thinking, motivation, psychology – see bibliography on last slide)

Why we should care

- * Happier clients = better recommendations and more work
- * Greater opportunities to do great work
- * Progression in our field leading to greater acceptance/integration of web design and technology throughout our clients'/employers' businesses
- * (leads to more of points one & two)

Who are these mythical creatures?

(here's some examples)

Dan Mall

- * Senior Designer at Big Spaceship
- * Technical Editor at A List Apart
- * Flash guru (sorry, but it fits)
- * Knows tech backwards & forwards – a comfy pencil in his design kit



Paul Boag

- * Been designing/developing sites since he had hair
- * Is near-terminally curious
- * Always looks through the eyes of the client & the user



You (if you want to be)

- * You have two sides of your brain – **engage both**
- * Be curious & **act on it**
- * Be a "Mad Scientist" - **experiment, try stuff**
- * Learn about business – how it works, how to influence it



**Businesses are like
people, only bigger**

but challenges are different for organizations & agencies

Corporate/In-house web teams

- * Web team usually part of marketing, corporate communications or IT
- * Usually very little incentive/interest in working across those boundaries (time, cost, executive ego)
- * Needs to start at the top: CWO & team should focus on customer while serving all departments **but not reporting to them**

Agencies/Interactive Design Shops

- * Too often reactive and not willing/able to look more closely at client's business
- * Must look behind request to understand the 'why'; study the client to find value we can deliver based on ideas they couldn't have imagined
- * Better off with smaller starter project to sort out the 'why' & the 'what' – show the value of our expertise rather than load up a huge budget to counter what we don't know

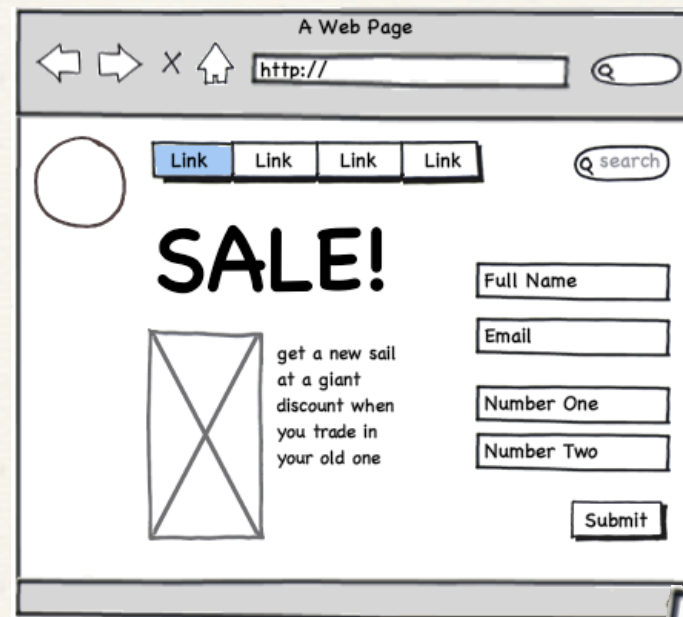
Project: Sail Trade-in Program

- * North Sails runs a yearly promotion called 'Trade In/Trade Up'
- * Involves direct mail, print ads, invoice stuffers, online promotion, receiving, fulfillment and accounting (for the rebates)
- * Marketing, Sales, IT (data), Accounting (4 departments, 4 budgets, 4 execs)

Process Flow

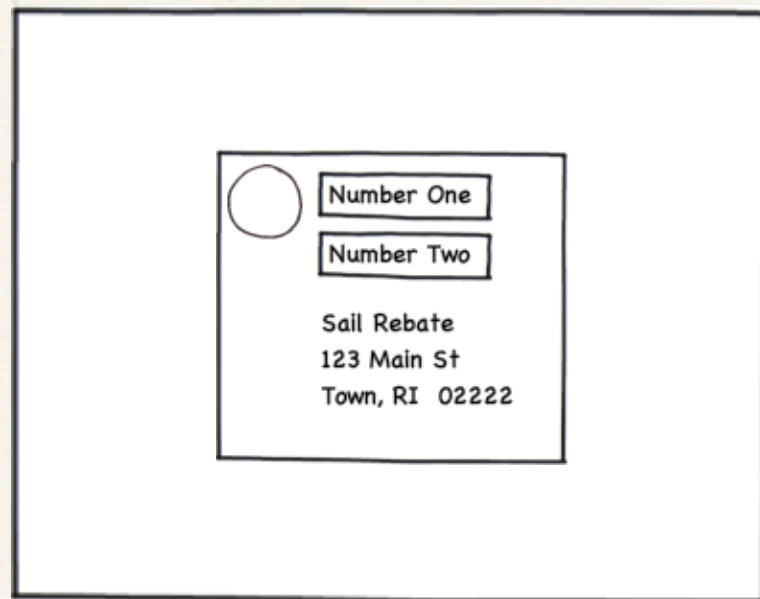


Marketing:
Print/online campaign

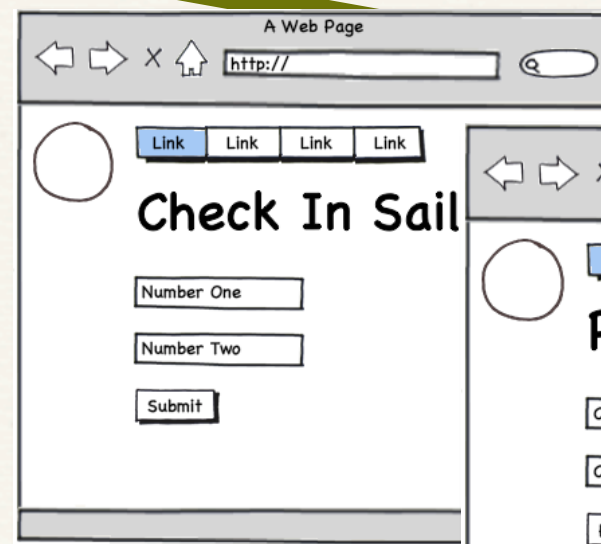


Item One	3203	4
Item Two	9322	3
Item Three	2320	1
Item Four	2380	7
Item Five	0293	3
Item Six	1249	5
Item Seven	5340	6
Item Eight	9430	4

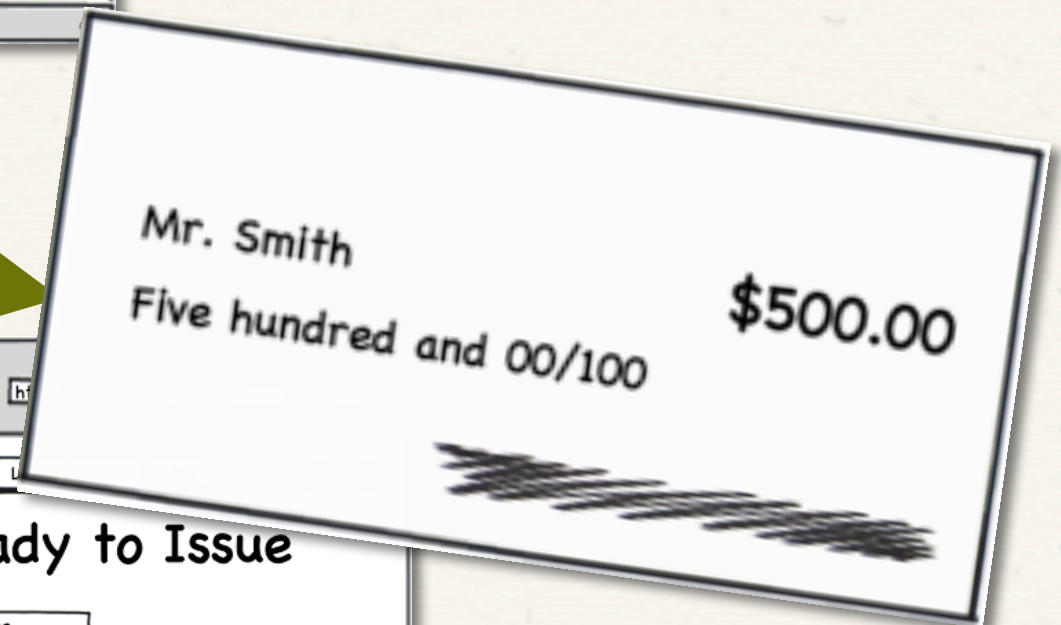
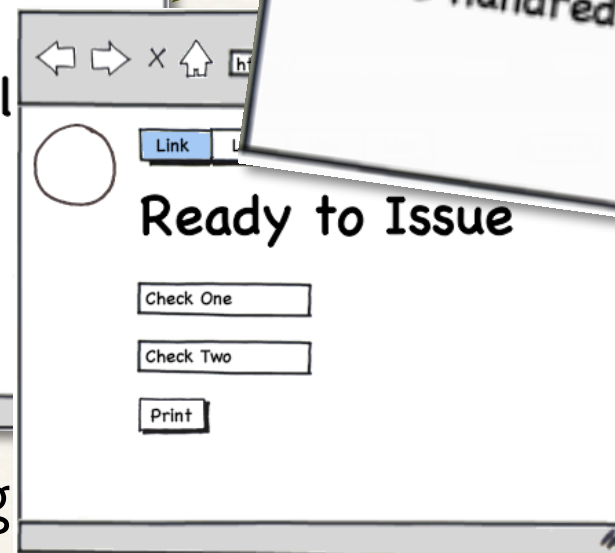
IT:
Nightly data load



Customer: ship sail to receiving



Check-in notifies acct'ing



Accounting sends check

Outcomes

- * Eliminated dozens of hours of labor every week
- * Cut Rebate time from 8wks to 2wks or less
- * Took ~3 days to build
- * Has been reused for several years w/no re-coding
- * All it took was some observation and a few good questions to discover the pain points and big opportunities for efficiencies

So how do we get there? Education

Who are the ideal candidates?

- * It's not for beginners, other than in concept
- * Ideal for those who have been working in the field for a number of years
- * More suited to designers/design thinkers with aptitude for technology & business rather than the other way around. Creativity harder to teach than technology
- * Could be Continuing Ed or Grad level

What to teach

- * Communication – if we can't get our ideas across, they don't exist
- * Look at new MBA programs like Rotman - Innovation in business & design thinking are tremendously relevant to what we do in the best web projects
- * Examine/understand how business works: open your eyes & look across enterprise to see points of intersection - that's where the opportunities are to use web technologies to create the greatest, most innovative solutions

Wrap it up

- * We have to define, embrace and espouse the role of web strategist – *which in turn*
- * Leads to needing classes to help develop those who seek to fill those roles – *which in turn*
- * Creates a culture that recognizes value of strategy & design in making most out of web technology on any device/platform in the most useful, usable ways, both within companies and with the agencies/shops they hire

Thank you!

It's been an honor to speak with you

Hello.

I'm a web professional and I make

Awesome

web strategy FTW

Suggested Reading

- * *The Design of Business* (Roger Martin)
- * *Subject to Change* (Peter Merholz, Todd Wilkens, Brandon Schauer, David Verba)
- * *DRiVE* (Daniel Pink)
- * *Linchpin* (Seth Godin)
- * *The Tipping Point* (Malcolm Gladwell)
- * *MTIV* (Hillman Curtis)