

Design on a site-wise, not page-wise basis: Set standards for the site

- Standard template
- Standard way to emphasize text, style links and lists (bulleted, etc.), standard offsets and width of pages, standard position of right sidebars, etc.
- Need styles for standard HTML tags – even if not currently used in the site so that author can use.

Separate presentation from content

- Goal: CSS for presentation - HTML for content
- Substitute HTML/CSS for text that is encoded in images
- Move inline styles and html attributes such as align or width/height to page CSS or external stylesheet
- Allow for addition of section pages and automatic addition to section nav – section nav not encoded in images
- Avoid explicit `
` – separate vertical items by `` -- avoid explicit breaks where possible.
- Avoid tables for layout
- Remove spacer images
- Images that are part of design (bullets, etc.) in CSS; Content images as `img` tag in html (user gets control)

Make sure design accommodates modification of content

- Ensure that Design is resilient to content changes
- Sidebars should grow and shrink with content
- Boxes should accommodate content changes within them – sometimes absolute positioning works against this
- Cannot set large box height for right column to keep left column from wrapping
- Cannot set print to break after certain content
- Don't name ids according to current content (ch for connie horgan)
- Do not use absolute positioning that is based on particular content size (e.g. the mechanism for highlighting items in Heller section nav)

Validate site to ensure correct XHTML

- DocType
- Content Type
- Lower Case Tags

Accessibility

Improve maintainability of site

- Make sure styles are not repeated across pages, but that shared styles are placed in external stylesheets
- It should be possible to change content in a single place - move content that is shared across pages into server side include file
- Use printer stylesheets rather than text-formatted html files for printing content
- Remove extraneous files
- Remove unused styles
- Try to remove complexity that leads to need for separate IE and netscape stylesheets
- Lightweight css – group declarations; shared styles
- Comments
- Use consistent naming conventions
- Use relative units (percents, ems) rather than absolute pixels

Clean up Navigation (not needed to go into CMS)

- Example: NIDA bottom navigation