

Professional Studies for Screen-Based Media

Commissioning - Exercise

The Situation

The local Art Gallery & Museum needs a new website - the current museum website was designed and implemented 5 years ago and needs to be updated with a new look. (Please don't contact a real museum about this project. Research should be undertaken without direct contact.)

- The site should appeal to families, possibly having separate sections for parents and children.
- The site should encourage people to visit the Art Gallery & Museum.
- There is an existing link to their 'Schools Online' site that deals with educational packages for local schools, but it would be good to include an element of 'light' learning for visiting families as well.
- The local Borough Council Crest must be incorporated into the Welcome page of the website.
- The website must be accessible on both Internet Explorer and Netscape versions 4 or above.
- The images of the Art Gallery's exhibits must not be distorted or altered in any way.
- The website needs to be branded using new logos or colour schemes
- The What's On section must be easy to update so that regular amendments can be made by a member of staff at the museum.

The Exercise

This project should be undertaken in pairs. Each pair is required to produce a written proposal, and deliver a pitch of no more than 2 minutes per pair in a class session.

Assessment will be based on your understanding of the brief, your interpretation of the brief and your ability to handle the brief. This will include the following elements:

- The idea
- The translation of the idea to the medium
- The quality of the visual design elements
- The quality of the interactive design elements
- The ambition balanced against the realisation
- The ability to control the associated software and hardware

Guidelines

Ideas and research

- Ensure accuracy of research and the ability to see the client's needs
- Make sure ideas are exciting and interesting but realistic and achievable
- Research the era of the museum and think about colours and styles in this period
- Think about how you can interpret this brief for a 21st century audience
- Read the brief properly and pay special attention to the target audience
- Visit the existing website and find out as much information as possible
- The site has to be sophisticated but friendly
- Think about access, legibility and accuracy
- Find out what in the museum appeals to the visually impaired and how this can be incorporated into the site

Presentation

- Importance is placed on the presentation of your research and of your new ideas
- Always use examples when explaining something complicated
- Be confident in your presentation and ensure that you are well prepared
- Ensure a clear, sensible order in presentation of research and findings
- Look up when you are speaking
- Watch your body language – symmetrical body language convinces people you are sincere
- Make sure everyone can see you and the material that you're presenting
- Vary the pace and intensity of what you deliver
- Control the pace at which you speak – nervousness can mean talking too quickly
- If you are nervous, try controlled breathing beforehand
- Prepare and rehearse

The client

- As a student on this course you are more of an expert on websites than they are
- Demonstrate expertise in your approach to the project and have lots of good ideas
- Educate the client in how audiences for websites are different to museums and about access issues
- Listen to what your client says
- In addition to capturing a new audience don't alienate the old one
- Show the client that you can handle the brief and a production team
- Demonstrate an ability to put good ideas into action

Working as a team

- Think about how many people and skills are needed to build the website
- It is important to work together to solidify the brief into a production plan and screen design
- Keep a sense of humour
- Listen to each other's ideas
- Take leadership turns if necessary
- Criticism is ok but make sure you are constructive
- Don't forget to praise when it is deserved