

NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US:

Engaging Stakeholders on Web Projects

There is nothing more critical to the success of your project than listening to primary and secondary stakeholders and using that data to make informed decisions about your new website. Here's how to do that.

Identify

Step 1. Assemble the names of important people or groups.

- Any person or group who could be affected by or needs awareness of your project should be considered a stakeholder.
- Write down the universe of stakeholder names.
- Do you have any mandatory approvals to consider?

Step 2. Add details to qualify each stakeholder.

- Why are they stakeholders?
- What are they interested in or what are they opposed to (for detractors)?
- What are the risks of not engaging these folks?
- How influential are these people or groups?
- Are there important details on how or where to engage these parties to get the best results?
- Group them into primary or secondary stakeholders.

Plan

Step 3. Develop a project roadmap.

- Outline your typical workflow.

Step 4. Add stakeholder milestones to your roadmap.

- Pinpoint on the roadmap and adjust where you need to insert stakeholder “toll gates” or announcement points.
- Develop a RACI Chart
- As you consider your project activities and deliverables, assign your stakeholders a level of interest on a RACI chart.

Engage

Step 5. Choose engagement methods.

- Now that you know who to engage and when to engage them, you need to determine how to engage your stakeholders
- Primary stakeholders likely need “listening” activities where secondary stakeholders will suffice with “informing” or “awareness” tactics.

Step 6. Monitor and control stakeholder engagement

- Regular risk assessments
- Keep a summary for project sponsors on who and how you engaged stakeholders
- Manage and mitigate any information that might negatively affect progress on your project.

“Listening” Tactics

- Focus groups
 - Surveys
 - Persona building
 - Empathy mapping
 - Journey mapping
 - Comparative analysis
 - Multi-phased launch plans
 - Goals and KPI setting
 - Gap analysis
 - A/B tests
 - Gap analysis
 - Content audits
 - Card sorting
 - Sketching exercises
 - Usability tests, like Treejack and heat mapping
 - 1:1 feedback gathering meetings
 - “War room” style testing
 - Beta and end-user accessibility testing
 - Analytics review
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“Informing” or “Awareness” Tactics

- Editor/Publisher/Developer training
- Technical documentation
- Organization newsletters / email campaign
- Project landing page
- Presentation meetings
- Town hall
- External media: press release, social or broadcast
- Website alerts

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