



Please Sign In

The title is centered and surrounded by five light purple circles. Two circles are positioned above the text, and three are below it. The top-left circle is an outline, while the others are solid. The bottom-right circle is also an outline.

Websites for PTAs

by Jenny Mitchell

What is a website?



A website is a series of pages that can be visited on the World Wide Web, or the Internet.

While some websites are used for buying and selling products, such as Amazon and EBay, most websites are primarily for **sharing information**.

What is a website? (cont'd)



PTA websites fall under the category of ‘sharing information.’ There are **two main purposes** for PTAs to have a website.

1. Provide visitors with forms, dates, contacts, and other pertinent **information**
2. Share news, events, and photos to **promote** involvement and membership



Form Follows Function

Websites must be created with these
purpose in mind!

This can present a challenge while trying to
balance content and design.

Things To Keep In Mind



- Form Follows Function
- Keep the design consistent across all pages
- Make it easy for visitors to see where they are and where else they can go
- Keep related content together

Notes on Design



● Form Follows Function

- Site design should come from the content that will live there
- Fancy websites may look nice but often hide the content beneath the décor
- Do not squish content into the website based on a stiff design

Notes on Design (cont'd)



- **Consistency is Key**

- Keep the site layout, the site colors, and the text formats the same throughout the website
- Consistency makes visitors feel comfortable and allows their eyes to get used to your styles
- Consistency shows professionalism

Notes on Design (cont'd)



● Easy Navigation

- Viewers want to know where they are and where they can go
- Keep a navigation bar somewhere on the page at all times
- Choose either a horizontal or vertical navigation, there is rarely a reason for both

Notes on Design (cont'd)



● Organized Content

- Keep related content together
- Do not use individual pages for every single item
- Put important items on the main page
- Filter out what information should appear on the website
- Keep content up-to-date



Screenshots of Websites

What is a website?



From a technical standpoint, a website is composed of three elements:

- **A domain name**
- **A web host**
- **Individual pages of content**

What is a website? (cont'd)



- A **domain name** is the address – also referred to as the URL – of the website you are visiting.
- When you go to an address, you are viewing the **pages of content**.
- Those pages and all other files found online, such as images, are stored on a **web host**.



Domains and Subdomains

- A website can have its own **domain name** or it can be found at a subdomain. A **subdomain** is an address that is attached to another address. Subdomains are often free or cheaper than complete domain names.
 - Examples of Domains
 - <http://www.mydomainname.com>
 - <http://www.peraltadistrictpta.org>
 - Examples of Subdomains
 - <http://www.somecompany.com/mycompany>
 - <http://ptawebreview.awardspace.com>

Creating a Website



- One must purchase a domain name and a web host in order to have a website. These costs can vary. A comparison of companies that offer these is presented later.
- Pages of content can be created in two different ways – using **templates** or writing from **scratch**.

Creating Pages Using Templates

- There are two ways to create pages from templates:
 - Web-based template tools
 - Computer software
- I often call template-based websites “managed websites” because, although you may have a selection of templates to choose from, the template manages the display of your content.

Creating Pages Using Templates (cont'd)

- The **pros** to a managed website are:
 - Very simple to use and access
 - No design or programming experience needed
 - Multiple people can access site builder online
 - Free or no additional software needed
- The **cons** to a managed website are:
 - Less control over design and layout of webpage
 - Template and designs provided by services can be unattractive
 - Some have ads and extras that appear on the webpage

Creating Pages Using Templates (cont'd)

- Many web hosts offer templates or website-building tools. Templates are pre-defined styles and layouts where the user enters their content and a page is generated.
- Some templates are more customizable than others. Some templates may give you options to change colors of items; others might also give you choices on placement. Online site builders also may give you the option to format your page or text styles (such as **bolds** or *italics*) yourself using HTML.

A decorative graphic consisting of six circles arranged in a ring around the central text. The circles are light purple. Three circles are filled with the color, and three are hollow with a thin purple outline. The filled circles are at the top-right, bottom-left, and bottom-middle positions, while the hollow circles are at the top-left, top-right, and bottom-right positions.

Demo of Site Builder

Using Computer Software with Templates

- There are also commercial computer programs that help users design websites using templates or other on-screen guides. This software is often called **WYSIWYG** – **What You See Is What You Get** – editing.
- Computer software usually allows for much greater flexibility when using templates. Elements can be moved around more and the textual styles of your content can be more easily formatted.

Using Computer Software with Templates

(cont'd)

- The **pros** to a WYSIWYG website are:
 - Template-based for ease of use
 - More control over the design and formatting of the webpages
 - No ads or unnecessary extras
- The **cons** to a WYSIWYG website are:
 - Requires software (for every person who wants to work on the site)
 - Some design and web experience helpful

Using Computer Software with Templates

(cont'd)

- Computer software can be more expensive and have a learning curve, but it allows for much greater flexibility and customization of the design.
- In addition, once a template has been created, others can use that template to add to and modify pages of the website.

The image features seven light purple circles arranged in two rows. The top row contains three circles: an empty circle on the left, a solid circle in the middle, and another solid circle on the right. The bottom row contains four circles: two solid circles on the left and two empty circles on the right. The text "Demo of Contribute" is centered horizontally between the two rows of circles.

Demo of Contribute

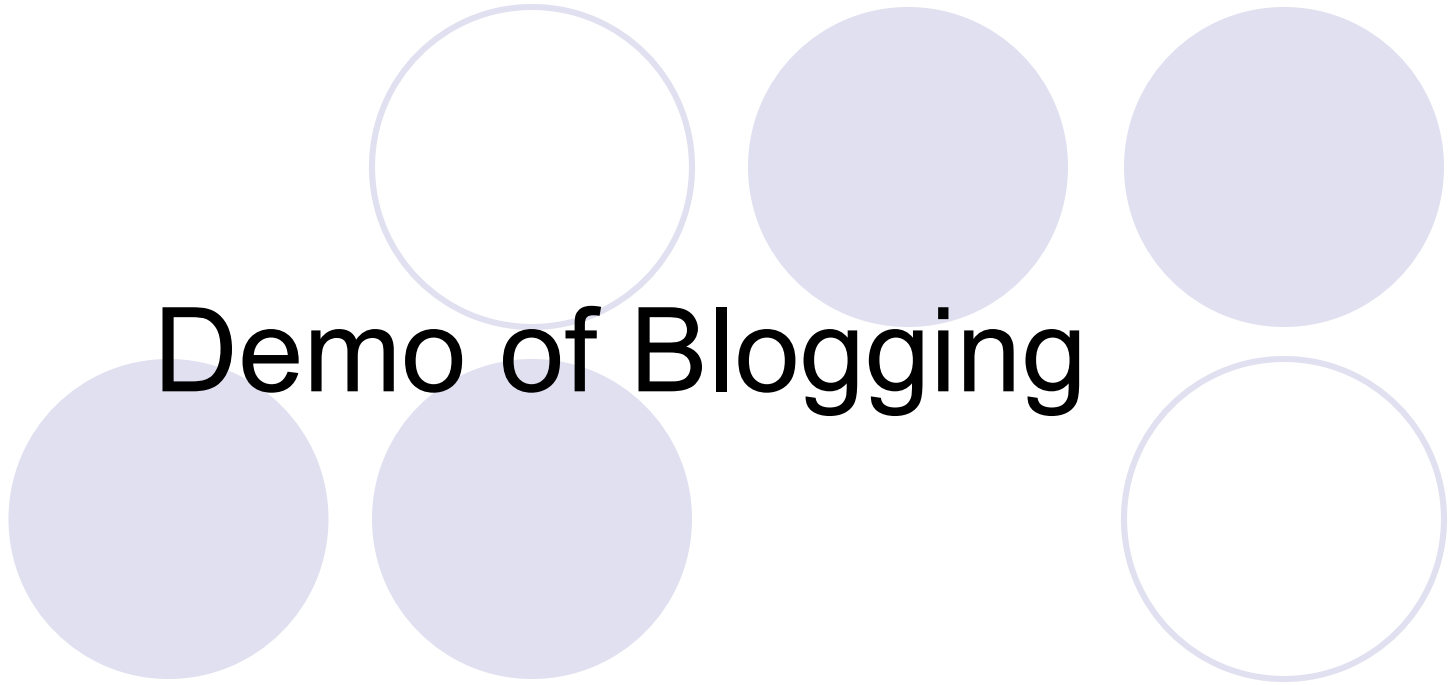
Blogging



A blog - or web log - is another way of managing a website through a web interface.

- A blog is an application that supports diary-like entries. There are multiple entries on a page, and each entry can be commented on by visitors.
 - The ability to comment on a post can be turned off.
- Some blogging programs also allow for static pages (one entry per page).

Demo of Blogging



Structuring a Website

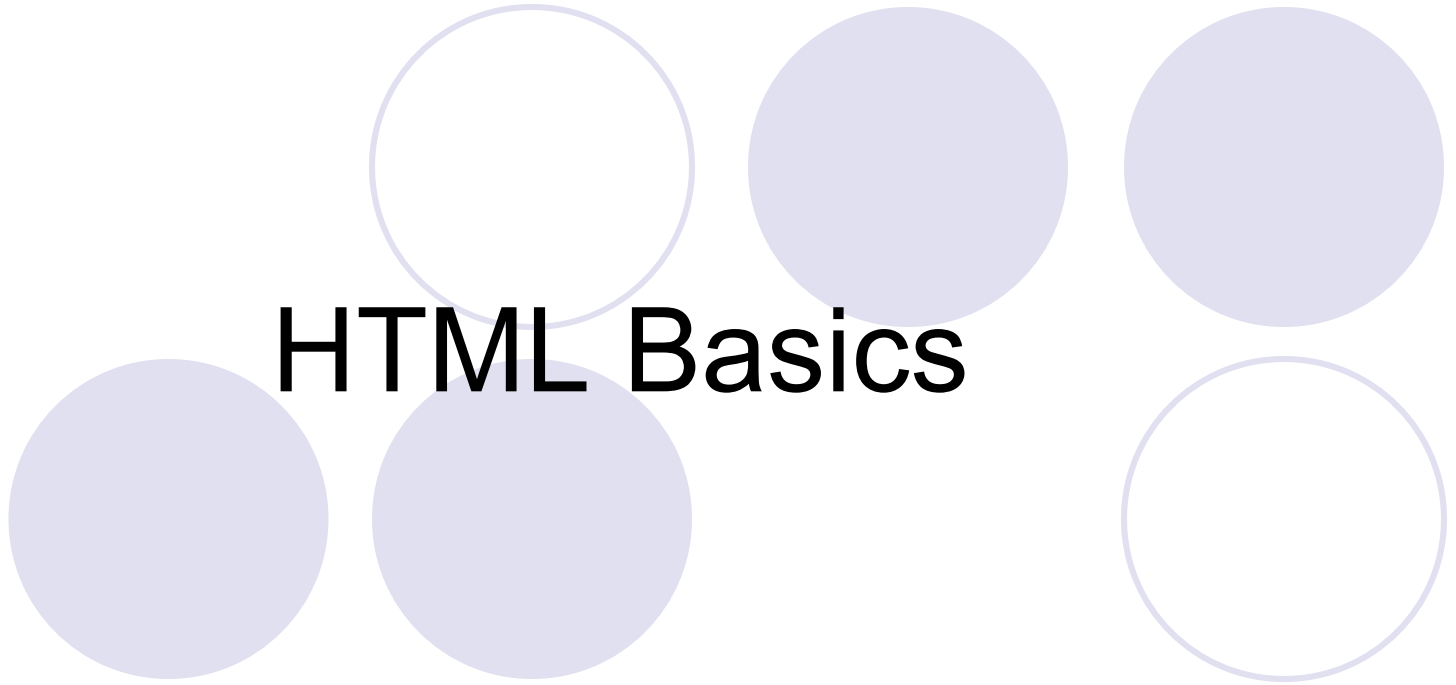


- Any website consists of .html files of content and other files, including images (.jpg or .gif) and downloadable files such as Adobe PDFs (.pdf) or Microsoft Word documents (.doc).
- The location of your index.html file (or main page) is considered the **root directory**. Other files, such as images and other pages, can be located in the same place as the index.html file or they can be in folders (called subdirectories).
- The location of files with respect to the file they are being referenced from is called the **relative path**.

Creating Pages from Scratch

- Creating pages from 'scratch' requires knowledge of **HTML**, the **H**yper **T**ext **M**arkup **L**anguage that websites are written in.
 - Pages are written in HTML files with a plain text file editor
 - Pages and are then placed on the web host with an FTP program
- This requires the least amount of software and services but the most amount of knowledge. However, HTML is a fairly simple language to learn.

HTML Basics





Electronic Communication

- Websites are one way to use technology to manage communications
- E-Mailing lists are another way to maintain communication with PTA members

E-Mailing Lists



- E-Mailing lists can simplify the use of email with members
- An e-mailing list provides one central address to send emails (either to some members or to all members)
- E-Mailing lists are provided by web hosts or third party tools

E-Mailing Lists (cont'd)



- Yahoo! Groups is a free mailing list service with additional tools on the website
- Members can join or leave the list as they pass through PTA
- Messages and files can be viewed at the Yahoo! Groups website for the group

Yahoo! Groups

fremontcouncilpta · Fremont Council PTA

Home

Members Only

Messages
Post
Files
Photos
Links
Database
Polls
Members
Calendar
Promote

Info Settings

Group Information

Members: 99
Category: [Parent-Teacher Groups](#)
Founded: Sep 18, 2002
Language: English

Home

Join This Group!

Activity within 7 days: 1 New Member - 1 New Message - [New Questions](#)

Description

This egroup is for members to discuss and exchange ideas and information regarding items and issues related to the Fremont Council PTA. This PTA Council operates in the Fremont Unified School District in Fremont, CA., a district of more than 30,000 students.



Message History

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2007	38	19	17	25	26	2						
2006	14	32	29	15	22	9	4	32	59	44	17	24
2005	21	19	12	37	8	3	9	11	15	17	27	7
2004	9	1	5	1	17	16		8	1	42	3	3
2003	18	13	10	8		17	8	3	4	11	3	
2002									10	16	15	9

Website Wrap Up



- Websites are places where people go to find information
- Websites should be created with their purpose and their visitors in mind
- Websites should have a consistent design and easy navigation

Website Wrap Up (cont'd)



- A domain (or subdomain) and a web host are needed to have a website
- Website content, including images, are stored on the web host
- Prices and features of hosts and domain registrars vary (to be covered)

Website Wrap Up (cont'd)



- Websites can be created from site builders, from templates, or from scratch
- Templates can be created from web-based tools (including blogs) or computer software
- Templates are not as flexible but easier to use than writing from scratch

Website Wrap Up (cont'd)



- HTML is the language used to create websites
- Common HTML tags are used for links, images, and font styles

Web Hosts and Domain Registrars

- A domain name and web host are necessary for a website
- A domain name points to files stored on the web host
- Web hosts often sell or give domains with their packages, but it is not necessary to purchase them from the same company

Terminology

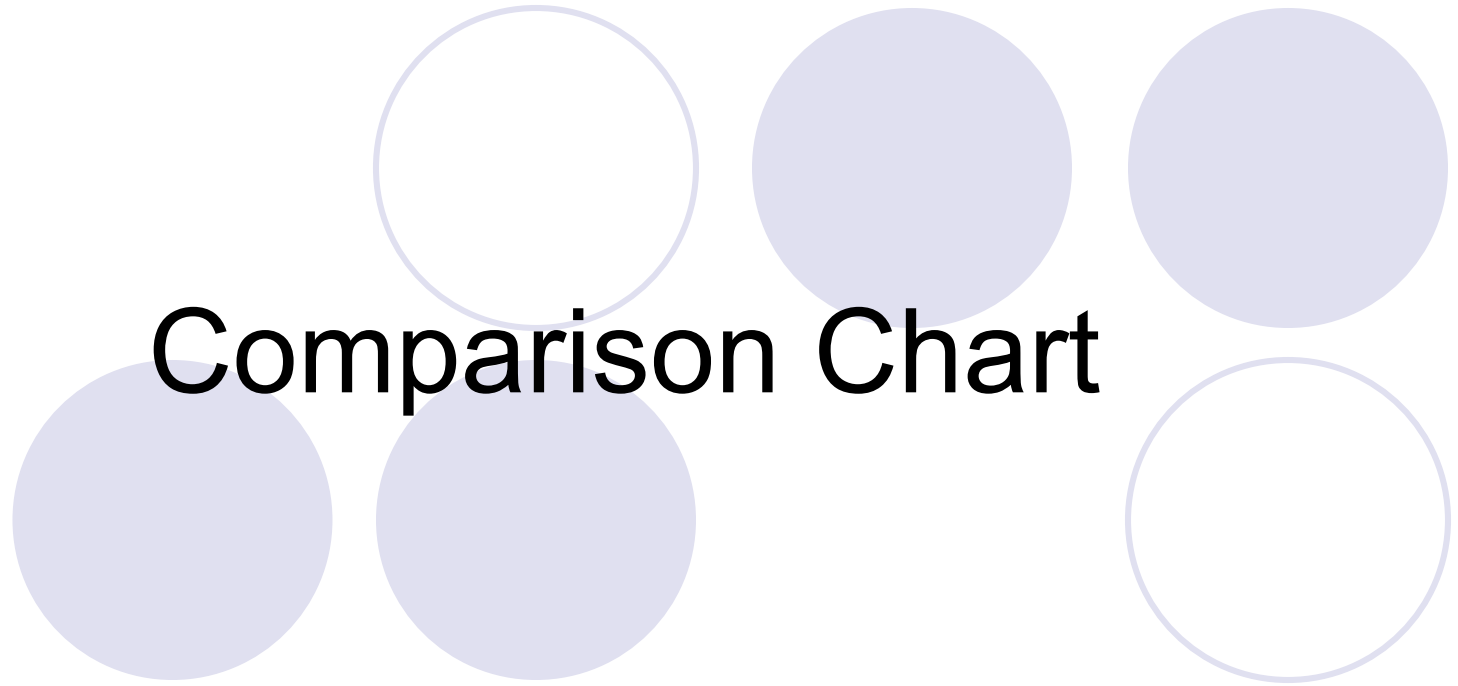


- **Web space:** Amount of megabytes available for storing files
- **Bandwidth:** Amount of gigabytes that can be transferred (by visitors) from the site per month
- **Email:** [name@domain.com](#) email accounts (to send and receive mail)

Terminology (cont'd)



- **Site Builder:** Options to use templates or a builder online
- **Blogging:** Web application to update a website with diary-like entries
- **Front Page Compatibility:** Supports the use of Microsoft FrontPage to create and publish the website



Comparison Chart

Resources



W3 Schools HTML help

<http://www.w3schools.com/html/>

Microsoft FrontPage

<http://www.microsoft.com/Frontpage>

Macromedia Contribute

<http://www.adobe.com/products/contribute/>

WordPress Blogs

<http://www.wordpress.com/>



Questions?

Feel free to e-mail me if you have any questions or need assistance.

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