Starting with user needs

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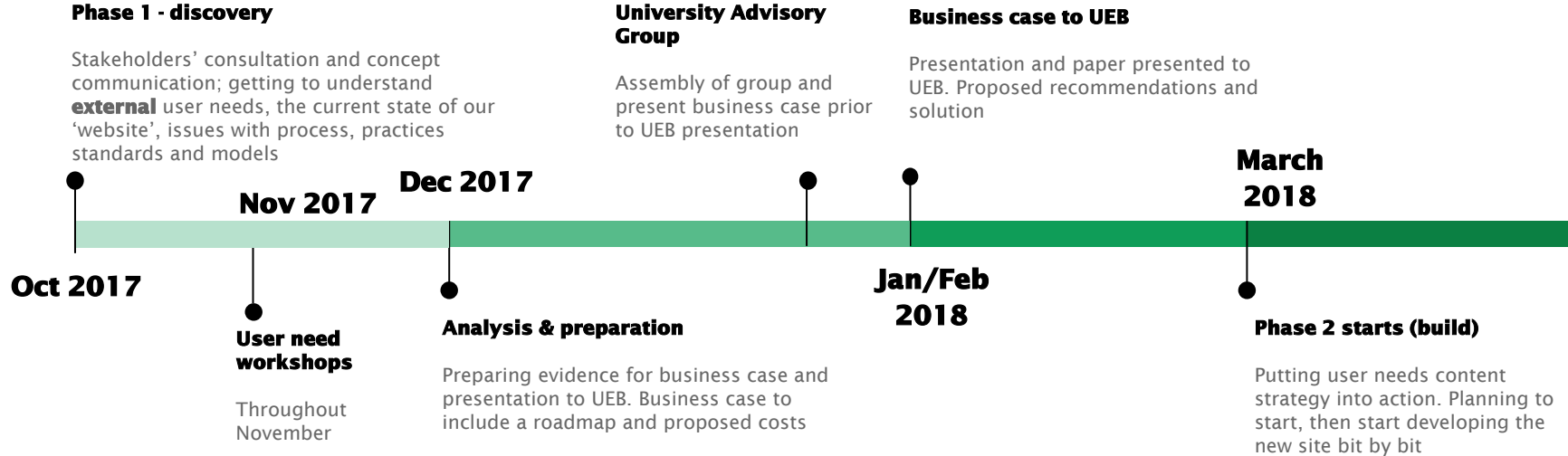Ayala Gordon, Head of Digital

November 2017

One Web is a project to create a new, streamlined, user-centric online presence for the university.

The concept has been agreed by the board, and that means this is now the consultation phase.

We'll be talking to staff and students around the university to get an idea of the needs for the website.

Today is about starting that work and taking on your views, which we're really looking forward to hearing!
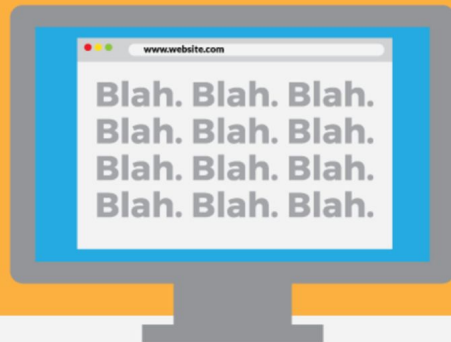
Timeline

Phase 1 - discovery

Stakeholders' consultation and concept communication; getting to understand **external** user needs, the current state of our 'website', issues with process, practices standards and models

University Advisory Group

Assembly of group and present business case prior to UEB presentation

Business case to UEB

Presentation and paper presented to UEB. Proposed recommendations and solution

Oct 2017

Nov 2017

Dec 2017

Jan/Feb 2018

March 2018

User need workshops

Throughout November

Analysis & preparation

Preparing evidence for business case and presentation to UEB. Business case to include a roadmap and proposed costs

Phase 2 starts (build)

Putting user needs content strategy into action. Planning to start, then start developing the new site bit by bit

3

On the average web page, users will read at most **28%** of the words during an average visit; 20% is more likely.

www.website.com

Blah. Blah. Blah.
Blah. Blah. Blah.
Blah. Blah. Blah.
Blah. Blah. Blah.

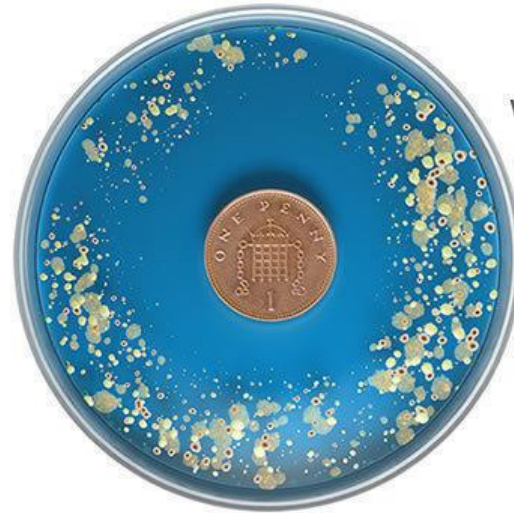The average page visit lasts less than a minute and users often leave web pages in just **10-20 SECONDS**

Every day ...

3 billion Google searches

27 million pieces of content shared

8 seconds before someone gets distracted online

The web isn't a billboard.

You can't push messages at people
like you can through other channels.

The web is all about 'pull'.

Before GOV.UK government web content was designed like this ...

Home

Business & industry ▼

Environmental topics ▼

Waste ▼

Types of waste ▼

Light bulbs ▶

How to dispose of lightbulbs

Energy saving light bulbs and fluorescent light tubes contain small amounts of mercury.

As mercury is a hazardous substance these types of lightbulbs should be disposed of sensibly and in accordance with the Hazardous Waste Regulations.

Most local councils will only collect or accept waste from their residents. They will not offer a waste collection or disposal service for business waste. Most businesses will have to use a private waste management company to collect their waste, or deposit their waste at a commercial waste management site.

Details of private waste management companies can be found on our on-line Waste Recycling Directory.

If the domestic property owner hires a private company / individual (not local council) to remove their waste they must ensure that all duty of care requirements are met.
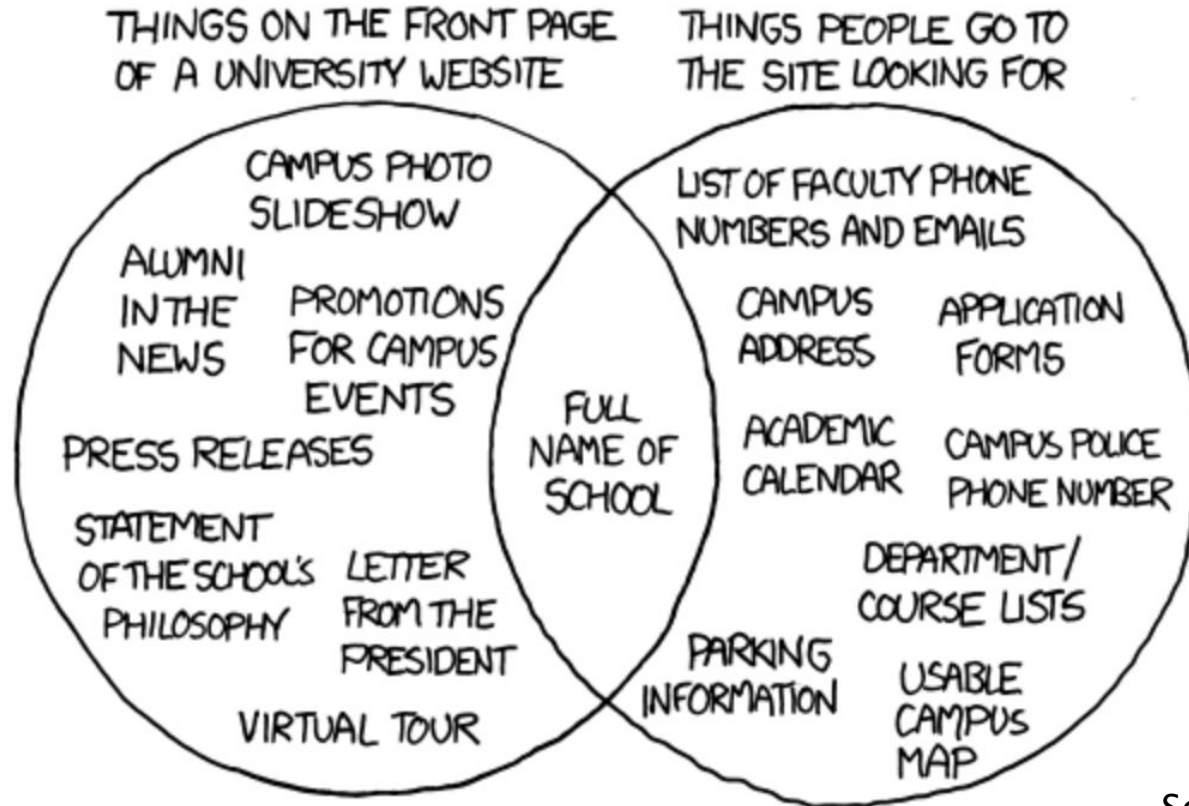
Old electrical items are covered by the WEEE regulations. The WEEE regulations state that in some commercial waste disposal situations the provider of new electrical equipment is responsible for the WEEE's disposal.

User feedback:

1. "But it doesn't say where and how to dispose of low energy bulbs!"
2. "The question was 'How to dispose of a lightbulb'. I challenge anyone to find the answer in this text."
3. "Think it might be easier to phone and speak to someone."

What do you get if you focus on your organisation's needs instead of your users' needs?

- duplication of content
- gaps in content
- poor SEO (so users can't find what they need)
- 200,000 pages instead of 2,000
- websites that are impossible to manage and expensive to maintain (eg Business Link)

Source: xkcd.com

A consistent trend

Unassigned ▾

Hi, is this your website or it is a scam site

https://studentrecords.soton.ac.uk

University of Southampton
Oct 30, 2:26pm

Hi

Thanks for your message, yes I can confirm the website you provided is ours, how can i help?

➔ Assigned to Jonny Vaughan   15 mins
"Just in case you wanted to also pass this on to the web team"
by **Enquiries**

Nov 02, 9:26pm

i was just skeptical it might be a scam because it look too different from main page and domain
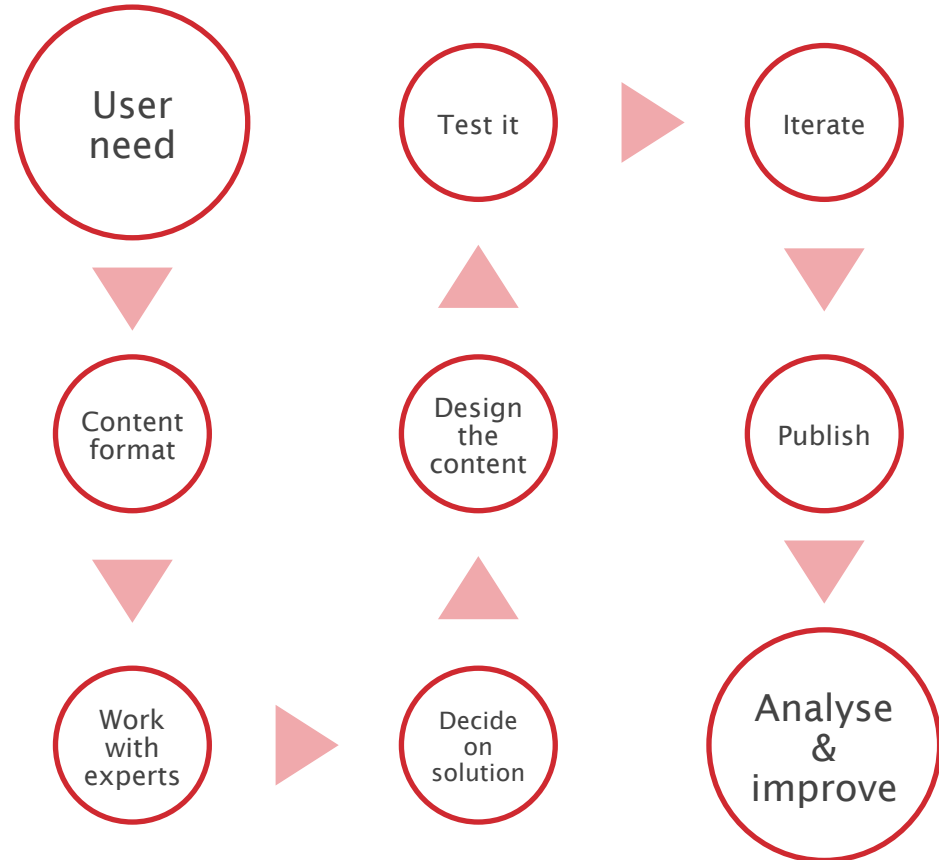
Nov 02, 9:26pm

thanks

Focus on your users' needs instead.

Not more content, **Smarter** content

The content design publishing model

Requires a particular skillset

- – Analytics / technical
- – All form of communications
- – Know your users
- – Have the right attitude
- – Question and research
- – Quality embedded

User need

Test it

Iterate

Content format

Design the content

Publish

Work with experts

Decide on solution

Analyse & improve

Who's the audience?

What do they want to do?

Why do they want to do it?

User story format:

– "As a…" *[person in a particular role]*

– "I want to…." *[perform an action or find something]*

– "So I can….." *[so I can achieve my goal of]*

Example:

– As someone choosing where to apply to do my university course

– I want to see what life is like for students at Southampton

– So I can decide if I want to apply to go there

How this works:

- data, user research and analytics
- content designer
- subject matter expert
- publish, get feedback and improve

This is about finding out the problem rather than going with a set solution at this stage.

We're really looking forward to getting your views and working together to find out what your users need.