



MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR PROJECT WEBSITE

Your IEE project website is an important mechanism to inform other people of your work and its results. Here are some recommendations on how to create a good website and avoid the most common mistakes.

The following suggestions are not a formal requirement but an attempt to help you enhance your website, thereby improving communication on your project and at the same time on the whole IEE programme.

WHEN YOU PLAN YOUR PROJECT AND WEBSITE

- Create a completely new page or make it part of an existing webpage?**
Both solutions work and each has its particular strengths. A new project page will have its own domain name and individual design. Yet, setting up a new page could be more expensive and updating it after the project may not be ensured. Integrating your project webpage into an existing page may limit your choice of design and editorial style. At the same time it could make the page cheaper, support regular updating and strengthen its marketing.
- Use an external editor or edit it in-house?**
Again, it depends. You can set up a simple, yet effective page in-house. This gives you a high degree of flexibility, control, updating speed, and cost-efficiency. Using an external web editor will allow you to do more complicated things, which is sometimes very useful, but the development and maintenance process can be much heavier.
- Design it to match the needs of your specific target groups**
Each IEE project is required to set up and maintain a project website. Yet, don't create it for the EACI or the European Commission in the first instance, but for the specific target groups of your project. *They* are the most important stakeholders for the success of your project, and the website should therefore respond to *their* information needs.

WHEN YOU CARRY OUT YOUR PROJECT AND CREATE YOUR WEBSITE

- Display the IEE banner and link it to the IEE webpage**
Your website has to display the IEE banner and this banner needs to link to the IEE homepage. More guidance on this requirement can be found on http://ec.europa.eu/energy/intelligent/implementation/communication_en.htm#logo.
- Don't make it too big**
Will you be able to manage and maintain your webpage all the time? After the initial setup, you will spend most of your time on maintenance and updating. That's why you should not oversize your page right at the start. Instead, size it reasonably to guarantee that you can keep it up to date throughout your project.
- Make it attractive, easy to navigate and fun to read**
A good design and a page structure which is easy to navigate matter. These features will decide within the first few seconds whether your visitors like your page or not. Also, your writing needs to be adapted for web pages: concise, scannable, and objective. Avoid using acronyms (RUE, RES, MS, NMS-CC, CFLs...) and jargon whenever possible. Don't just copy/paste text from your project proposal! It is completely unsuitable.
- Use it to sell your results and deliverables – and not your work packages and project team**
Very few people want to read a detailed explanation of your work packages and the partners involved. Instead, most visitors wish to get a quick idea of what you are doing, download your results, or get in touch with you. Hence: Stick all your electronic deliverables, reports, publications etc. on your page and make it easy to find and download them; announce your events; provide updates on key findings, and give the contact details at least of the project leader.
- Keep it up to date and complete**
Nothing worse than a page with parts "under construction", outdated information and broken links. If you want to put off people from using your page this is the way to do it. Tip: give the responsibility for updates to a dedicated person in your project team and create a timetable for regular revisions.
- Market it pro-actively**
Have you ever heard of a company which builds a new shop without making publicity for it, hoping that people would find it on the road one day? Certainly not. The same applies to your webpage: *you* need to approach your target groups. Tell them that your page exists, where they can find it and what they can get there: create mailing lists and send regular updates on your page, ask other webmasters to create links to your page, register with Internet search engines, announce new online publications in "Intelligent Energy News" etc.
- Monitor its use**
Most web hosting providers give you statistics on the use of your webpage. These are the only means to know how popular your page is and how often your files have been downloaded. Is the marketing of your page successful? Is interest in your page low and do you need to take action? Your web statistics will tell you!

Want to get more extensive guidance? Try this

http://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/science-communication/website2bis_en.htm