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Developing a Web product

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Key points

- What do we actually do?
- How do we deal with it
- Everywhere, the same
- Manufacturer and consumer
- Wrap-up

- Open talk
 - A piece of the social web cake



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What do we actually do?





Key concept

Let's remember our old friend,
the webmaster:





Key concept

Let's remember our old friend,
the webmaster:

“A **webmaster** is a person responsible for designing, developing, marketing and maintaining web site.”

(Wikipedia)



Defining capabilities

As developers, we are **solution providers**. We listen to **customer's** needs and we try to offer the best way to solve his **problems** in a defined **context** of time, money and technical restrictions.

But we shouldn't be alone in this quest.





Plain request, right answer

John Doe:

You're making websites, right?

Developer:

True...

John Doe:

I need one this week, can you do it?

Developer:

I can't, but **we** might have a chance.



Why a “we” and not an “I”

Developing a web site implies multiples tasks, requiring various capabilities.

While some of them may reside in one person, there is a small chance to have them all. Although you may be sure that you're one of the lucky ones.



Me, myself and I. Still not enough

Ok, I've got a deal. So let's see what I have to do:

- **client interview** (“not a single person, not only a department...”);
- **developing IA/ ID** (“what to put, where to put, how to put...”);
- **proposing mock-ups** (“I hope he's not too choosy...”);
- **refining design** (“...and let the artist to perform”);
- **establish a database model** (“hm, have I got it right?”);

My slide is almost over and we've just started..

- **code page templates** (“anybody on IE5.5, Opera 7-8, Safari or text browsers? neah, I guess not...”)



Ok. So I don't go out this week

- ...
- **choose the right framework** (“the official rock-paper-scissors strategy guide”);
- **customize CMS** to fulfill needs (“it’s always **almost** perfect”);
- **copywriting** (“I have a Cambridge diploma, don’t I?”);
- **publish content** (“how hard copy/ paste can be?”);
- **test the application** (“I don’t make mistakes, but these stupid machines...”);
- **deployment** (“there’s a funny lady on the support line”)

Pfiu, I’ve managed to pull it off. **Finally, over! Not.**



This starts to be annoying...

- ...
- **training materials and support** (“how can you not know JAVA?”)
- **maintenance** (“remember that you’re not selling shoes”)

+ bug fixing, future developments, redesigns, etc.

The “webmastering” era has been ended. To be an active player on the market you have to consolidate your services’ portfolio and provide quality assurance of your products.



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How do we deal with it



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Key concept

Think about it as a **process**:





Key concept

Think about it as a **process**:

“A series of actions, changes, or functions bringing about a result” (The American Heritage Dictionaries)



Part of a team

- Be sure that all the stakeholders of the project know their rights and obligations; (they are aware of own responsibilities, milestones, deadlines, dependent actions)
- Think about the process in terms of “Role” (actors), and not as “Individuals”; (the customer may be represented by several persons or the beneficiary of a specific action may be a member of your own team)



Part of a team

- Every project is different from another. Some stages can be compulsory in one, and a total waste of time in another;
(choose carefully what phase is not necessary and which one is; do not cut off until you're definitely sure that it won't affect the result)
- Be sure you grant sufficient resources (time, money) to each step to achieve goals;



Part of a team

- And most important, choose trusted partners, especially when dealing with critical tasks; (“nobody’s perfect but a team can be” – maybe not perfect, but surely more efficient)



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Everywhere, the same





Key concept

Any web application, regarding any kind, fits the general definition of a **product**:



Key concept

Any web application, regarding any kind, fits the general definition of a **product**:

“A **product** is anything that can be offered to a market that might satisfy a want or need.”

(Wikipedia)



As simple as it can be

- First step of the preliminary analysis is represented by identifying the customer's problem;
(since he came to you he definitely has one)
- Be receptive on his needs – although initial desires can be altered during the process – fulfilling those is the key success measurement unit;





It's not a product without a customer

- Identify the audience; a good understanding of whom is targeted can confer you a lot of useful information, even technically;
- Remember that you need to “sell”, in a way or another;
- To “buy” it again, it has to be useful for them – your customer’s customers are your customers now;



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Manufacturer and consumer





Key concept

- Web 2.0 is all about **reciprocity**:



Key concept

- Web 2.0 is all about **reciprocity**:

“A relation based on interchanged, given, or owed privileges to each other.”

(Wikipedia, again)



I blog, you blog, we blog

- Considering the relationship between you, an user, a blogging engine, as Blogspot, Wordpress or whatever, and the rest of the world, how would you define yourself?



YouTube – Directors' cut

- You can make your own “mini-product”, to “pseudo-sell” it to others and be a “mini-customer” “buying” their service.
- The difference? They get some profit.



Stock exchange stream

- Who was first, the egg or the chicken?
- Is the social web just profitable or the profit drove investors in complex social web projects?



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Wrap-up





Key concept

Straight forward.

With no definition from Wikipedia this time.



Open talk

Consider developing another social web network, with time restrictions, budget constrains, limited team size.

What would target? Whom, why, how?

