DoIT DIGITAL

Implementing a digital strategy for Boston’s residents and beyond
WHO WE ARE
OUR DRIVING FOCUS?

Ensure that residents and visitors of Boston:

- can read our important information
- can recognize it’s official
- can get it where they need it, and
- are delighted by what they find and the ease of their interaction.
FIVE ASSUMPTIONS WE CAN’T MAKE

• If it’s online, they can find it
• City Hall is open, people can come to us
• It’s all in the report
• Digital is just about “cool” apps
• Digital can replace the in-person
INTRODUCTIONS

Jeanethe Falvey
Chief Digital Officer

Reilly Zlab
Director of Product Management

James Duffy
Senior Content Manager and Strategist

Sebastian Ebarb
Design Director

Sarah Figalora
Digital Engagement Strategist

...and 10 other amazing team members who couldn’t be here today!
WRITING FOR HUMANS
It’s generally accepted that the average reading level in the United States is 7th - 8th grade.

Our goal is to create accessible content that everyone can understand. You are not “dumbing down” your content. Writing in plain language has a number of benefits, and it saves you time and money.
How do people read websites? The truth is, they don’t.

People mostly skim and barely scroll down a page. Slate.com hired a data scientist to study how people used their site, and found 50% of their users stopped reading halfway down. Thirty-one percent never even scroll.

Turns out, this is pretty typical for most of the web.
So, how do we interact with pages?

Most people scan with a rough “F” pattern when they read a webpage. Starting from the top left corner, they scan horizontally across the page and quickly drop down the left side for information.

The Nielson Norman Group did a study on user behavior, and created this heat map at the right.

The red shows the most viewed section of these websites, followed by yellow, and then blue.
WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR US?

PEOPLE STILL NEED US

We’re the City of Boston. We have information that residents can only find on Boston.gov.

SO BE BRIEF

We still realistically only have the attention of our audience for a few seconds on each page.

AND GET TO THE POINT

There are ways we can write to draw people in and get their attention.
Write for your audience

Remember to keep in mind the people who you want to read your information. Your writing might be different for different audiences.
FOR EMS PROFESSIONALS

Within the Training Division, our Research, Training, and Quality Improvement team conducts critical research designed to introduce new treatment protocols and technologies with the goal of advancing pre-hospital emergency medical care.

FOR THE PUBLIC

We make sure our EMS training division is up-to-date with the latest pre-hospital emergency medical care technology.

THE LESSON?

Sometimes when you’re talking to a broader audience, you don’t need to dive into every little detail. Just give them what they need.
Use the active voice

When we speak, we usually use the active voice. Using the active voice can increase comprehension, and clearly state who is responsible for what.

In most active-voice sentences, the doer comes before the verb it governs.
An easy way to tell if you are using the active or passive voice is to add “by zombies” after the verb in a sentence.

If the sentence still makes sense after adding “by zombies,” it’s in the passive voice.

For example:

- Passive: The town was attacked (by zombies). **Still makes sense.**

- Active: Zombies attacked (by zombies) the town. **Doesn’t make sense.**

There are trickier versions of the passive voice, but this is an easy tip to keep in mind.
DESIGN WITH PURPOSE
“I want to know that my government's professionally run, and therefore I want to know that [it has] professional web designers, graphic designers.”

- Dorchester resident
CONSISTENCY

boston.gov/brand
The beauty of Boston begins with a certain boldness. A boldness of opinion. Of thought. Of diversity. A boldness to be ourselves. Even though we’re all diverse, and come from different cultures and backgrounds, we are connected through our boldness. And through our City. We are Boston.

This guide is just that. A guide. It’s meant to help you understand our strategy and decisions, and provide a foundation to build upon. We will add to it as we bring Boston.gov to life over the coming months and years.
BUILDING THE BRAND

1. BRAND STRATEGY
2. COLOR
3. LOGO AND SEALS
4. TYPOGRAPHY
5. ICONOGRAPHY
6. PHOTOGRAPHY
7. EMPLOYEE TOOLKIT
8. LAYOUTS FOR MEDIA PLATFORMS
9. GRID SYSTEM
THE BRAND IS FUNCTIONAL
not perfect!
BUILDING THE BRAND

National Preparedness Month
BUILD AN EMERGENCY KIT
Disasters don't plan ahead. You can.

City of Boston
Emergency management

Boston.gov/emergency

DID YOU KNOW?
You can't drive moving trucks on Storrow Drive
due to low clearance.

To help alleviate traffic on September 1, we
close several streets and parking is restricted.

Visit Boston.gov/moving for more information.

City of Boston
Mayor Martin J. Walsh

National Preparedness Month
MAKE AN EMERGENCY PLAN
Disasters don't plan ahead. You can.

City of Boston
Emergency management

Boston.gov/emergency
LESS NOT MORE

“We teach and build tools, not rules.”
BUILDING THE BRAND

EMPLOYEE TOOLKIT

- **PRESENTATION SLIDEDECK**
  - Please duplicate the document before beginning your work.
  - GOOGLE SLIDES

- **PRESENTATION SLIDEDECK, OPTION TWO**
  - Please duplicate the document before beginning your work.
  - GOOGLE SLIDES

- **PRESENTATION SLIDEDECK, OPTION THREE**
  - Please duplicate the document before beginning your work.
  - GOOGLE SLIDES

- **BLANK DOCUMENT TEMPLATE**
  - Please duplicate the document before beginning your work.
  - GOOGLE DOCS

- **EMAIL SIGNATURE**
  - Copy and paste one of two options in this document with your information.
  - GOOGLE DOCS

- **REPORT TEMPLATE**
  - Please duplicate the document before beginning your work.
  - GOOGLE DOCS

- **BRANDED PHONE AND DESKTOP BACKGROUNDS**
  - Phone and desktop backgrounds in our brand.
  - GOOGLE DRIVE

- **MEMO TEMPLATE**
  - Please duplicate the document before beginning your work.
  - GOOGLE DOCS

- **SURVEY TEMPLATE**
  - Please duplicate the document before beginning.
  - GOOGLE SLIDES

- **YEAR IN REVIEW TEMPLATE**
  - Please duplicate the document before beginning.
  - GOOGLE SLIDES
EVERYONE IS A DESIGNER
sometimes, without training.
EXPANDING THE BRAND
EXPANDING THE BRAND

LOOKING FOR A NEW FRIEND?
The Animal Care and Control Shelter is now open!

Come visit us at 26 Mahler Road in Roslindale.
Call 617-635-1800 or visit boston.gov/animals
to find out what pets are up for adoption.
Viewing hours are Tuesday - Saturday, from 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

“People will try to divide us. But we’re better than that. We are all the same, and it’s my responsibility to fight for everyone in Boston.”
MAYOR MARTIN J. WALSH
FEBRUARY 24, 2017

“Today, we reaffirm our commitment to compassion, and making our immigration system more fair.”
MAYOR MARTIN J. WALSH
SEPTEMBER 13, 2017

To ensure safety, please avoid driving, bicycling or walking on flooded streets.
Sign up for AlertBoston for storm updates.

FLOOD WATCH
To ensure safety, move household hazardous waste up from the basement.
Sign up for AlertBoston for storm updates.
EMPOWER PEOPLE
they will surprise you!
EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT
ENGAGEMENT CHECKUPS

- 140 social network accounts, 84 newsletters

- How can we make sure each department has the right tools to leverage their content?

- Goal: A consistent and rewarding constituent experience

Twitter
850K followers

Facebook
270K fans

Newsletters
210K subscribers
WHAT WE’RE ASKING THE PUBLIC TO FOLLOW
HOW CAN OUR TEAM HELP?

- Digital engagement check-ins
- Digital Digest
- Social Media Working Group
- Trainings
- Content libraries
CASE STUDY: OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (BEFORE)

- 3 Twitter accounts
- 1 Facebook account
- 2 Instagram accounts
- 3 different brands
CASE STUDY: OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (AFTER)

- 1 Twitter account
- 1 Facebook account
- 1 Instagram account
- 1 brand
CASE STUDY: OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Mosquito safety

Mosquito bites can be more than just annoying. In rare instances, they can spread illnesses like West Nile Virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis. #SafetyTip: Prevent mosquitoes from breeding by draining any items that hold water, like...

Last used 10 days ago
Used 2 times

Mosquito bites can be more than just annoying. In rare instances, they can spread illnesses like West Nile Virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis. #SafetyTip: Protect your home from mosquitoes by making sure items around your house do...

Last used 10 days ago
Used 2 times

Mosquito bites can be more than just annoying. In rare instances, they can spread illnesses like West Nile Virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis. #SafetyTip: Mosquitoes are most active b/w dusk & dawn. Try to limit...

Last used 16 days ago
Used Once

Mosquito bites can be more than just annoying. In rare instances, they can spread illnesses like West Nile Virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis. Contact a doctor if you experience high fever, confusion, severe headache, stiff neck, or...
GROWING YOUR SOCIAL PRESENCE (RESPONSIBLY)

- Downsizing our social presence doesn’t mean we’re closed off to creating new accounts

- Create new accounts with caution, collaboration, and a lot of planning

The evolution of the @ArtsinBoston Instagram account:
AND SOMETIMES...
WE BUILD IT
BUILD NEW PRODUCTS: BUY DEATH CERTIFICATES ONLINE

REGISTRY.BOSTON.GOV/DEATH

THEN

- Only available via mail or in-person
- Private companies [incl. State vendor] charge $40+
- Lengthy turnaround from order to receive (at least 6 months)

NOW

- Available online as soon as the City has the data
- Just $14 plus fees [no upcharge]
- Pilot of a new online payment system
- Made possible thanks to partnerships with the Registry and Treasury Departments
## WHERE WE’RE HEADED NEXT

### CONTENT AND ENGAGEMENT

- Continued trainings for City staff
- Continued content migration and creation
- Moving departments and staff off microsites
- Explore opportunities for new guide pages on Boston.gov
- Streamlining the City’s social media presence
- Celebrating our historic City through #BostonUncovered
- Experimenting with different social media tools to increase engagement in public forums.

### DESIGN

- Color palette expansion
- Online City store
- Overhaul and user testing of paper forms
- Made in Boston program
- Citywide wayfinding and signage

### DEVELOPMENT/PRODUCT MANAGEMENT

- More web apps!
- Moving from Drupal 7 to 8
- Expanding use of our pattern library
WHERE YOU FIT IN

- Keep pushing the envelope; we’re always learning from you
- Be one of our ‘gov friends’, we love sharing
- Use the brand and tag us on social @CityofBoston
- Follow our work at boston.gov/digital
- Give us feedback on boston.gov, or on social
- Become a part of our team — we’re hiring - boston.gov/jobs
RESOURCES

DIGITAL

- City of Boston on github
  - With active workload tracked on a git wiki
- Boston’s pattern library

CONTENT CREATION

- Hemingway Editor: Web app to monitor/tweak reading level of your content.
- Boston’s writing guide
- Cheat sheet: Social media image sizes

DESIGN

- Boston's digital brand guidelines
- Boston’s video guidelines
- Canva: Free, light weight online design tool.
- Noun Project: Largest free online repository of icons.
- Google Fonts: One of the most diverse and helpful free typeface selectors
- Full presentation on branding Boston.