

Martin Francis  
Student Number-90944425  
Web Design BSc Year 1  
Module UFIE7W-20-1  
Introduction to the Web  
Tutor Paul Hulbert  
Link to my home page

<http://www.cems.uwe.ac.uk/~mfrancis>

## **A Report detailing the production of the Bob Dylan Prototype Website**

March 09

## List of Contents

- 1 Summary
- 2 Introduction
- 3 Methodology
- 4 Discussion
- 5 Conclusions and Recommendations
- 6 Bibliography
- 7 Appendix
  1. Sources of Photos
  2. Site Structure Diagram
  3. Page structure Diagram

## Summary

This prototype site has been produced using the HTML text editor Notepad++. It is a liquid layout that expands and shrinks with browser window size. I have listed some features of each of the ten pages, discussed my design approach and because of their importance addressed briefly Standards and Accessibility. I have concluded with ideas for future developments and looked into any problems that may need addressing.

## Introduction

The website is a “prototype” site designed to show a client what can be done with choices. To go completely with an overall “design look” would be wrong at this stage. What is important is to have each page correctly written so that global changes can happen quickly, giving the client choice. I have assumed that I have had an initial meeting with the client and now I am at the stage where I go back and show what I have done and to expect changes.

“Correctly written” is not just about neatly written HTML mark-up or W3C validation which is assumed with an expert web designer but will be decided on the audience of the website and what it is felt is important to them.

If the audience has a large variation of screen size, resolution, and aspect ratio then more of the HTML may be marked up with the correct CSS rules to take account for this.

# Methodology

To construct the prototype website I was given the basic text content for each of the pages and it was suggested I use a CSS file from a previous tutorial exercise.

## Rationale and Identification of Software used

- I used Notepad++ for the coding for all of the pages. It gives you the maximum screen area so that you can see a lot of the code that you are working on.
- The most useful feature of it for me is the way it colours the tags and text.
- With the HTML coding it pairs tags in a colour block (purple). With this I was able to check whether tags were nested correctly and that they were in pairs.
- With CSS it is really useful to check that you have not missed a colon, or a bracket, or spelled a command incorrectly.
- These features are so useful that on other work I have switched from the WYSIWIG back to Notepad++ to check the parity of the tags.
- The other feature I used the most is the Run – Launch in Browser and the main browsers used for testing were Firefox 3.0 and IE7
- I have used the W3C's validation tool and ensured that the CSS validates and all the pages validate to XHTML strict.

# Discussion

## Description of each page with screen dump

I have printed out the screen dump running two versions to show how the pages will look in Firefox (normal resolution) and Internet Explorer 7.0 with the Largest Text option chosen. Not obvious from the printouts is that when you roll over the navigation the background changes to a colour matching the header.

### **Page 1** – Index Page

Purpose – To get a sense of size of the content and to explore the possible ways to presenting it.

I designed this page to include all of the Bob Dylan albums to show that the layout for such a large number has to be considered.

This need not be the final layout but it will put in the forefront of the client's mind the problems of having such a high number of possible links.

### **Page 2** – Album Page - FreeWheelin

Purpose – To list the song titles of this album so that the user can choose which song lyrics he or she would like to view

I have added addition navigation to go back to the home page. This may seem excessive but it reminds the user where they have just been and how to get back plus it reduces the time thinking about how to go back.

### **Page 3** – Album Page – Another Side.

Purpose – To list the song titles of this album so that the user can choose which song he or she would like to view

I have added additional navigation to go back to the home page, again this is to remind the user where they have just been and how to get back, plus it reduces the time thinking about how to go back.

### **Page 4 to 9** Lyrics Pages

Purpose – These pages of the user (Tony) to joyfully reminisce over the poetic beauty of meaningful lyrics of each song. We can imagine that he sings them out loud or maybe uses them to make a JavaScript virtual karaoke machine.

I have added some interesting pictures for Tony to ponder on while he sings.

### **Page 10** – Contact Page

Purpose – To provide a method of feedback for the site's owner or web designer. The information collected can then be used to improve the site.

## Design Approach

Before I started design and construction, I analysed the competition to see what they are doing, what they are not doing and what they think their users expectations are. (Baxley 2002) Bob Dylan fans have an enthusiasm for the subject matter and where this is the case they are likely to overlook bad design and focus on what they are interested in. (Sevilla).

The design approach of prototyping with iteration fits well here. I would plan to get the website up and hosted and collect information about the users or audience, then rather than make assumptions.

But a few assumptions could easily be made before hosting and collecting data.

For example: -

A Bob Dylan fan is very likely to have been a teenager or young twenties when Bob Dylan was at the peak of his career. This puts the average Bob Dylan fan at the age of 45 years to 60 years of age. A person like this, we'll call him "Tony" is still very likely to be computer literate, and probably very computer literate. But I would have to acknowledge that Tony's eyesight might not be as good as it was and so the sight should easily be viewed with large text. He may be using the site because his memory is starting to fade and he can't quite remember the lyrics to some of his favourite songs.

After hosting though I would want to get more accurate information.

What sort of machine they are using, what operating system, and what screen size. With a counter installed reporting to for example Google analytics this information will be available. This would be an evolving website that will change as it grows. The user profiles ( or personas) will become more accurate and so content and layout can be changed to become more relevant.

An online survey or questionnaire will also provide useful insights into Tony's or other users/ personas needs.

### Choice of Colour

For the colours of the site I was influence by an example of a website called [www.jasonsantamaria.com](http://www.jasonsantamaria.com) on page 86 of the book "The Principles of Beautiful Web Design" by Jason Baird. It's an example of how a site can have an aged look with the use of tan and dark brown colours. Although I was always aware that this is a prototype site and not to go to great lengths to produce a finished design, what I have done can be changed quickly, the key advantage of CSS.

### Choice of Font

Often a screen renders serifs badly (Sevilla 2007) so I have used a sans-serif font throughout. To reach the widest audience I used the most commonly available true type. To make the text scalable and satisfy accessibility requirements I used ems, rather than points. (Gotz)

### Link colours

The colours of the links I have chosen are highly contrasting for the main links and muted to complement the overall design style of the website. I agree with Sevilla (2007, p281) when she says that different link colours are fine as long as they consistent. We have moved on since Jakob Nielsen published his top ten web page errors in 1996 where this appeared as point eight.

I have kept underlining just for links (Gotz).

### Navigation

Users ask: -

Where am I? Where can I go? How will I get there? And how can I get back to where I once was? (Sevilla 2007)

By making the main navigation links large and clear they answer the basic user questions listed above instantly. I have given them a bit more visual appeal by colouring the rollover blocks the same colour as the dark colour in the header. Navigation of all the pages is also available via the footer. This is common on all pages.

Titles are different for each page and start with the subject of the page.

Images – see appendix for sources.

I have used what I feel are appropriate images for the lyrics of the songs. To continue the aged look I put each image inside an “aged polaroid” and on screen put the images at an angle for a bit of added interest.

The images are backgrounds in CSS rather than brought in the page using `img src`. This gives more flexibility for the editing of this prototype site.

Overall

- I have kept the important information clear in the top left of the page. This is to allow for different screen sizes including notebooks and net books.
- Consistency and repetition are one of the most important principles (Williams 2004) with common design elements appearing on every page.
- Although alignment (see appendix) is not always exact because of browser and screen rendering of this liquid layout.
- Similar items are grouped together (Gestalt).
- Space is free on the web so I have got lots of space around the text to keep it readable.
- Line lengths have been kept short (Sevilla P120)

### **Standards & Accessibility**

Standards exist so that there is an agreement between different browsers on how documents should be presented/rendered. Looking forward to the future there is always a new next generation browser and adhering to standards ensures that the web pages keep their original look. Part of that standard is writing clean mark-up and separating presentation from the content. This gives the user the control over how they want access the content.

This makes it much easier for redesigning the website and providing different versions of it such as a text only version in high contrasting colours.

The Bob Dylan fan site was validated using the World Wide Web Consortium validation tool for XHTML strict and CSS and passed. This means that complying with accessibility requirements is easier and considerable progress has been made to comply with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.

There are fourteen guidelines but only a few are relevant here. The guidelines have been assigned checkpoints and that allow the web designer to check whether or not the web site conforms to the guidelines. Each checkpoint has been assigned a priority level or 1, 2, or 3. The priority level tells the web designer how important the checkpoint is.

The Priority 1 checkpoints identify the basic steps that should be taken to ensure that most people can access the website.

I have summarised the relevant WCA guidelines for the EAAA site: -

1. Provide text equivalents for pictures i.e. meaningful alt tags.
2. Don't rely on colour alone

### 3. Use mark up and style sheets

I have not used the W3Cs tools to check validation for accessibility but one issue that I am aware of is not providing meta data for all pages. For example

```
<META NAME="keywords" CONTENT="Bob, Dylan, songs, albums, lyrics, freewheelin, anotherside, blowin in the wind" />
```

```
<META NAME="description" CONTENT="This page is about the Albums of Bob Dylan and the lyrics or his well known songs." />
```

## Conclusion and recommendations

### Critical review of the site

The Bob Dylan Fan Site reflects what I knew in terms of skills in February 2009. Since then I have learnt a great deal more and applied my new skills to other websites that I have been working on. There is a great temptation to go back and change things around. But I have to remember that this is a prototype site and I could go off in a direction spending time on it that really is unnecessary. Its function is to be something to show the client and let the iteration process begin. So in this case learning to leave it alone is lesson too.

### Problems

1. Putting the image inside a div gave rise to cross browser presentation problems. Problem solved by making the picture into a background of the content wrapper.
2. I left the testing of the page in Internet Explorer 7.0 quite late in the development process, so I had to make some small edits to the CSS to allow for it not rendering the pages in the same way as Firefox.

### Recommendations for further development

Tabbed navigation is self-evident, easy to see and distinctive (Krug 2006) so I would suggest to any client that this is a good method for navigation. I have used tabbed navigation on other sites that expand to take larger text.

This website would also benefit from multimedia. Each lyric page could have a virtual MP3 player embedded into it that plays the song of that page. MP3 files are small enough not to affect the download times of pages too significantly.

Correct, clean well-structured mark-up has given the site a good foundation on which new updates can be added easily.

## Bibliography

Bob Baxley, *Making the Web Work* (New Riders, 2002), Ch 1  
Information Design Desk Reference by Christine Sevilla Edition 2002  
V Götz, *Type – for the Internet and other Digital Media* (AVA Publishing, 2003)  
The CSS Anthology by Rachel Andrew 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition 2007  
Don't Make me Think by Steve Krug Second Edition 2006

W3C

<http://www.w3.org/WAI/ER/tools/Overview.html>

**Techniques for Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0**

<http://www.w3.org/TR/WAI-WEBCONTENT-TECHS/>

**Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0**

**W3C Recommendation 5-May-1999**

<http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG10/>

## Appendix

### 1. Sources of Photos

1. album covers and song title list

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

2. tree picture

<http://uphilldowndale.files.wordpress.com>

3 girl on train

[http://farm1.static.flickr.com/40/123171140\\_442792a895.jpg?v=0](http://farm1.static.flickr.com/40/123171140_442792a895.jpg?v=0)

4. Girl on bike

[http://farm4.static.flickr.com/3163/3107980453\\_a1c296fbd8.jpg](http://farm4.static.flickr.com/3163/3107980453_a1c296fbd8.jpg)

5. Dandelion seeds

[blinkyblinkyblink.blogspot.com](http://blinkyblinkyblink.blogspot.com)

6. Holding hands

[www.superstock.com](http://www.superstock.com)

7. Long winding road

[breathtakinggroup.blogspot.com](http://breathhtakinggroup.blogspot.com)

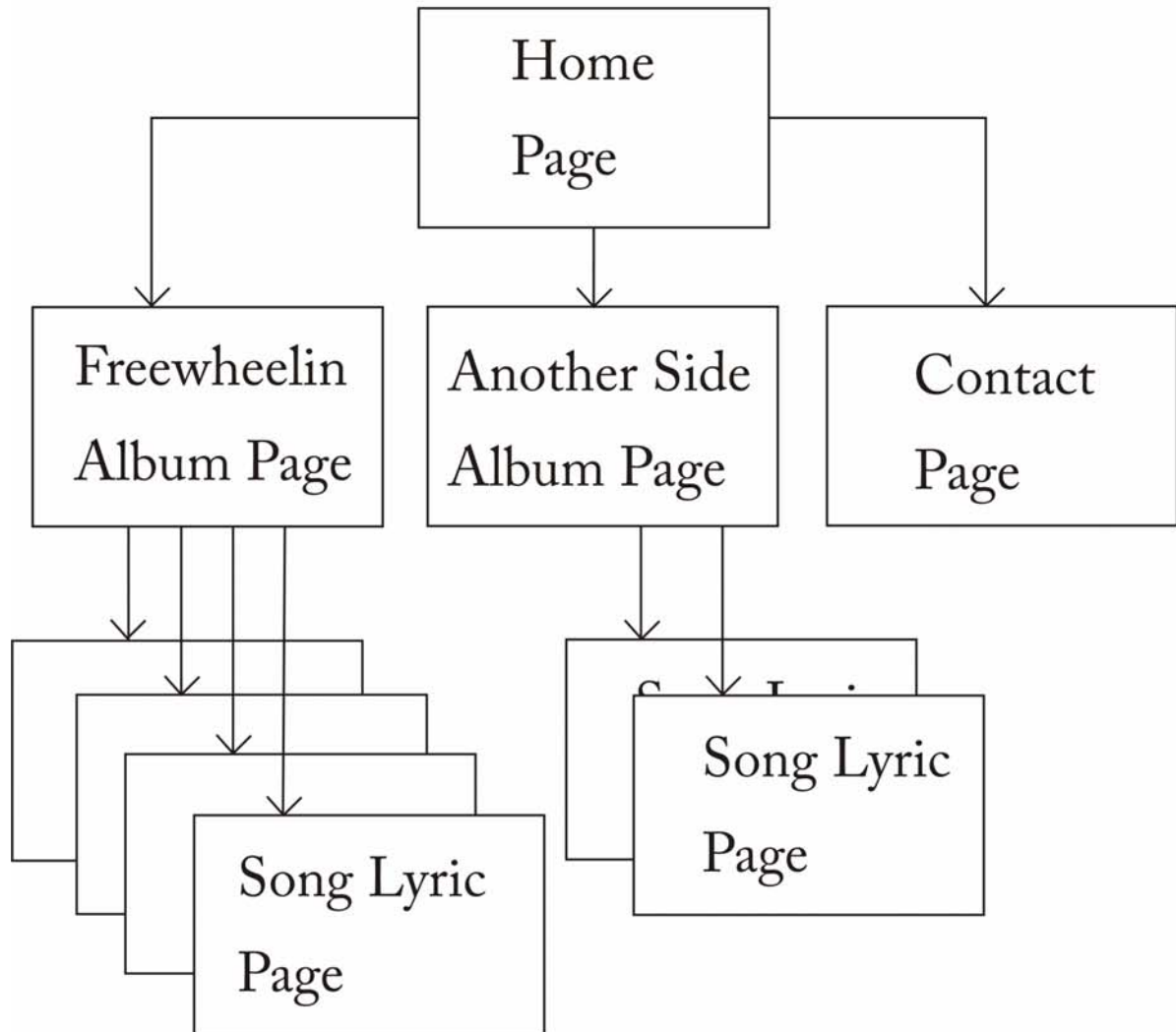
8. Aged polaroid and aged polaroid with tape

[www.flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com)





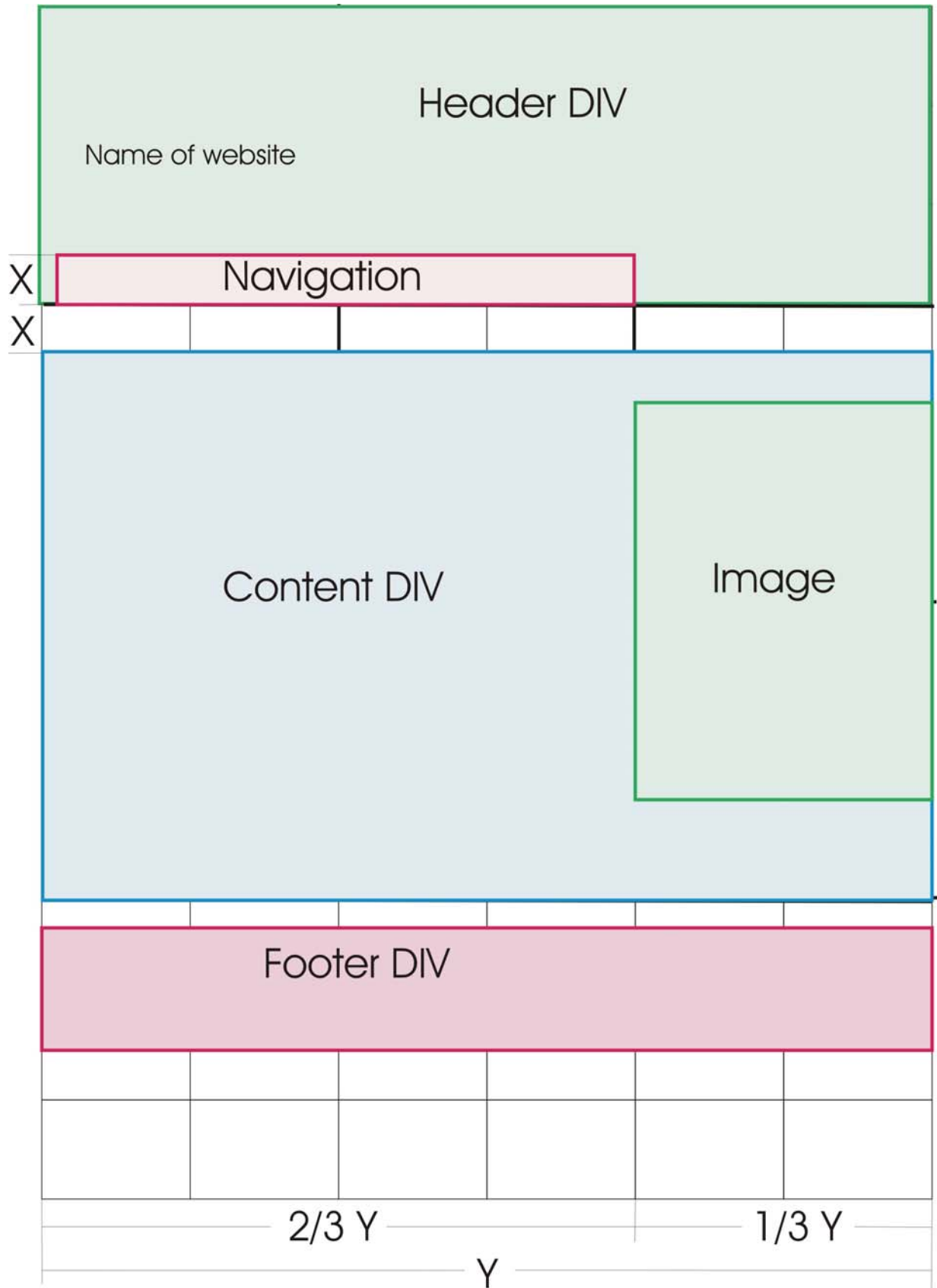
# Site Structure Diagram - Bob Dylan Fan Site



Martin Francis

90944425

March 09



Martin Francis  
 90944425  
 March 09