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Internet Marketing
FOR ARCHITECTS

INTERNET MARKETING FOR ARCHITECTS TRAINING COURSE 2014 LEVEL 1, PART B

On-Page Optimization—Content Development, Site Navigation

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LEVEL 1 - PART B

Hey, welcome everyone to the Internet Marketing for Architects lesson. Today is February 5th, 2014. This is Eric Bobrow in San Rafael, California and my co-host, Enoch Sears.

ENOCH: Yep this is Enoch Sears, Business of Architecture. Glad to see everyone on the call again.

ERIC: Okay, so we'll get started. Enoch will be monitoring the chat window for your questions and feedback. And I'll be going back and forth a little bit with him but be presenting a lesson on on-page optimization. Before we get started, let's make sure that everyone can hear us. So please type into the questions box and let us know that you can hear us and if there are any problems with the audio—echo or sound levels—let us know. Tell us where you're calling in from as well. It's always nice to have that. I see Larry Folk, Cathi Colla, Ed Ozols, Peter Schneider, and Michael from Bainbridge. So what is it, up in Washington? [0:01:12]

ENOCH: Yep. And Rachel and Spencer are on the line. We've got about 20 people on right now at the moment. So it's good to see everyone on the call.

ERIC: So Michael says, "I'm not at the Seahawks parade." Yeah, I know! There must be a lot of excitement in Seattle for the Super Bowl winners.

So, okay, before we get started on the actual content of the lesson, I just want to make sure that you're all aware of and have joined the Architects Mastermind group on LinkedIn. This will be a place where I

expect we'll have lively discussions, at least that's my intention, and it's up to you to join in to those discussions—contribute to them, in fact, start discussions. I started out with just a little quick comment here and we've gotten a few responses; including one saying, "Am I missing the topic? What were you asking?" so I clarified that and we got several replies back here. [0:02:17]

If you're not really familiar with LinkedIn and the whole format of groups, let us know and we can give you some guidance. But the basic idea is that you can join LinkedIn for free if you go to LinkedIn.com. If you're not a member then you can just follow the steps to join it. Once you do that you should be able to go and search for groups. Since I'm already a member of many groups, if I go to 'Interest', 'Groups' I'm going to see the ones that I'm involved in. I actually use the feature here that says 'Create a Group', and you can actually create any group you want. I know Enoch has created one or two of them. I'm sure there's some way to search for groups you may be interested in. There must be some way to search for groups. Enoch, do you...

ENOCH: Right there at the top. If you're on the group window right up there in the search bar, it's at the very top in the middle. [0:03:03]

ERIC: Ah! So...

ENOCH: You can search for any group you want. Right there.

ERIC: So you can do that. I've sent a link to this group there. If you're not already a member you can go to that link it'll say, "This is a closed group. Do you want to join it?" And go ahead and say, "Yes I'd like to join." Since I've pre-approved everyone, you should be able to get in right away. If you're logged in under a different email address than what I put in—perhaps you paid for the course or you work with us with "info@yourcompany" but you're logged in as "John@yourcompany" then it may not connect directly and I'll have to give you permission.

Once you're in the group and you're able to see this, under the discussions you'll see a brief summary and maybe some recent comments. You can actually say that you'd like to create a new discussion simply by clicking here. You type in a title, something that will tell people what the basic idea is, and then add more details and type that in and share it. And so it really is an open forum. [0:04:08]

What I would also suggest is, particularly for our group since it is a Mastermind and therefore I want to have lively discussion and not just a resource. That you go under 'Manage', this is where I'm a manager. And there is information here. 'Information and Settings'. So the letter "I" here, you'll see that there's an option for your particular role in the group. So I'm obviously the manager of this group. But under 'Your Settings', you'll see an option here for specifying what email it will go to. So, in fact, you could segment emails from this group to a particular inbox. [0:04:53]

So some of you who are sophisticated with multiple email addresses and you may want to send messages from this group to a special destination, I would suggest that you say, “Send me an email for each new discussion”. That way whenever something starts you’ll get an email that there’s something been posted by one of our colleagues. And then you can also have a “Digest of all activity in this group.” The maximum that they allow you to choose is 'Daily'. I would suggest for this type of group, we’re not going to have a whole lot of discussions, but if you get it daily, you’ll at least know what’s going on and what the comments are. And, just basically check all of these things here. [0:05:33]

So this will allow you to stay in touch more actively with the group. I will be seeding, putting in some questions, initially, to ask you. For example, I’m thinking, “What are your burning marketing questions? What are the things that you really want to know about that are a top priority?” And there’ll be some other questions that I’ll put in. Maybe Enoch will contribute as well. But ultimately, over time, it really should become more even balanced where more of you are putting in questions and maybe information; maybe you post something about something that you learned that you want to share with the group. This will be a way to build our community. And, in fact, I expect to learn from you as well, perhaps, as much as you’re learning from me over time because I think that we’re all on this journey together. [0:06:22]

Enoch, do you have any comments on that?

ENOCH: No, no. Just, LinkedIn is a great resource. And once again, like Eric said, the importance of being able to go in there and receive the updates is what’s going to make it be more engaging. And once again, just to point out, this is a closed group so the conversations in the group are limited to the people who are members of the 'Architects Marketing Mastermind'. In other words, it’s not going to be found in search engines and so we can feel free to ask questions that you might not normally want to be out there floating around the internet because it is a confidential group. And so, we also ask that any information that’s shared in the group, that you respect other members of the group and don’t share anything or pass it around without their permission.

ERIC: Good advice.

ENOCH: As I’m sure you all would do. So...

ERIC: And ultimately just if it’s not already clear, the idea here is that we can share information and help each other. The whole idea of a Mastermind is to have a common purpose or focus. Obviously, in this case, helping our design businesses, or our businesses in general, grow and all of us are focused in architecture and building design and helping each other. Help your colleagues. In return you’re going to find this an amazing resource to get help, guidance, suggestions, and actually practical tips for what to do. So... [0:07:48]

ENOCH: Share what's working for you. If there's something that's working that you're seeing in your local area, share that to the group and that's just going to add to the momentum.

ERIC: Yeah. And it doesn't have to be online. Obviously this course, Internet Marketing for Architects, is internet focused. But really the Mastermind, I think, can be broader than that. And in general I'm actually expanding my focus, personally, to understanding more of off-line marketing; things like live networking referrals, even sending good old fashioned paper mail or postcards. These are all things that certainly have their place in the larger scheme of how you become more visible and bring in more design work. [0:08:35]

So let's look at the topic of discussion today, on-page optimization. I'm bringing up the page from the 2012 course. I went through my lecture on that and felt like, generally, it's still pretty sound. But there are some things I need to update, that I need to make a little bit clearer. And one of the things that I did in the lesson back a year-and-a-half ago was I presented about half of it and then opened it up for questions and we had about half an hour of questions. And then we did another half and I got feedback from people saying that it, let's say, disrupted the flow so after that I changed it. [0:09:16]

So we'll—basically I'm going to present for about an hour on these topics. Certainly feel free to put in your questions and Enoch may interrupt me if it's important for clarification. Certainly I don't want to keep going if there's something that's confusing. But in that earlier run-through, the questions went off into other areas and I think that was not as productive as it could have been, but they were interesting questions and I think, overall, there was good content. [0:09:48]

So let's look at the agenda here. We're going to be looking at how you develop content for your website, or materials that you place on your website, that are focused on keywords; which is sort of a general term for what people search for on the internet—when you type in some words into a search engine, those are typically called 'keywords'. And, how do you develop content that also satisfies the needs of the visitor; people who are looking, researching, and come to your website?

We'll talk about the navigation of your website. How to structure that and plan it so that you end up having a website that people feel comfortable exploring and, in fact, spend time exploring, and that's accessible to a wide range of people as well as devices. In other words, when people navigate on a tablet or, potentially, even on a phone, because that's happening more and more. [0:10:40]

We'll talk a little bit about visual appeal and eye-candy, but I'm going to reserve that for a later lesson that will focus on sort of the broader topic of visual things to add to your website, including video, and slideshows, and other things that make it look more jazzy or just have movement and visual appeal. [0:11:01]

So, we'll get started with content development here. I'm going to be sort of going through the lesson talking from the outline here. But, I'm also going to be flipping over to various websites and illustrating the points on those websites as well as some other materials.

So the first thing is just to talk about the general concept. Search engine optimization, or SEO, is—let's say the idea here is setting up your website in a way that search engines will rank you for searches. You want to be found. One of the primary ways to be found is through search engines. So when people type in the word "architect" or "home design" or "home remodel" or any other search term, how can you be found when you're one of the relevant choices? In fact, you would prefer to be the best choice, or the first choice on that page. [0:11:58]

But what you do on that website to make that happen sometimes can be construed or, if it's approached in the wrong way, could conflict with the visitor experience. So how do you make sure that when someone comes that they see something that looks good, that gives them information, that they understand where to go—in other words, it's not confusing—how do you do that?

So a question I've already talked about in the main webinar, in the main Marketing for Architects, is do you approach your website as a design project or a marketing project? As a design project you want it to look nice. You want your colleagues and your own personal esthetics to be pleased. You know, say, "Wow, this looks the way I wanted it. It's really finely crafted." And that's fine, but you also need to make sure that you are focusing on it as a marketing project. How can you make it effective for the intended aim? Which is not to impress people, it's to get work. You want to do both, ultimately. You want to achieve all of those aims: make it beautiful and effective. [0:13:06]

So if you think about a building, any type of building project, you are synthesizing and reconciling potentially conflicting program requirements, building code, budget requirements, somebody wants something beautiful but less expensive, or they want to have a certain amount of space but there are limitations with building code for setbacks or usage, things like that. And obviously, one of the things that you develop a skill at over time, more and more, is how can you reconcile that? How can you find the best compromise, the elegant solution? And that's what we want to think about with a website: an elegant solution to design and marketing at the same time. So if you think about it that way I think you'll have a good basis. [0:13:54]

Enoch, do you have any comments on that?

ENOCH: Sure. You know, just really quickly I wanted to just mention that sometimes when we're looking at a website—just to reinforce what you're saying, today is all about on-page optimization. Today is about what happens on your website. How you structure it? What kind of stuff do you talk

about to make it both able to be found by people who are searching and then also engaging once people are on the site, and also to be understood by search engines?

Just to give you a little example of something I found, Eric, is that with creative people, architects in particular who have a very keen esthetic sense, we generally like—there's been a big fad, I don't know if it's a fad but just a design movement in terms of websites that are boxes and they don't scroll. So I'm sure there are people on the call that have those kinds of websites. I've made them in the past myself. And they're beautiful, they're lovely because we all like to navigate and do everything right there on the page without having to scroll. But unfortunately that's a good example of a website layout that looks esthetically very nice and it's very beautiful but then it doesn't work well from a marketing standpoint. And there are a number of reasons why that kind of layout just does not work for SEO and for getting found online. [0:15:12]

ERIC: Right. So we'll look at that and, of course, be studying during the course different alternatives that can, let's say, satisfy your esthetic eye as well as the marketing gauge of effectiveness. Do people actually contact you after visiting the website? And, do they find you?

Alright, so let's see. In terms of search engine optimization—so basically Google is what we often just sort of refer to, "Google it." Google has about two thirds of the search volume on the internet; the other third being divided by Bing and Yahoo and some minor ones. All of these search engines basically look at your website, at the underlying code behind the website and they discard some of the things that really are—we might see such as the actual visual images. They really can't understand the graphics. They don't know if it's a beautiful picture or not. They look at the text that describes the image. They look at the text that describes the page. And, in order for the search engines to do their job, and if you think about it their job is to direct people to relevant websites. [0:16:30]

If you're doing some research, you want to find websites that give you information that is relevant to your particular quest. So having text on the page that describes what you do or what services you offer or what you're talking about on that page will communicate that. If you want to be found as an architect, then the word "architect" should be on your page. Now this may seem trivial or stupid like, who wouldn't put that on? But I've seen websites where the word "architect" isn't even on there.

Let me just see about this one. This is one of our clients, Hart Wright Architects. Go to the homepage here. Alright, so this is a home page. These are words: "Blog," "About," "Approach," "Proof." Hart Wright Architects—this is a graphic. When I press down on it and I move it, this is a picture. So the word "Architects" is not on this page. Now, of course their website says "Hart Wright Architects" so there's at least some basic information. And their title up in the top here, you see it says "Modern Residential Architecture San Francisco Bay Area." [0:17:43]

So they've done a couple of things here. Perhaps there's some underlying back code that says they're an architecture firm and something about them, but there's no text here. And this does not scroll. There's nothing below here. Now they have some beautiful images and we'll talk more about some of the things that they're not doing as well as some of the things that they did do correctly. They do have a blog and they have a lot of content on that. But that's an example where this looks nice, but from a search engine's perspective, there's not a whole lot going for it that says, "They do architecture."
[0:18:13]

Now, ideally each page should have 200 words or more; 300 to 500 is ideal. This isn't a hard-and-fast rule, but basically there's a consensus among experts and people who do this type of work on the internet that when you have at least that much content on a page that Google will say, "You know, there's information there. This is useful. People will spend a little time reading it. There's no top end of the information." In other words, you can have a very lengthy page with a whole story, but this seems to be, at least, a good amount to shoot for. And I'll show you a little later some examples of pages so you can gauge what 300 words looks like on a page. [0:19:04]

Now when we're looking at the homepage, it has a large job. It's basically representing your entire firm. So it should, to some extent, describe the firm and what you do in a way that Google understands it as well as, of course, your visitors. When you're going to individual pages they can each have somewhat different keywords, or targets, or focus. So that means that a page that's talking about remodels—even maybe you do remodels and new construction, or new design—that should talk about remodels. So it should be focused on that and, in fact, if you do your job right, some of these interior pages will start to rank in Google for particular searches. For example, for me, if someone's searching for ArchiCAD tutorials, they will find linked in the Google results 'Bobrow.com/ArchiCAD-tutorials'. In other words, there's a page within my site that has that title and talks about tutorials and actually shares some useful information. [0:20:05]

So, instead of someone going to the home page, they're going to a page that is relevant to that search. So if someone's searching for a remodel, let's say a kitchen remodel in Cambridge, Massachusetts, they're in Cambridge and Google says, "Well, let's find a page from a firm that's in that area and does kitchen remodels," than having a page that talks about kitchen remodels. That will help. So, in fact, here you see, "This home remodel in Cambridge updated the bathroom." So you'll see that instead of referring to your pages—the portfolio pages—only by the client name, you know, "Smith Residence" or perhaps the street, "Oriole Drive Remodel" no one's going to search for "Oriole Drive" but they might search for "remodel in Cambridge." And if Oriole was a street in Cambridge, Google wouldn't necessarily know that that was relevant. But by putting in the text something that describes the area as well as what this is, like "home remodel" and "bathroom," these words here just very simply included can help Google understand that this page is relevant. [0:21:14]

If you do these things intelligently and you have many pages on the site that have different things Google will start to understand and say, "Oh there's a whole bunch of pages that all talk about home remodels. This website actually would be a great place to send people who are looking for a remodel." So the idea is you want to not so much try to make every page amazing - I mean that would be great - but just make many pages with the basics and you'll be far ahead of many other firms that just have a picture of a project and then the name and maybe a sentence saying the basics of what was done.

So you can build this up gradually. It doesn't have to be done all at once. And, in fact, that's a good idea because if you were to have your entire site redone and have, let's say 20 pages all beautifully done and then you did nothing for the next few months or year, Google would not respect that as much as a site that had 10 or 15 pages and then had a new page added once a week over the next couple of months. You ended up with more pages and, perhaps, other things were your updating pages. [0:22:26]

You're going through and saying, "Well, I don't have time to put all of this together now, but let me just put in an hour a week to going through and adding some more material, more descriptions to two pages." You know, and that could take you half an hour or an hour of your time. So these sorts of things Google will recognize and say, "Ah, this website continually got some new information." And that's part of their job is to help people find the new stuff on the internet, not just things that have been there for a while.

Enoch, do you have any comments on search engine optimization? [0:23:00]

ENOCH: Yeah, you bet. Thanks for turning it back over to me. You know, could you make the text a little bit bigger? It's kind of small and my old eyes are struggling there, if you could make it a little bigger.

But one thing that you mentioned, and what a great way to sum it up, I think you did an excellent job, Eric. I just wanted to add to what you said regarding the home page has the biggest job. I think there are two takeaways from this that I get. If you want to go out there and you want to implement something today, Google sees your homepage, just your root domain as we might call it. So, in other words, for me, it would be EnochSears.com. That is the primary page on your site, the most important, and so it weighs that page more heavily when it tries to figure out what your site is about. [0:23:44]

So that's something to keep in mind if you're going after a particular market segment. Especially if you're doing residential work and you want to add those words on there about "home design," "architect," make sure that information is there on that home page along with, also, the geographic location. So when you're thinking about doing your projects and your portfolio, your write-ups. Also when you write, just think about a little trick that I used is think about someone, what they might be searching, and see if there's a way to work that into your project description. [0:24:16]

So, for instance, if you did a kitchen remodel or something, normally you might say, "This is a 1,000 square foot kitchen remodel we did that included the living room." And, "These are some Corian countertops that we picked out and we got these cabinets from Ikea or the local cabinet shop." But what you want to do is you want to think, okay, what are they searching for? So I would start it out by saying that this is a local kitchen remodel that we did in Snohomish, Washington, because I see that Joel's on here. So you might say that, as a local architect, I did this kitchen remodel for Snohomish and that right there hits all the bases. It hits the fact that you're an architect or designer, if the case may be that, it hits the fact of your geographic location, and also the kind of project you did. [0:25:03]

So that's one thing that you can go back to your existing site and say, does my homepage have enough text on it for Google to be able to say, okay, if this is the most important site and this is what this person does? And then also under the product and description—portfolio pages, do they have the phrases that people might be searching for that you want them to find you for?

ERIC: Okay. Well thank you, Enoch. So, I want to just actually bring up Sarco. So what I've shown this in previous presentations for—I'll just zoom in a little bit more here—for the Internet Marketing for Architects course and I'll just go back over this. This is the home page and so on the homepage—I've zoomed it up, maybe I'll just put it back to the normal size—this is what someone might see when they come. And they're seeing beautiful pictures and they're seeing a little bit of information at the top. And, in fact, this tells the main story—who they are, but you scroll down further and you learn some more. And, in fact, this is a really nicely laid out site because it's in bands, segments that talk about a particular area. And if you sort of scroll down you see some more information. Then you scroll down a little bit more and it's actually broken up nicely into different segments. So it doesn't look cluttered, it just sort of takes its time. [0:26:28]

It's sort of like taking your time to make a presentation; you go over certain things, you have an introduction, and then you talk about something, and then you talk about the next thing. So think about it that way, that it all doesn't have to be crammed into one little space. You can take your time and lay it out in an elegant way and talk about all of these different things. And notice that they have things about green architecture and the fact that they work with foreign clients and design-build. And down here they have areas. This is an interesting way to reference these areas. You don't have to do this and give the names of cities or towns that you're working on, but it can be helpful from the perspective of the search engines and reassuring people who are looking saying, "Yeah, I'm going to be building close to Tamarindo and yeah, this firm has done work in that location. [0:27:22]

So let's go back to the content here for the visitor experience. So if you think about this, what a visitor will see, try to put yourself in their eyes—their shoes—rather than the eyes of yourself as a professional. What are they looking for? They certainly would like to see pictures of your work but they would like

more information in most cases. What questions, problems, issues, or goals do they have? What's in it for me? You want to tell them that I'll help them, not just that you're great and not just to tell them about yourself.

Now, how can you help them actually, literally when they're coming, answer some of their questions? So think about the concept of frequently asked questions. This is a term widely used in the internet; FAQ are the initials often used for that. I'm sure if you think back over your months, or years, or decades of experience, there are some questions that people come to you and they ask, either early on in the process or at some point during the process that you know the answer to; you know it far better than them, obviously, they're asking questions. And how can you include that information in your website? [0:28:47]

Maybe it's about zoning regulations. Maybe it's about the process of getting approvals. Maybe it's about figuring out budgets. Maybe it's just simply how long do things take. Someone would say, "Well, if we start now, when would we actually have the building ready and we could move it?" You can say that well, it takes so much for this thing and so much for that and so much for approvals and stuff, and that can be a great blog post. That can be a great page that isn't so much selling you but is answering a question. And when you answer people's questions then they're going to appreciate that and ultimately that will build up your authority as well as the sense of goodwill. "Hmm, I like these people. They make everything so clear." [0:29:35]

Now, there are also questions that you could say that people don't necessarily ask but they should. Maybe—Enoch, can you suggest some things that maybe people don't always think of when they're starting the project but they should be asking their architect or they should be asking themselves?

ENOCH: Yeah, sure. What are the line items for? We use those when residential contracts and when the other contracts are done, there are always unknowns in the contract documents. A lot of times there will just be a line item in there the contractor will put in there in terms of "will budget 'x' number of dollars for lighting fixtures." So, that will be something that when someone goes into that process they might not have an understanding whereas designers/architects, we know what that means. We know how owners can get the shaft because quite honestly if the contractor puts a number in there but it's not realistic they're going to end up with cheaper fixtures or there might be a change order in the future to upgrade to more expensive product. So, the list goes on and on, really. [0:30:39]

And I think you did a good job here of sort of outlining, you know, "I need more content on my website." Eric has just brainstormed here for some really great ideas for things to start to get some content on there.

ERIC: So while the search engines may not find every page relevant in terms of search—in other words, they may not ever rank the page that talks about how long does it take to build the project, but undoubtedly someone who’s visiting and who gets intrigued with the fact that you have a page saying how long does it take and they go, “Oh, I’ve never seen this on an architect’s website. Yeah, I want to know how long it takes.” So you’re then developing the content that the visitors will become more engaged with. Perhaps you have space for comments or questions directly under that page and you have a discussion going. I’ve seen this on many sites where information-rich posts elicit discussion and questions and ultimately this builds your authority as well as what is called social proof because people will see that other people have been there, that intelligent questions are being asked and answered. [0:31:50]

So, another thing that you will want to think about in terms of putting content and this is really a core part of your thought processes in terms of marketing your firm: what are you really good at? What are the things that you love to do that you know that you do better than many other people? You don’t have to say that you’re the best in the world, or even necessarily that you’re best in town but that you’re really good at and that you’re proud of. So that’s one core part of it. What are the things that maybe you do that other people don’t do? Or, at least that some people don’t do so that they might compare? Maybe you’re comparing it to other comparable firms. Maybe you’re comparing it to the lower priced alternatives like just getting your drafting done by the contractor sort of thing. What are the things that essentially would motivate someone to say, “I really want to work with this firm because they do this.”? [0:32:50]

So Enoch, do you want to step in here? I didn’t ask you ahead of time to think about it but maybe you can suggest something to think about for that value proposition.

ENOCH: Oh, of course! I love that because this is usually where we start when we think about marketing. And not just about marketing, but about getting a premium for our services and making a good living while we’re doing what we love. I’d just like to throw it back out there to the audience and say how many out there in the audience—and we’ll continue the presentation and come back to this later to look at some of the answers—but how many out there feel that they have gone through the process of developing a very strong, unique value proposition or your differentiator? What is the one thing that sets you apart and makes you different from your competitors? [0:33:36]

If you just put in here whether you’ve gone through that process if you have that early focus and tell us what it is and what is your USP, I’d be interested to know that. And for those of you that don’t have one, it could be along the lines of we’re not the cheapest architect around but we deliver high-quality design in terms of durable finishes and stuff that will stand the test of kids. Or maybe your USP is that

you specialize in design for, let's say, all ages. So, as someone gets older that their house is still going to be usable for them.

So those would be a couple things that are very specific examples of something that could differentiate you from the guy next door. And, of course you're not going to appeal to everyone so your USP should honestly—it should turn away some people. And if it doesn't turn away some clients then you know that you need to focus it in a little tighter. [0:34:34]

ERIC: By the way, Enoch has been using the abbreviation or the acronym USP. Often this is “Unique Selling Proposition” or what would be the other—“S”? Is there another? Anyway, it basically is: how do you sell yourself? You can also think about it a little bit in terms of that elevator speech. Now I think that this is a term that's not widely focused on in architecture and people are not told, “Oh, you should really practice what—if you have 30 seconds to tell people what you do, what would you say?” For an architect it would be, “Well, I'm an architect. I design and focus on homes.” And that maybe what you think of as an elevator speech or the short introduction, “Hi. I'm John Smith. Yeah, I'm an architect.” That does tell them something about what you do but not anything that would differentiate you. [0:35:30]

So you want something—if my architecture firm focuses on residential design for people who want to have a home that they can live in through their own age because we focus on clever ways to build in support for the aging process. That's a little awkward there but if that's what you said and the right people saw that they go, “You know what? That's perfect! We're 58 and my wife is 55 and we want to be here for the next 20 years and probably sometime during the next 20 years we're going to need a ramp or we're going to need some handrails on things, and things like that.” [0:36:15]

So let's move on here. So ideas for additional content beyond who you are and samples of your projects. So why do you do this? What's your philosophy? Is it that you do it for the love of creativity? Is it that you love certain types of people and what they need and how you serve them? Have you developed a whole approach that you feel just really hones in on what people need? Or, is it the sense of delight and creativity? That you bring in so much light into a building? It could be any variety of things that you treasure that you just feel like are part of your DNA. [0:36:58]

You can also talk about interesting topics whether its trends in certain types of areas like bathrooms or kitchens, or building materials, sustainable design, code requirements. So someone may not know that the code requirements are changing for projects in that if they want to do something of a certain type they're going to have some advantages for doing it before a certain date or possibly after some new rules are in affect.

You can have information about things to avoid. People are often motivated by wanting to learn about mistakes, disasters, and problems so that they can avoid them. It's just a natural part of human nature. And without trying to scare them, you want to say, "I'm your friend. I have some information here that's going to save you some headaches. That's going to save you a problem down the line because you don't want to go with that other alternative." Maybe I'll just—since most of you here are architects or building designers rather than contractors, I'll just put it in that sort of generic thing of you don't want to go with a contractor who will just draw something because of whatever it is because they won't be aware of this and you'll have certain problems. [0:38:10]

Enoch, do you want to say some examples in this area?

ENOCH: Yeah. You know there's probably—I think everyone on this call probably has great fodder for any of this material, you know. If we're talking about additional content, I know we've all had horror stories. We've all had success stories and the horror story can be anecdotal; it doesn't necessarily have to give out any confidential client information but we can just refer to things that happened in past projects. You know, maybe talk about the stresses that are placed upon a marriage or a relationship when a building project happens, and it can be something as coy or as witty, or maybe as nonprofessional as saying, "Four Key Mistakes to Avoid to Keep Your Marriage Intact during Your Home Design Project." So, sort of, you can work in these things whether they're interesting topics or common mistakes to use them as titles for your content. And then another thing that I know, Eric, you're going to talk about that we've both seen as very successful is to repurpose that content. Right? [0:39:13]

ERIC: Right. Yeah, I think that whatever you create can often be placed in multiple locations in the world. For example, you might have a post that talks about, let's say, things to watch out for during a project to keep your marriage intact, to minimize stress, and things like that. Well that could also be part of an email that you send out. You could potentially have a little video where you're talking about that that could be put up on a YouTube channel that you set up. So the same ideas could be shown in multiple different modalities: on a website, through email, through video. Perhaps as part of a report that's downloaded so that someone can click and say, "Yeah, I want information on this particular topic." And they download it and now it's something that they can print out. So, repurposing content can leverage your time. [0:40:15]

Now, one thing that I'll just mention here is that if the idea of creating a bunch of pages, a bunch of content, is scary or you just feel like, "I don't like writing! That's why I became an architect, because I like drawing and I like designing. I don't like writing," then there are ways to get that done for you. And as you know Enoch and I have the Architect Marketing Group as a services company and so that's something we're providing as a service. So keep that in mind that there are ways to get it done. We're

talking about what's good to have on your site. So whether you do it yourself or get it done the idea is try to make sure that it's worked into your strategy. [0:40:59]

And the other thing about this is that you don't have to do it all at once. You don't have to say that in the next month I'm going to have 10 new pages of content. You can create one article a month over the next six months; that would be six new pages. Maybe you could accelerate that a little bit if you could do two a month, then you'd actually make progress faster—or, one a week. But you, definitely, if you take it a little bit at a time and just keep going you'll make some good progress. [0:41:29]

So other things that we've talked about: why choose an architect, disasters to avoid, certain benefits that people are going to get in terms of smart design. You know, there's the classic thing of you could get this drawn up by the contractor or the firm that doesn't actually pay attention to your needs as deeply as we do but you'll end up with a project maybe that's bloated, that's bigger in scope than it needs to be. We can fine-tune it so that you can actually have multiple uses of certain rooms or certain areas of the project and therefore, perhaps, build less but get more. So that may be part of your value proposition, that you're really expert at getting the most out of a budget, or the most of what's allowed on a particular site. Things like that. [0:42:19]

So in terms of the content here, we'll see with Sarco that on their pages they've got "What Makes Us Better" so let's see what they say. So "Integrated Project Delivery Process" so they're talking about the fact that they do design-build, and they—"No solving problems on the site because of lack of knowledge or visualization" because they design and build and use BIM Technology that allows you to visualize it ahead of time. So, "3D virtual walkthroughs"—they're, of course, describing some of the things of how they approach it, as well as why among other firms in Costa Rica, one might choose them. [0:43:07]

If we look at, say, JHD Architects and we look at their site and we say "Our Approach" here is also an explanation of how they approach it with "passion, energy and design ethos." And here is their strategy of trying to make it very simple; if you just want to have a quick look then that's all you see. If you click on "read more," now it talks about green architecture and sustainable design; so some of the things that are their passions that they want to bring to the table. Or "Why Choose Us" is another page that is similar, obviously, trying to say what their benefits are, "We communicate well, giving peace of mind and are easy to work with." You know, "Teleconferencing and simple internet tools we use to hold virtual meetings give clients maximum flexibility." [0:43:56]

So you may find that there are some things that you take for granted but not everybody does as a firm. I'm using this routinely, of course, this GoToMeeting, GoToWebinar to share with you and you can see me and you can see the screen there. Do you do that and, if you don't, why not? You can get a GoToMeeting account for 50 dollars a month, or you could use Google Hangouts for free. And then once you're doing that you can say, "Here's one of the things that we do that other people maybe aren't

doing—the fact that you can actually show people things without them coming into the office. So think about the sales position you would take of “why choose us” and then put it down as part of the website. [0:44:42]

So I think I’m ready to move on to the next topic of site navigation and accessibility and planning out your site. Anything before I go on, Enoch?

ENOCH: Well, you know that was an important section there. I just wanted to reinforce that, of course, the USP has a lot to do with the messaging. When we’re talking about what the kind of images that the USP should translate into your market segment—whom you’re targeting. You’re going to tell a very different message if you’re targeting mid-forties professionals with young families versus people who are on the verge of retirement. I mean, those are very different categories of people. And if you can focus down that tightly on whom your group is then you’ll have a lot more success if you can message to them directly. [0:45:37]

So the way that might translate is, if you are targeting people who are entering the retirement age, you might include a lot of pictures of people of that generation doing the kind of activities that those people like to do. So when they visit the site it feels like home. They say, “Hey, this person’s like me. They’re talking to me, I understand it.” If you do, for instance, I know Peter does broadcast studios. I’m just going to use him as an example here. If you do broadcast studios I would image your website would speak to network executives, the kind of people—decision makers. What are they interested in? How old are they? What kinds of things do they like? And then just include that very subtly on your website and it gives your website a little bit of an edge over other websites that are a lot more generic and when those people arrive it’s going to speak to them. What do you think about that, Eric? [0:46:24]

ERIC: Yeah. That’s all good things to think about in terms of what’s on the site and how you want to present your—what do you want it to look like and feel like.

Now, moving from there into: How people navigate and what do they find when they get there? I’m going to talk about some tools that you can use and just basic ideas that you can use to make sure your site actually works as a whole. Think about the circulation path. Someone can come to your home page and then they might want to click on the “about” page. Then they’ll look at your portfolio pages to see projects. But think about where you’d like them to go, what you’d like to make it easy for them to find and plan that out. Now at the beginning with only a few pages it’s not a big deal, but if you want to have a rich site that will rank well then you will want to have more content and you will want to plan out how everything is linked together. [0:47:25]

Now a great tool that I use and Enoch uses for planning out websites is called Lucidchart; so, Lucidchart.com. You can get started for—I think there’s a free version that you can do diagrams up to a

certain number of elements and so you can do basic documents, just play around with it. And then for something very inexpensive, like five dollars a month, you can have a much broader range. And then I think they charge a grand total of 25 dollars a month if you want to have a team account where multiple people can all share projects here. But check it out—Lucidchart.com. It's very, very easy to learn to work with. In five minutes you can be up and running.

Now here is an example of a mind map done in Lucidchart. This is one type of a diagram that can be done. So you can see overall that there's a central thing that says "front page." It's probably a little small to read but you see that all of these little pieces that are connected. Let me zoom in on this. So, "zoom in"—I'll do command, let's see, click here. Okay, and I scroll a little bit and I'll just zoom in one more step here. [0:48:37]

Okay, so you can see that when one comes to the front page, someone might be saying, "Oh this looks sort of interesting but I'm not quite sure about this firm. I wonder how good they are." So then you're wanting to say what do you have that deals with trust and credibility and the special aspects of the firm. So here's maybe the idea of the page about the process. So someone can say, "Oh, I see. Okay they approached this process really in a way that makes sense. Maybe there's something, in this case, about this firm about the fact that they make real estimates that are—they guarantee or their track record is good so there's no surprises later on." Or there are some things about who, in the firm, is there and their particular credibility. So they're LEED accredited and things like that. [0:49:22]

Here we have—they might be interested in services. I wonder if this firm does commercial renovations. Okay, so there's some description of services here and that they do every aspect—by the way, when I zoomed in it sort of—the text is getting all sort of funny. Normally this would be a little bit easier to read. For—what we're talking about the keywords and the idea of being found for particular areas or services.

Now with Lucidchart you can actually sort of just press down and drag these things around. You notice when I drag this around it actually keeps it connected. And there are ways that you can even drag this line and you can say that you want to connect it from this end or the other end. So you can see how just by grabbing things you do this. You can actually put new elements in here and just drag it in. You know, "Most Common Questions," "How long does it take?" [0:50:21]

So there's a question and I can literally just drag this box to make it whatever size, press down on this and maybe I'll put it down in this area and make it a little bit smaller. Here, see. And then I can connect it with a line. I can basically go to the edge of one—whoops let's see, I think if I go to the edge. No, let's see. I'm trying to remember here. Yeah, you just...

ENOCH: You know, this is a great tool also for business planning, which we've used it before for that. There are a lot of great things you can use Lucidchart for.

ERIC: Let's see if I press down near here and make sure I touch it and then I let go. It's not—what is going on? Whoa, didn't want to do that. I've worked with this for a little while. Let's just get this—the third time's the charm when I connect it from here, make sure that it's on and let go. No. What isn't that connecting? There. [0:51:25]

ENOCH: I think it might be the kind of nodes you're connecting to. It's just the "Most Common Questions" and it might be thinking it's a child or something, that if you go that way it'll be fine.

ERIC: There we go! Okay. There's that. And I can also take this line and then I can say I don't—I want no arrowhead there. So, things like that. So it's nice that I can actually drag—I can sort of select multiple elements and drag them around. So you can see how just as a diagramming tool, once you get used to it, it becomes very simple. So this has to do with a mind map and you can use this for lots of different things. Let's look at something that's more specifically about laying out a page or a site.

So here's a simple diagram that we put together for a home page saying the top there might be a logo, a tagline that says "Contemporary Architects" or "The Best Firm in Town," something about contacting—contact information, and menus saying here are different parts of the site. Maybe there's a slideshow or slider up at the top and descriptive content. [0:52:32]

So this is basically a page layout. And then there are links. So basically, if someone clicks on the blog, maybe you have one or two blog posts, you know, articles, indicated when they click on it, it takes them to the blog section. Or, if there's some information about the team and when they click on it they go to the team page.

And here we have a little hierarchy of a category for projects, perhaps residential projects, and then several projects within that. Here is maybe commercial or landscape or some other types of projects—historic. So this is just a way of thinking about how the homepage and the other site pages connect to each other. And so it's pretty quick to draw this out. It can be the subject of discussion between yourself and a web designer. Perhaps you can ask a web designer to do this for you before they actually work on your site. [0:53:32]

Now if we look at an example where we go a lot further, here we have one that Enoch did for one of our clients, Sherri Weaver. And this is a miniature, or actually it's just zoomed out a lot. Let me just go to "zoom to width" and you'll see that here this is the full width of the page and you can actually see that it looks like the website.

ENOCH: It does.

ERIC: Now when I click on this...

ENOCH: Can you hear me, Eric?

ERIC: Yeah.

ENOCH: I'm saying Rachel Burton; if she's on the line she'll recognize the placeholder images in that beautiful slideshow up there.

ERIC: Ah! Okay, so you borrowed it from Rachel. Alright.

ENOCH: Yeah, the slideshow images I did. Yeah.

ERIC: Yeah. Okay. So you can see that these are little pictures and, in this case, this is text that's being put in as placeholders. This is using the common placeholder called "Lorem Ipsum" where the text is sort of nonsense words, but it does look like text when you're looking at it on a larger page. And I think these are all sort of squishing together because I've zoomed up the magnification. If I zoom out a little bit, here, okay yeah, in fact, you can see now it's looking much more natural in terms of the text. [0:54:55]

ENOCH: You can also zoom in—I don't know if you're zooming in through the native Lucidchart zoom chart function. If you go up to "view," Eric, I use that to zoom in and it will keep all of the—should keep the text relative in terms of the size of it and that should make it easier for this presentation.

ERIC: Right.

ENOCH: There you go.

ERIC: So, you can see that this is a way of looking at the whole page, or, I mean parts of the page and planning it out. And if we zoom to the whole page you'll see that what Enoch had set up is a whole series of sections. So each section is used for a particular topic. You can see it broken up in some cases by colors; this can be very effective way to set up, particularly, a home page. You wouldn't necessarily use this for a project page or another interior page. But the home page often will be broken up into segments. The Sarco site would be a typical example of that. [0:55:53]

Now, Enoch also put together some ones for individual pages. So this would be a page for the formatting for the blog post. So, in other words, we're now looking at some text and a picture, some related articles here. And one of the things that I'll point out, this is an interesting area to spend a few minutes on. When someone is interested in one topic, let's say residential new homes or something like that, and they click to look at a new home project, it would be ideal if you can present to them, in some way, links to other related pages. Now why is that? [0:56:37]

Well, if they've already demonstrated by clicking and visiting on that page that they're interested, you're now making it easy for them to find related content. They will tend, if it's easy, to go explore another page and perhaps another one and another one and look at multiple pages. The more time that they spend on your site, the more connection you make with them; the more likely they will actually contact you. So if they just come and go less likely than if they look at three or four, or five or 10 pages on your site.

It also, Google does monitor people's actions. It doesn't pay attention to who they are, it just says how many visitors you have and how long they spend on your website and how many pages they visit. Why do they do that? Because they know if they send people to sites that are better, and people like better, that people will spend more time on them. [0:57:31]

So, conversely if people are spending more time on your site Google will say, "You know what? This is a better site to send people to than another site where they just come for 30 seconds and leave." So the more you can encourage by making it easy for people to find information that's relevant to their needs, the more benefit you get from them. And, it has a snowball effect that will make Google say, "Ah! Let's put this site in a better position."

So, anyway, this is about planning here. You will also see that, in terms of the side, there's a space that Enoch has designated for an offer. We've talked about this, the whole idea of providing information that people can opt-in and "request yours" for whatever this is, a report. You've all got the lead generator system as one of the bonuses of this year's membership in the Internet Marketing for Architects Course, so you'll be able to adapt the ones we've got or use them as an idea for your own. And here's some other links to videos. So, for example, when someone looking at a post about a particular topic they might find an interesting video on a related topic. [0:58:45]

So, how can you make things that people just stick on your site and look at? I'm sure we've all experienced that on news portals and other websites of general interest that they have "Related topics". So without going into too much detail, Enoch actually created some great dummy pages to plan out how project would show what the 'About' page would look for Sherri, here. And, let's say, this is the 'Contact' page, which will have a map.

So her site is in progress right now, so I don't want to bring it up because it's still being worked on. But you can see the type of layout that can be done. And if I just grab this, you can see that it's just text done with the Lucidchart elements. I'll just undo that, here. And, in some cases, of course, pictures placed to make it look real. [0:59:46]

Enoch, do you have any comments on the process of working out these wire frames?

ENOCH: No. I think it was probably good to show this just to know kind of what people do when they go through making a website. You know, if you remember the very first one that Eric pointed out, the one he showed, I just want to point out that that was really long. When he zoomed out you could see that it went down quite a ways. That's a format that we found to be very successful because we can add a lot of different content there, especially if we're on a WordPress website, being able to plug in different. So each one of those rows is what we would call a "widget" and you can modify those, add, take them away, depending on as the case may be, and it makes for a very flexible website that Google just eats up; it just loves it. [1:00:30]

ERIC: Okay.

ENOCH: And also the users. They also like scrolling down. It's like they're browsing a library. I mean, I love going to a library and going to, maybe, the business book section or the architecture section and just looking. You know, walking down the aisle and looking at the binders of the books. It's the same kind of idea with this kind of website, where clicking on something, there's a refresh; it's not quite as joyful of an experience. But if you're just able to scroll continuously and be entertained and find something that catches your interest, it's a format that has proven to be very successful.

ERIC: Absolutely. So, I have some specifics here that I just want to make sure I mention in terms of accessibility. If we look at something like the Hart Wright site, here, there are just individual pages. And even the 'Work' page here actually just goes to their remodel section where it's just—I guess this is just the image show. If we go to something like 'Kitchens', it's just a page there. [1:01:35]

Now, this is fine. It's a very elegant site and they have been getting some work from people saying, "Oh you do beautiful work here!" And they do have pages like the 'About' page that have quite a bit of material about the firm. And so there are some pages that have a lot of content. But I'm going to contrast that with, say, Sarco, where there are many pages in this dropdown menu, so it makes it easy to see things about the project portfolio. It makes it easy to see 'About Services' and all of these different pages. And we take it for granted that these dropdown menus are easy to figure out or very intuitive; we're all used to that. If we go to JHD, we also see the same sort of thing with the dropdown menus. It's built into WordPress and is quite easy to just add in. Any web designer can do it, or if you're working with WordPress yourself, you can do that. [1:02:32]

I'm going to point out something that relates to that topic that I said about related content. So if someone goes into listed buildings such as historic buildings and you say "view projects." Alright, let me check out this two story listed building extension. Okay, so we're now on a page where there's some information about this project and you notice they have the actual town location. So if someone was in that town or looking for something related to that town, it would be found. Now you'll notice that on the side here there are some other projects that are under "Extensions & Alterations". So that would be

like remodels and additions in the U.S.; that's just slightly different wording. And here's "Listed Buildings." [1:03:20]

So we're using, in terms of this WordPress site which I personally built for them, some simple plugins that actually will automatically pull up related content. So, in other words, this is related to both an extension—or addition, and it's also a listed building—historic building. And so here are some related projects. So if someone's coming here and they say, "Ah, well I do—this is a listed building. It's sort of like mine. Let me look at another listed building." So you click on that and now you're on another page that has another project that is historic or listed. [1:03:57]

So that's something that Google likes. It's actually a term that's come to be known as a silo—"siloed site." So silo like on a farm that stores a particular type of grain, you know, something like that. In this case what this has done in terms of Google's eyes is it says, "You know what? This firm has a lot of content related to listed buildings or historic buildings, and separately, they also have a lot of content related to extensions." Architectural building house extensions and things like that.

So instead of everything just sort of being a mishmash, Google can identify themes. And if you can build up a structure that tells Google when someone's looking for a home remodel in this area, this firm is definitely one of the ones you want to—that Google should send traffic to—because they have a lot of information about that. That's going to put you in a better position, as well as the fact that someone browsing the site will find a lot of content easy to locate. [1:05:07]

So actually let's go back to here. So contact info also is important to have. Ideally you don't want to have it just relegated to the contact page. I mean, it's not hard to click on the contact page if someone's ready, but in general it's considered good form to have contact information in the header or footer so that it's just easy for people to get to.

Now I'm on a desktop machine here—or actually a laptop, and so this is just plain text. If I was browsing this on a phone, usually phones are able to pick up the fact that there are digits in a certain format and I'd be able to click on that, just tap it, and it would call that number. And while that's not going to happen a whole lot, every little bit will help in terms of someone saying, "You know, let's just call these people," and bang, you've got someone inquiring. So make it easy to find. Why do I keep on hitting the wrong thing here? [1:06:12]

So, social media icons—oh, sites mobile-friendly and social media icons. So, what is that? What does that mean here? So if I go in here, if the browser window is squished what happens? You can see the text has been resized here and the images are now displayed in a slightly different fashion. And then if we made it narrower yet, like for a phone, you can see how it's reconfiguring. This is called responsive

web design and so it actually will be fairly readable on a small device as opposed to where they're seeing just a little piece of the page. The page is reconfiguring. [1:06:55]

You'll also see some social media contacts. They do have a LinkedIn page and this would be an email link. If we go to Sarco you can see that they've got a bunch of these that they've established. So generally if you can make that easy then people can check you out in multiple media. Now you may wonder if they're already on my website, why do I want to direct them—why do you want to direct them to my Facebook page or my Google+ page?

Well, if they aren't into Facebook or Google+ or LinkedIn then they'll probably ignore this. If they are, if Facebook is something that they do all the time, then out of curiosity they'll click on it. And you know what? If you're on the medium that they are used to, you can make more of a connection. If they're used to Facebook and you have a Facebook page that has some content that sort of regularly gets updated from your other activities, then there's more chance that you're going to be essentially in their line of sight, in the top of their mind. So I think that having these is nice to have. It's not essential but nice to have. [1:08:04]

Enoch, do you have any comments on that? I know you've written the book on social media for architects.

ENOCH: Ah well, you know. You know social media's just—it's just one of those things. It's just another way. Primarily, in terms of what we're talking about today, it's a way to promote your content. Google is getting more and more wise, and they're trying to figure out, how do we really tell what's on the site? How do we know if it's good quality? And, some of that are the things that we've been talking about like the on-page optimizations, using the right words in the right places. But more and more of that kind of using the right words is becoming less important in terms of the overall scheme of things, and social factors and other stuff like that's becoming a little bit more important. And I have a feeling that's the way the trend's going to go. [1:08:55]

So, any way you can build your network and encourage shares is going to be a good, long-term play. Everyone's getting online now. Everyone's getting involved in social media. And if they're not now, they will be within the next five years or so. And so those kinds of networks are being formed. And it's just about asserting yourself in part of the conversation, you know, making connections. And not just doing it to promote you; but just to meet people and connect with them.

I read a study a while ago that was pretty impressive talking about how we've set up barriers to advertising. A lot of times now we have—we used to have the TiVo. When that first came out I remember that was amazing when you could fast-forward all of the commercials and, of course, we now have DVR. So we're getting very good at ignoring promotional messages. [1:09:43]

But there is one thing that will go right to someone's smartphone. In other words, you can get right in their life, and that is Facebook posts or Twitter. You know if they have it on their smartphone. Email's another great way. So that's why some of these messaging platforms are going to be so powerful now and going forward because they're not totally shutdown yet in terms of you can still reach people and connect with people on those mediums.

ERIC: Right. Good points there. I think that the point is that you don't have to do everything but doing a little bit in different areas will be helpful and there are clever ways. And one of the things that we're going to be adding to the course, that Enoch will be contributing to later on, is about the social media side and about making it simple to do. Because the idea, you may say, "I barely have enough time to even think about adding an article to my website and then if I have to maintain something separate like a Facebook page, oh that's too much!" [1:10:43]

Well, obviously there are some things you can outsource; you can have someone else do. But there are automated tools where you post something on your website and it can go to a Facebook page. It can go to a Google+ page. There can be a Tweet sent out without any extra effort or very little extra effort. So you essentially can say, "Yeah, send this out to here." Check this, check that, check that, and you've already set it up so they essentially get linked out. So Enoch will show some of the ways to essentially leverage your efforts on multiple locations.

So we're running about an hour and a quarter so I want to just finish up some of the accessibility things quickly and then sort of say where we're going from beyond here. I can see that there are a few comments and questions which we can address. I've already gone over sidebars just for navigation. So that was some of the related posts like related buildings on the JHD site. Or supporting content such as you can put testimonials there and each page can have a different testimonial. Or you can use—there's a plugin that we—I like to use, on sites, that will rotate through testimonials. [1:11:58]

So if you pick up five or 10 different quotes from clients, you can just put in a sentence or two in this thing and it will just sort of rotate every 10 seconds or however long you want. So you can put in all sorts of things in the sidebars. The whole idea of a sidebar is that once you set it up, it can show up on multiple pages. So the same information that you want people to just easily have in hand can be there whether it's maybe a contact form, or an announcement of things, or an offer.

Now, some older sites were set up—if you have a site that's more than three or four years old, you may have followed the conventions from four or five years ago where a site was maybe 800 pixels wide, or even 640 pixels wide because the old screens were—people were saying that they can't make it any wider than this because people won't be able to see the site. Of course we have a lot higher density—definition screens—bigger screens in general so it's not as necessary to squeeze it into a tiny size. [1:13:01]

The common size right now would be, say, in the thousand pixel range which is what this particular site is right here. This is a thousand pixels across. Now, I've blown it up a little bit for here. If I go to the normal size it's this. But normally I wouldn't even have this particular web—my browser filling the whole screen. In fact, I'm sure you do this yourself, you just have the browser taking up part of your screen and you just have your email or other things sticking out there. So I'll just zoom back in here. So that's just a general guideline.

And part of what that also informs you to do is if you're putting up photos, what resolution should they be? We've had issues with clients putting up their own photos. It is good for you to add your own photos once you have a site set up, but I've had people take their digital camera photos which are 3,000 or 4,000 pixels across and just sort of upload them and they might be two megabytes or five megabytes per image and say, "Why is my site loading slowly?" And the answer is that it's taking this big thing and it's displaying it in this size. Well, why not set up your image to be a thousand pixels across or something in that neighborhood? Because then it's a much smaller file to transport. [1:14:23]

So using columns to break up content also makes it more readable. I think if we look at—we'll, let's actually look at Sarco. You can see that we have the sidebar and this. If we go to the homepage you'll see that they have a number of columns, in some cases. So this really isn't technically a sidebar, it's sort of breaking it up. Here we have four columns and we're all used to that in terms of newspapers and magazines. There's a reason for it. It's just harder to read large blocks of text that go all the way across. So, if you're going to have extensive text, breaking it up into two columns or possibly more is helpful for that. [1:15:11]

And finally, I've already talked about this quite a bit in the introductory lecture, avoiding Flash technology. So the tool called Flash is not mobile friendly and in general is sort of falling out of favor. Use other tools like JavaScript. Now, you don't have to pay attention to this, but if you're talking to a web developer if you're having someone do this for you then you may want to just double check. Say, "I don't want a Flash site. I want something using JavaScript." Any web developer will know what you mean and will make sure that your site is able to be accessed on mobile devices because now, literally, about 50% of the web traffic is done on tablets and phones. That's quite amazing. [1:15:55]

So just to summarize before we take some of the questions, you want to develop your site in a way that works for search engines so that you have a good chance of ranking and being found and also, of course, works for people who visit. What information will help visitors with questions and educate them? This will position you in a way that will increase the likelihood that they're going to return to you, that they're going to actually contact you. You want to be in a position where they trust you because you provide information and not just who you are.

Make it easy to find things on your site. Plan out your site or have your web designer actually come up with a plan and not just sort of “We’ll do five pages. It’s going to be your homepage, your about page, your contact page...” You know, if it is only five pages you don’t need a big plan. But really to have a successful website you should have more content than that. Or at least just a structure that allows you to add more and more content easily. [1:16:57]

So Enoch, do you have any things—part of this closing summary before we take some questions?

Uh, you’re muted.

ENOCH: Thanks. I like to turn my microphone down in between. Okay, so no. I thought it was a very well laid out presentation, Eric. You know, we talk about these things every day. And just adding, it’s going to be fun as people try to implement these things and also use that form on LinkedIn to ask questions about this process because that’s going to help us spread it. And quite honestly a lot of this stuff is cutting edge in terms of the architectural world. So if you implement this—it doesn’t take implementing a whole lot of this to really get the edge up in terms of getting a little bit of extra work and a little bit of extra exposure or something with your existing website. [1:17:47]

ERIC: Okay. So, I think that we can now take some questions here. I know that, Enoch, you’re going to have to head off shortly so when you’re ready to go just—you can duck out.

ENOCH: Yeah, you bet. Yeah.

ERIC: Let’s take...

ENOCH: There’s one question here that I just wanted—Elizabeta was asking. Now, Elizabeta is currently part of our Marketing Academy group that we’re running concurrently with this which is taken them with Richard Petrie, a group of very ambitious and interesting architects through this process of building their marketing funnel to bring in work and kind of automate the sales process. So she’s asking, Eric, if she has access to this website.

ERIC: Yeah. I... [1:18:36]

ENOCH: And the answer would be yes, right?

ERIC: Yeah. I’ve added all members of the Architect Marketing Academy to the membership for the Internet Marketing for Architects site. I sent emails awhile back with login information. If you did not get that then drop me a quick email and we can definitely make sure you get that.

Q: So there’s a related question from Walter Perry asking, “How can I get copies of these webinars?”

A: So what you'll see is that there is the Architect Marketing Course from 2012. That's what I use, this outline; and here's the recording from the 2012. If I click on it, you can see the recording start to play from the 2012 session in a few seconds here. Okay, so there's where I'm starting there. You'll notice that there's a download button here so there will be one, of course, for today's session as well that you right-click on it and you say "Save Link As" or "Save Target File As." That will save the .mp4 file, the video file, to your computer if you want to have permanent reference or reference when you're not online. But of course you can just log into the website and get it. [1:19:49]

Our first lesson from the 2014 series is posted here. I'm probably going to change the menus up here to have a 2012 and a 2014 series. But this is the one from 2014 and when I start this one you'll see both Enoch and myself up in the corner. In the 2012 one, the technology did not allow us to have the webcams and so this is a little different. Here you can see me—instead of putting it above, I think, on your screen, you're seeing what I'm sharing and the webcams above that. But instead I'm just sort of putting it in the corner so it isn't changing the aspect ratio of the screen.

So, let's see, we have some other questions here, I think. A comment from Rachel Burton, a good webinar, lots of great information, has to take off. Thank you, Rachel. [1:20:48]

ENOCH: Amy asked a question there. Let's see, she said... Oh, she was asking about Lucidchart. So I just wanted to clarify that Lucidchart is a planning tool. So it would be the sort of tool that you might use to plan out what your website's going to look like. It would be something that you could hand off to a web designer and have them create that website. That's basically what we use it for. There's really no way to directly, automatically turn that into a website. It's basically just a layout tool to plan out, you know, kind of conceptualize where things are going to go.

ERIC: Now, it's like many tools on the computer. You could do it on paper. You can just sketch things out. It's actually faster to sketch things out on paper but when you want to change anything it becomes an ordeal. So one of the advantages of a tool like Lucidchart is that you can sketch it out and then you can move it around, you can tweak it, you copy something and make a whole new version of it and things like that. [1:21:44]

The other thing is that it's good for collaboration because, in fact, these ones for the wire frame for Sherri Weaver's site I didn't have access to until earlier today when I said to Enoch, "You know you've shown me this but I don't think I have access," and he just went and shared it with me. And now I can not only see it, I could edit it. You may have noticed me draw a couple of things on there.

So you can use Lucidchart to share with someone else for a variety of purposes. I mean, it's not really a tool designed to draw buildings but it is a great tool for capturing thoughts and layouts for concepts. And it's free for basic use up to a certain level; I think up to 60 elements on a page. And you know I've

done some somewhat complicated diagrams with the free version and then decided to spend the five dollars a month and have an unlimited number of elements. [1:22:42]

Q: “How does this compare to using a theme for a site?”

A: Well, Lucidchart is just a planning tool. A theme would be something for WordPress—the term used for programming code that someone creates that allows you to lay out a site in an interesting visual way. So, there are a lot of different themes for WordPress sites. We’ll be spending some time looking at that a little later in the course. They basically help you to organize the pages into one column, or two columns with a sidebar, or put the menus at the top in a certain way. Some themes have much more elaborate structures to make it easy to do really creative sites and other things are a little bit more ridged or limited. We have a few of our favorites. Typically a good theme will cost somewhere between 40 or 50 dollars is sort of not unusual. A small investment if you pick one you’re only paying it once and it becomes just a basis for making your website look good and perform well. So it really is sort of a styling sheet for the website as opposed to a planning tool. [1:24:00]

So, let’s see. Um... going back to other things here, there’s something. Larry Folk wrote something earlier about some plugins for WordPress for search engine optimization. So I’ll just talk a tiny bit about what that means.

So, search engine optimization, we talked about the content that goes onto a website. So, in other words, having materials—I’m on—this is lesson one. So let’s go back to here. We talked about the—what you put onto a website here. So what you put onto it. But there are other parts of communicating with the search engines that plugins will do. So, a plugin is either basically something that will be free or may cost a little bit of money. Most of these things that we’re talking about would be free. [1:25:03]

They allow you to customize what you’re telling the search engines. So for example, each page has a title. This one says “Level 1 Part B—On-page optimization—Internet Marketing for Architects” you can see it’s across the top of the screen. So this is called the title of the page. At no point on this page does it say exactly what we see. It’s a combination of this title here and the summary “Internet Marketing for Architects.” The search engine optimization plugin allows that to be customized.

Now, why did I choose that? Well, obviously there’s a topic, “On-page optimization” and then there’s the broader thing “Internet Marketing for Architects.” This allows the whole site, in this case, to have information that Google will say, “Ah! If someone’s looking for marketing stuff about architecture or architects, this site has good information because every page has that title on that.” So, the search

engine optimization or SEO plugins allow you to refine what that title is and some other aspects of the page description for the search engines. [1:26:08]

And so if someone were to search and come up and see my site, or this site, listed there would also be a description. And I can handwrite that description, perhaps a couple of sentences of describing what the page or the site is about and so the plugin essentially makes it easy to take that copy and tell the search engines here's what this is about. So if you don't have a description, for example, Google will take the first few words of the page, typically. So it would see "Member Home Page Level 1". So this is what it would say the page is about.

And that's sort of what the page is about, but it would be better to have a description that is a little bit more optimized for someone seeing it in a search result. In other words, when you do a search, you're looking at something that says what this page is about and you're going to click on it if the description makes you go, "Ah! That's relevant to what I'm looking for." So the SEO plugins make it easy to take your description and your title and other things and tell the search engines this is what my page is about. [1:27:17]

Enoch, do you have any additions to that?

ENOCH: Eric, you're just such a guru. I think you nailed it.

ERIC: Thank you. Thank you. Enoch's teasing me about the guru status. Most of you know that my extensive background in ArchiCAD and as an expert over the years, I've occasionally been called a guru in that area. And recently the internet has opened up some new domain extensions. So we all know about dot com and most of us know about dot net and dot org. And then there are special ones for other countries like dot co dot uk is for websites in the UK. Well they've just opened up some new ones and one of them is dot guru. You know, there are other ones: dot sports, dot biz, dot all sorts of things. Well one of them is dot guru. We'll I've just reserved and grabbed ArchiCAD dot guru. So, I am now proud to say I'm officially the ArchiCAD guru. [1:28:23]

Anyway, alright so I see some earlier comments about just unique value propositions. And so Peter Provost had—let's just take a look so we can open this up a little bit. And so Peter, are you still on the line? Because that was awhile back. Yeah, you are so let's see if we can get you on the line here. So I'm going to unmute you. So Peter do you have a microphone on?

PETER: Ah, I do. Can you hear me?

ERIC: Yes we can. So, in response to your particular—or to that question about do you have a unique value proposition worked out or do you want to type it in you wrote, "We are a cross-disciplinary design firm focused in commercial interior design and branded environments. We help forward-thinking

clients communicate spatially who they are and what they do through their built environments.” Okay, so...

PETER: A mouthful. [1:29:20]

ERIC: It is a mouthful. It is a little bit, you know, the words are a little bit dense but...

PETER: Right.

ERIC: But I think they’re well focused. Enoch, do you have any comments on this in particular?

ENOCH: Yeah, well, you know I was glad—thanks for sharing that, Peter! I appreciate you putting yourself on the spot. It’s good to talk to you!

PETER: Yeah, likewise. Thank you!

ENOCH: Yeah. And so, no, just regarding the—I know Peter has gone through great effort to kind of condense a lot of ideas into one sentence and so that’s what I’m seeing there. And I’m—this is, when I read this, I would think this is more of an internal kind of USP.

PETER: Yeah.

ENOCH: I would hope that this wouldn’t be something necessarily out there on the web just because of the words it uses like “cross-disciplinary design” and things like that. [1:30:16]

PETER: Well, I think one of the things that I’m struggling with is that I feel very focused on what it is I’m trying to do in terms of reaching those clients. But for me, I’m constantly trying to figure out how to boil it down to communicate it very easily and very quickly. And so I’m very focused on the markets that I want to go after.

And both the blessing and the curse of what it is I’m doing—I’m actually in a bunch of, let’s say, three distinct markets with three different types of clients that are buying services from us. And so when I’m trying to communicate myself on the web, I don’t want to use language that is specifically geared to one of those markets that precludes the others from engaging me. So I’m constantly battling how specific do I be for those markets? [1:31:13]

How specific do I whittle the USP down so they understand that we have the expertise that’s relevant? But at the same time how do I leave it open enough that, for instance, broadcast scenic design and interiors is one thing, how do I leave it open enough for that but also the cultural and museum client

that wants to engage us for predesign services can also have something to relate to? And, again, it's both a blessing and a curse.

ERIC: Right. Well, you mentioned that you have three specific market areas that you've identified sort of as somewhat different focuses. Obviously...

PETER: Yeah.

ERIC: ...they're all part of your strengths. They need some similar talent, you know, your experience and talent on that. You talk about communicating spatially. You talk about cross-disciplinary. Now cross-disciplinary, what does that mean? Do you—what does that mean, cross-disciplinary, in this context? I mean, I can guess, but tell me what that means. [1:32:25]

PETER: Yeah, so in this context it's the disciplines of interior design, scenic design, graphics, and, I'm just going to, just for practical purposes, say branded environments; which is really more of an approach, branded environments, but it is also thought of as a discipline. So what's interesting is that depending on which project I'm in, the fact that we can play in all of those worlds actually brings value to the clients that we try to serve. And it allows me to kind of tell the story of our design approach in a more convincing way than if I were to just say, "We just do interiors. We only do retail. That's it." [1:33:19]

ERIC: Right. So I would suggest, as part of the thinking process here, is terms like cross-disciplinary doesn't say anything. I mean, yes it says that you're different than a single discipline. But what does that mean? So being specific about interiors and branding and graphics, those are the specific cross-disciplines that you bring, or some variation of those words. That makes more sense to me. Okay, now I can say, "Okay, you do interiors and graphics. So if I wanted graphic design to be done and that it would be seen in the interior space and represent my branding, okay. I see how that would work." So you identify it more specifically. [1:34:11]

Now in terms of its applications to a museum versus a retail versus something else, I think you'd want to have a paragraph, or actually, ideally pages. A page for each one of these disciplines, each one of these market areas that would specifically say that when we have a museum project, here's some of the things we look at, here's some examples of museums we've worked on, here's some of the problems or challenges that we've been able to solve. So those sorts of things, so you have a specific story for each one of them. But...

PETER: That's great.

ERIC: When you're talking about what you offer the specific disciplines would become more important to say. And, "communicate spatially who they are and what they do" I don't know. What do you think about that, Enoch? Is that clear enough? [1:35:07]

ENOCH: I mean, I feel Peter's pain because I've gone through this process myself and I can tell that Peter spent a lot of effort here and it comes through. But I think that it still needs more work.

PETER: Yeah.

ENOCH: Spatially we're—"we help forward-thinking clients." So, to get around that idea, when you say "forward-thinking" I want to distill that down to: what does that mean? I take that to mean clients who are willing to think outside of the box.

PETER: Right.

ENOCH: Clients who are willing to do things a little bit differently.

PETER: Correct.

ENOCH: Is that right?

PETER: Correct.

ENOCH: And, "communicate spatially who they are." I think that that's "archi" speak. You know, we get that but I think you know that clients don't get that. So I would just say that, what's a tagline? If you were Nike and you wanted to sum up "just do it" like your brand in one sentence. Maybe there's something that you can use to convey your brand, like, I don't know, like a question. "Does your studio represent who you are?" I mean, just that kind of idea, and really kind of hone in on that one thing. [1:36:14]

Without going too much further into this specific USP or value proposition, one thing I did want to mention that, you know, you can't speak to all of your segments and have it sound good to all of your segments. So there's two ways to deal with that. One of them is to do it like Eric mentioned which is developing your website in more silo kind of where each of the three branches are sort of self-contained. So kind of limit the links that would allow someone to go from one section on broadcast studios to another section on museums. You know?

PETER: Yeah.

ENOCH: The other option is something that I'm actually doing and putting into place is having completely different websites for my different areas of focus. You know, I like doing homes because I

like working with clients personally. At the same time I like doing hospitals because it's a little bit more challenging and that's a little bit more profitable sometimes. So I'm going to have two completely different websites for that. So someone who's looking for hospital information isn't going to see a house. You know? [1:37:21]

PETER: Right.

ENOCH: And that allows me to focus in that message very, very targeted and very—just really speak to what those people care about. So those would be my two points for that.

PETER: That's great.

ENOCH: I don't know if that helps out at all.

ERIC: Alright...

PETER: It does. Yeah, go ahead. Sorry.

ERIC: Well, we can finish up with a couple of comments and go on to a couple of other questions.

PETER: Thanks very much.

ENOCH: Walter asked, "What is scenic design?" I was just curious too. What is scenic design? And Eric you can go on.

PETER: Yeah, sure. So when you look at CNN, for instance, and you see the space that they're in, basically that's what I design. So, the environments that the broadcast happens in, that's where I am. And so often times what's interesting, there's this convergence that's happening between traditional interiors and office space with broadcast studios. [1:38:30]

So like oftentimes you'll see the newsroom through the glass behind the news anchor. And so what's happening is firms or companies are hiring us, that know interiors, work place and office, but also know broadcast. So it's this unique niche that I'm in that I'm trying to position myself in the office in a forward and fairly aggressive way.

ERIC: Great.

PETER: Does that make sense?

ERIC: Yeah, definitely.

ENOCH: You bet it does. And I would say you definitely have—having your tight niche—having your tight market focus is just a huge advantage. So I encourage everyone out there, even if you just do homes or you just do office buildings, you know, get more specific than that. Because, Peter, with the specific—you have such a narrow focus there. That’s really powerful. [1:39:31]

ERIC: Okay. Alright so we have a bunch, I mean a few more short questions and comments. I’ll just sort of go through some of the more recent ones, like in the last five or 10 minutes.

Q: There’s a question from Johannes Wortmann about the Mastermind group.

A: So I did send out another link to it. So, if you—that was in the email that went out today and one from a couple of days ago so try going to that link. That should take you directly to that LinkedIn group. If you still have a problem just hit “reply” in the email and we’ll figure it out.

Q: There’s a comment from Joel Niemi about “Peter’s text might be better broken up into more than one sentence.”

A: It actually was two sentences. I sort of read it quickly.

Q: How would Hemmingway write about it? Short sentences.

A: Okay. Alright. Interesting.

Q: A comment from Spencer Howard. “I hired a copywriter a few weeks ago. They suck. I’m hiring Enoch and Eric now with value propositions.” [1:40:28]

A: Great. Alright, thank you so much, Spencer. We do work at communication, both Enoch and I. And, of course, our specialty is architecture and so hopefully we understand you guys better than a general copywriter. So that’s one of the strengths that we bring here is that we’re insiders. Okay, and we look forward to talking to you, Spencer, about whatever work you need.

Q: Greg Danskin writes, “Clients also have clients so enable them to meet the unique needs of their customers.”

A: I'm not quite sure what you mean by that. So, just part of the job of the program requirements for a broadcast studio or a museum is to communicate and deal with who their visitors, their customers, their clients are. Enoch, do you have a question or a comment? Let me just bring up—Greg has got a... So, Greg, are you there? [1:41:33]

GREG: Yeah, can you hear me?

ERIC: Yes. So, did I get it right, what you...?

GREG: Well, who did you just have? Peter on?

ERIC: Yeah, it was Peter.

GREG: Yeah. I was thinking while he was talking—I was thinking, each one of us, when we have a client, they've come to us to solve a problem. And typically if you're dealing with a residential client, they have problems and you have to navigate that. But if you have a commercial client, their problem is related to their marketing. So we're kind of helping them market themselves by what we do. So if we encapsulate—he was having a little bit of a hard time and it sounded like some of his language was directed towards people in the industry that he would be working with. But the person making the decision to write the check to pull the trigger on this CNN studio or whatever it is has to make sure that their goals are met and their goals are basically from a marketing perspective to their viewers or customers or whatever. So maybe that streamlines a little bit of that language that he might be using. [1:42:46]

ERIC: Yeah, absolutely. Good points.

ENOCH: I appreciate the feedback.

ERIC: Yeah. Alright, so let's see.

Q: George Turner wrote, "Set design not including the electronics."

A: So I guess this is his—George was maybe responding to scenic design, perhaps.

And Peter wrote, "Thanks, Gents." So I guess you got some thank you there.

I want to go back now to some comments earlier. Just some quick things and make sure we got that. Okay.

Q: Eddie says, “Haven’t created a unique value proposition but content that could be massaged to get to get to become one.” [1:43:27]

A: Yeah, you probably do have things you’ve written that are related to it and that you could reformulate in a way that is more succinct and hits home in terms of really making it clear to people why they should look further. One of the things you think about, every part of your message is not—let’s say everything isn’t about selling the contract. In other words, a—each sentence, each page on a site, it’s job is not to say if you come to here they’re going to say, “We’ve got to work with this firm!” What you want to do is keep them interested. And ideally, keep them interested so that you can take another step. [1:44:13]

There’s a classic thing about sales letters that says that the top, the headline, its job is to catch the person’s interest and to make them want to read the next line. And the next line is often a subhead that maybe explains it or gives some clarification or expands on it. And its job is to make the person go, “Oh that’s interesting and I want to read more,” the body copy of the text. And each part, basically, the job is to keep the person interested, keep them moving along.

So each part of your website, whether it’s the unique value proposition, the “about us,” or “why work with us,” its job is to keep the person interested, qualify the person so that they know, “I’m in the right place. Boy, these people know—they’re the right people for me,” or they’re in the wrong place. Don’t be afraid to say “we do hospitals” and have someone who stumbles on there and wants a home go, “Oh, not in the right place. Bye.” [1:45:09]

If that site and your work is about a specific niche, make sure it’s clear so that the people who are going to waste your time are—maybe there are people who are looking for budget plans and you say that we do high-end carefully crafted unique designs, well you don’t want the people who are looking for budget plans. And most likely they’re not going to want to pay your fees and they wouldn’t recognize the value of your services. So, things like that.

Q: So Ed Elliott, “Contextual’ design, buildable design, contractor friendly.” [1:45:50]

A: Interesting. Let’s just see if Ed is still on the line here. Let’s see if—my mouse is not going. Ed... Oh, Ed Elliott. We had two Ed’s. There, Ed Elliott. Alright, unmute. Ed Elliott, are you there? Hello? Okay, well, we’re not hearing something from you Ed so I’m not sure if you’ve got a microphone. So, “contextual design,” written like architect. I’m not quite sure if that’s contextual. What do you think about that, Enoch? “Contextual” like in context? Buildable design?

ENOCH: Yeah, yeah. Generally that's a term that I would say that I understand. I'm an architect and I know what contextual design is. It means that we take into account the surrounding context in the design.

ERIC: So with an "X" instead—rather than a "C"?

ENOCH: Yeah, there you go.

ERIC: Buildable design. Okay. So what do you think about that little value proposition?

ENOCH: Let me scroll up to read it again here. [1:46:50]

ERIC: Per Ed Elliott. "'Contextual' design, buildable design, contractor friendly."

ENOCH: I like that because it's so tightly—I understand buildable design. I understand what he's getting at. What he's saying is that he's not one of the architects out there who will design something that looks great but doesn't understand kind of how it goes together and doesn't understand that there are certain concessions that need to be made for buildability purposes. So I'm not sure exactly what—if it's residential, commercial work he's doing but it sounds like that target market is definitely targeted at contractors who are very, very budget conscious.

So, I think, to me that's very clear. I think the "contextual design" is not—and that probably wouldn't speak to most contractors unless you kind of finessed it a little bit. Maybe that means that you're going for contractors that care a little bit more about design and about added value of a building in addition to wanting to make it buildable. So, I think that, yeah, I understand it. And I think that if you use that language and reach out to that target market with that kind of messaging, it sounds like it would be effective. [1:48:01]

ERIC: Okay. Let's see. Here's another one. Let's see, the last one for this—maybe we've gone through all the comments.

Q: "High design on a reasonable budget."

A: That's Mark Raeburn. Let's see if Mark is still on the call. Yeah, Mark is still on here. Let's see if Mark has a microphone. Mark are you there?

MARK: Yeah, I'm here.

ERIC: Okay Mark. So you wrote this awhile back because we were talking about the value proposition, "High design on a reasonable budget." Okay, I like it. It will certainly speak to some people who know what high design is but don't feel like they're rich, you know, or just don't like overspending.

MARK: I feel like there are a lot of people out there that really like modern design but they don't think that it's within their reach.

ENOCH: Yeah, absolutely. Sure.

ERIC: So, Enoch do we have any suggestions for taking that a little further? Because it seems like it's a little bit generalized, you know, like it's not... [1:49:03]

ENOCH: Yeah, yeah. I would like to talk to you because I would like to do some modern design in my house but it's beyond my reach. So—no, I'm just halfway jesting. No, I think that there's a lot of opportunity there. That sounds like a good opportunity to put out some educational material. You know?

I know that Bob Borson on his site "Life of an Architect" has a great post where he wrote about, "How much does modern design really cost?" And I know that the firm I used to work for, when we did modern stuff we would use like double aired 5/8th inch chipboard because it hides the wavy walls since you're not using any sort of orange peel texture, you know, you're just painting them flat. And then we're used to using maybe a reveal around the bottom instead of a baseboard. So I know there's effective ways to do that and if you can sort of bring that process and give people an idea of what goes into that, you can really position yourself as an expert and I think that people would find value in that. [1:50:04]

Eric, do you have any thoughts, or...?

ERIC: Well, I think—I'm not quite sure how to wrap it up in a more persuasive sentence but I certainly can see ways that you can build this into content. So, in other words, a little piece that says, "Five ways you can have an amazing high-quality, modern design on a budget." So you can have tricks; some of the things that you've found when you do it this way it looks really special but it doesn't cost much. You know, just some of the things that you've learned. Or, you know, "Avoid these things where you're spending too much on high design," and you can have things that sometimes are specified by other designers or architects that will cost people a lot of money and there are better alternatives, something like that. [1:50:57]

So, that would be content or maybe some stories about how—with pictures, illustrating how certain things were achieved and say, you know, this was quite clever. There was an interesting one for one of our clients, Diane Waingrow, which we actually created a press release on because she—there was some particular cabin, some particular, I don't know, extensive built-in case work that they wanted a certain type of glazing, a certain type of pattern. And the things were going to cost like 2,000 dollars to

build these simple doors and she found that by going to the hardware store and getting a certain type of paint put on regular glass that it had an even better look.

So I don't remember the details, but if you think about it there are probably some things where you've done some research on materials, research on construction methods where you've found an elegant solution that gave real high esthetic, perhaps durability, you know, other criteria that you have at a much lower cost than maybe some off-the-shelf standard approaches. So that would be a way of saying that we're able to solve these challenges or achieve certain results beyond what competing firms are. Because we're talking about the value proposition: how do you achieve something that other people don't? [1:52:16]

ENOCH: Yeah. I think if you can—I would encourage people to think of their value proposition in terms of a tagline. If you can come up with a tagline that embodies it well, that's kind of why I brought up the example of Nike earlier. You know, that's what they're about and they've turned just that little simple symbol they have, they've turned that into, you know, you kind of know what Nike represents.

Now, in terms of Mark who was just talking about affordable design, just a couple taglines that I thought of and this is the idea, that you want to brainstorm these. But like, you know, "I care about design. Do it without breaking the bank." Or "Live a modern life without breaking the bank." Or "Live in a design magazine but still go out to dinner," or something, you know. You could get clever and that could just be the taglines. To what little tagline can just sort of convey just the emotion as well as the lifestyle of just sort of what you're going for. [1:53:11]

MARK: Yeah, some great ideas. Thanks guys.

ERIC: One just general tip about this in terms of taglines. There's a sort of general bit of advice from really good copywriters about writing—generally I'm talking about a sales page—but about making a headline. A tagline would be similar. How can you create a few words or a sentence, some bit of text that communicates something? Well, you can think about it and say hmm this or that and then say alright well here's the best one I came up with and write it down.

What they often do is write down dozens of options. Just sort of say I'm going to spend 20 minutes, just write out things one after the other. And, you know, a lot of them are going to be crap but you're going to find a few that are like, yeah, that one came out pretty nicely. And then when you look at those 15, or possibly 50 or a hundred that you've gone through, you'll find some better ones and you'll be able to combine them. And so it sort of frees up the mind and instead of sort of finding "the one" create a bunch of them and look at them afterwards. That's a really good brainstorming technique. [1:54:19]

ENOCH: Yeah, anyone that went to design school is going to be very familiar with that process, Eric.

ERIC: Alright.

ENOCH: As I'm sure you know.

ERIC: Alright, so I think we've gone close to two hours. So I want to thank you all for sticking with us. I think we only lost about three or four people who had to run off to other meetings. Please feel free to send us your email or add comments to this page down below once the recording's posted. And, of course, please take advantage of the Mastermind coaching program LinkedIn group to ask related questions as well as to just, maybe, if you had an "ah-ha" moment; if you have something like, "Oh my god! Now I really understand such-and-such!" post that as a beginning of a discussion. In fact, I may post something similar like, "What were your key takeaways from today's lesson?" and then we'll just have some comments. So let's do it in a way that we can build some discussion and momentum. I think it will be more interesting and will actually come up with some good synergy working together. [1:55:25]

So thank you, Enoch for helping out today. Your contributions are extremely valuable and I love working with you.

ENOCH: I appreciate it, Eric. I just want to remind people, also, Eric I know that we talked about his earlier.

ERIC: Ah!

ENOCH: But I'll be sending out an email about people who want to get their web audits done. We talked about that in the original—as part of a course member you can have the opportunity to have our team look at your website. I'm going to be looking at them personally and giving you personal feedback. So, the first part of that process is we want to get some sort of analytics tracking and make sure that's set up on your website. So be on the lookout for an email from Eric or I with the details about how to do that. [1:56:08]

ERIC: Alright. So basically we expect that some of you already have analytics on your website. It's not hard to set up and it could very well be there. In that case you'll give all the information we would need to be able to access that to be able to see how many visits you're having and where the traffic is coming from.

For those of you who don't have it, we'll have some instructions for how to put it on. But if you don't have it on or don't know how to check whether it's on and don't have a resource to do that, then for a

very small fee, I think—What were we doing?—twenty-five dollars, we will just have one of our team put Google Analytics onto your site.

So, if you already have it on there, you're getting this website audit that's part of signing up for the course and we'll do that. But if you don't have it on then we're just going to charge, basically, our cost to have one of our team set that up for you and just make it easy so it can happen. We want to make sure this happens so you get the information you need to make some decisions about what to do with your website, you know, how to develop it. So... [1:57:18]

ENOCH: Yep, yep.

ERIC: Alright. Thank you everyone. It's been a good session. I'm enjoying this whole process so I look forward to talking to you. We'll have our next session a week from today. I think—what are we talking about? This is the schedule here. Local marketing, okay, so we'll probably be focusing on setting up your Google Places page and other pages and talk about what that means. So return same time, same channel one week from today. Take care. And as I like finishing up, this has been Eric Bobrow. Thanks for watching. [1:58:02]

[END OF VIDEO]