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DT: September 23, 2021
RE: Personal Website Information Architecture Draft

This plan will outline the vision I have for my website that I am designing. My website is a PLN that will focus on my experiences with vermicomposting as a documentary of my hobby and as a professional pursuit as I plan to use my knowledge of vermicomposting and the goods the worms produce as items to sell. For now, I plan to build it up with helpful information to prove that I am a reputable source and attract others who share my interests. The purpose, targeted audiences, information architecture, visual design, and backend site management behind my website are detailed below.

Purpose and Audience
This section will dive into the purpose, goals, and establish an idea of the targeted customers.

Purpose
The purpose of my site is to network with other vermicomposters, both veterans and newcomers to the process. I am seeking for information to add to my arsenal about treatment and care for worms that I also want to pass on to others as I work to validate and test out any information I find from sources. In the end I am seeking to make this website a hub for information and a place that myself and others can use to double check diets and quickly identify common problems within vermicomposting that arise.

Goals
The following are the goals for my website:

- Use site to spread information as a reputable source
- Use site to promote my future documents on vermicomposting setups and plans
- Make it a resource that myself and others look back to for solutions to problems or verification
- My site will also have my contact so any information I post can be corrected and verified by multiple people than one person's blog
- I wish to provide a way that makes vermicomposting simple as it works as an amazing method of sustainability with the removal of organic waste that can't be recycled and goes to the landfill.

Target Audience
My targeted audience are the following:
- Myself
- Vermicomposters both old and new
- People practicing methods of sustainable living

Personas and Scenarios
The below Figures 1 and 2 detail the personas and scenarios that guide my plan for a PLN website.

Persona 1: James
- 25 years old
- Gardening enthusiast
- Looking for a way to minimize waste
- Not much experience with vermicomposting
- Overwhelmed by information

Scenario:
- James is a man who is striving to achieve as little waste in his life as he can. He attempts to grow his own food to avoid the wasteful packaging in stores. But he wants to minimize his waste even more than recycling or growing his own food. He finds vermicomposting as a great solution to eliminate his leftover organic waste.

Figure 1: James in yard

Persona 1: Steve
- 27 years old
- Beginner at vermicomposting
- Lacks knowledge of higher levels of upkeep/diet
- Strives to know more about vermicomposting

Scenario:
- Steve is a budding vermicomposter that wants to have a constantly updating source that will widen his knowledge base about worms. He finds himself constantly looking up if something is safe for worms to eat and always has to dig through a website's post to see if what he searched for is safe or not. He comes across my website that gets to the point if the food is safe or not and even has a convenient search table to know further what is safe or unsafe for worms.

Figure 2: Steve in garden

Information Architecture

This section is detailing the organization of my site with its navigation and listed content that is both internal and external in order to provide my website visitor all of the information they might need in one general area.

Content Inventory

Here is my personal and external content listed with which navigation header they will be listed under to give a visual of my plan and what type of content will be contained within my website.

Title	Page	Link	What is it about?	Author	Content Type	Update Date
Worm Species	Blog	Future post	Pros and cons of different species	Samuel Neery	Blog with text and images	
Bins types	Blog	Future post	Brands and styles with form/function	Samuel Neery	Blog with text and images	
PH Levels	Help	Future post	Tips and tricks to reading and balancing PH levels	Samuel Neery	Subpage with text and images	
Preparation for vermicomposting	Starting Out	Future Post	Steps to prepare	Samuel Neery	Subpage with text and images	
What is Vermicomposting	Starting Out	Future Post	Defining vermicomposting for newcomers	Samuel Neery	Subpage with text and images	
Why vermicompost	Starting Out	Future Post	Giving reasons for vermicomposting	Samuel Neery	Subpage with text and images	
Catalogue of Diseases	Help	Future Post	Table of diseases with links to posts about causes/solutions	Samuel Neery	Subpage with text and images	
Impact of desert heat on worms	Blog	Future Post	Worms require certain temperatures but can adjust with work	Samuel Neery	Blog with text and images	
Uses/Products of Worms	Blog	Future Post	Worms have many uses and have products for dirt and water	Samuel Neery	Blog with text and images	
Where to buy (Vendors)	Resources	link	Is a vendor of worms	Jim	Business	9/23/2021
Homestead and Bin maintenance	Resources	link	Provides a gardener's pov	Deanna	External	9/15/2021
Vermicompost and Gardening	Resources	link	Is a vendor or worms/gardening tools	Company	Business	9/23/2021
Las Vegas worm vendor/blog	Resources	link	Is a vendor/blog (currently closed due to COVID)	John	Business	4/1/2021
Urban vermicomposting	Resources	link	Vendor	Unknown	Business	1/20/2021
Composting and Bin Selection	Resources	link	Vendor for worms and bins	Unknown	Business	6/5/2015
Side-hustle vendor	Resources	link	Vendor	Bentley	Business	Oct 2020

Vermicompost methods	Resources	link	Vendor	Kyle/Jen	Business	6/30/2018
Forum for vermicompost issues	Resources	link	Forum for questions	Unknown	Blog	9/23/2021
Guiding and Teaching resource	Resources	link	Blog with guides and resources for teachers/students	Steve	Business	7/11/2021

Table 1: *Information about the content that will be on my website*

Site Map

My site map indicates what pathway pages will be included on my homepage. The homepage will contain blog posts of my current status with my own vermicomposting with assistive topics, a starting out guide, and diet page. I will add links to the social media I have to spread the word of my website. My content is grouped by topic.
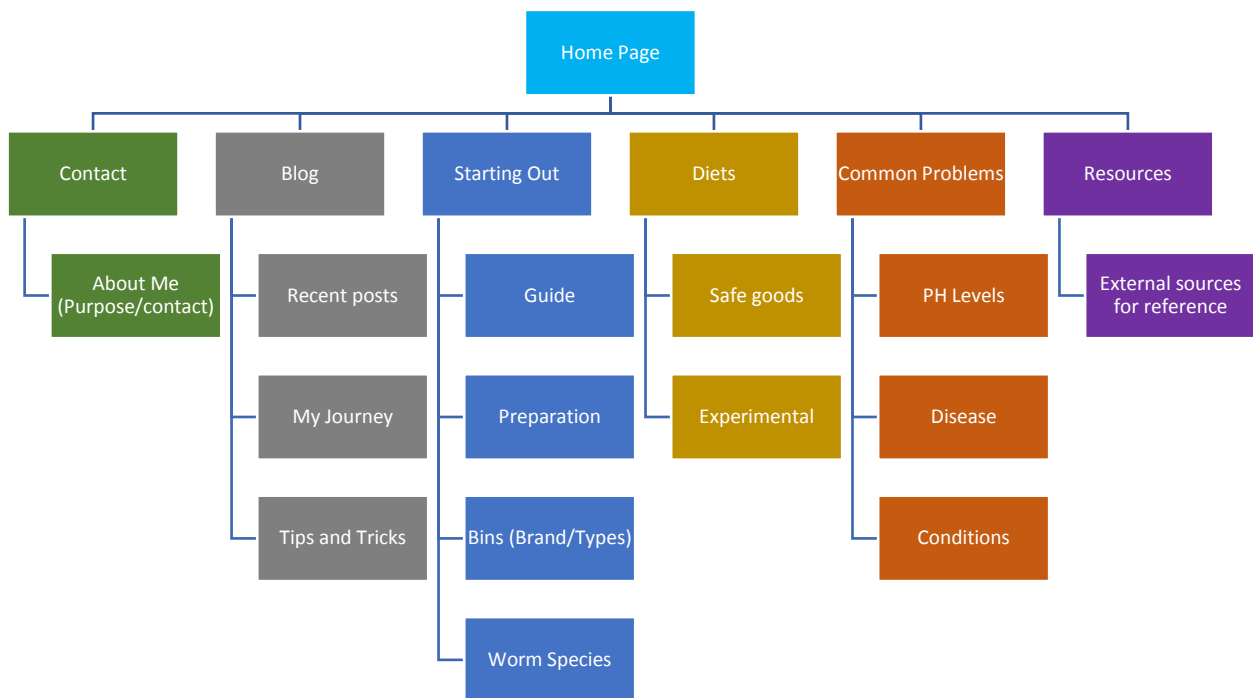

Figure 3: *Site map detailing the hierarchical system of my PLN website. The home page acts as a hub to the other pages informative content.*

Rationale

My blog will work to document my journey into my own vermicomposting while also holding any information that doesn't fit in any other category on the navigation bar. My about page with have my contacts for interested individuals in the future when I'm ready to potentially teach vermicomposting into a business. I have a starting out page to catch the eye of new vermicomposters in one area that also contain information of external sites for comparison of techniques/setups. I always find myself searching if something is safe to give to the worms so the diet will be a welcome section for myself and others. Finally, I have the problem section as many problems arise with simple solutions and explanations that may not be clear.

Visual Design

For the "Visual Design" section of my PLN, I will provide my theme and evaluate the effectiveness in meeting our guidelines for providing information and a usable interface that is responsive, universal, and assessible.

Template/Theme Choice

The name of the theme I am currently using is "Shawburn", which is a free theme on WordPress. I chose this one specifically for its traditional design that balances text and imagery. I plan to make the site an informative blog and potentially as a business but for now is a portfolio of my vermicomposting progress. The current set up encourages linking to other parts of the site, which matches how I want to map out my information. For my headers I used "Arvo" and the base font is "Merriweather". I did make some adjustments from the default color as the pale white background didn't work well with the lighter navigation bar light color that is now darker. I also changed the favicon to some worms to define it from its default set up.
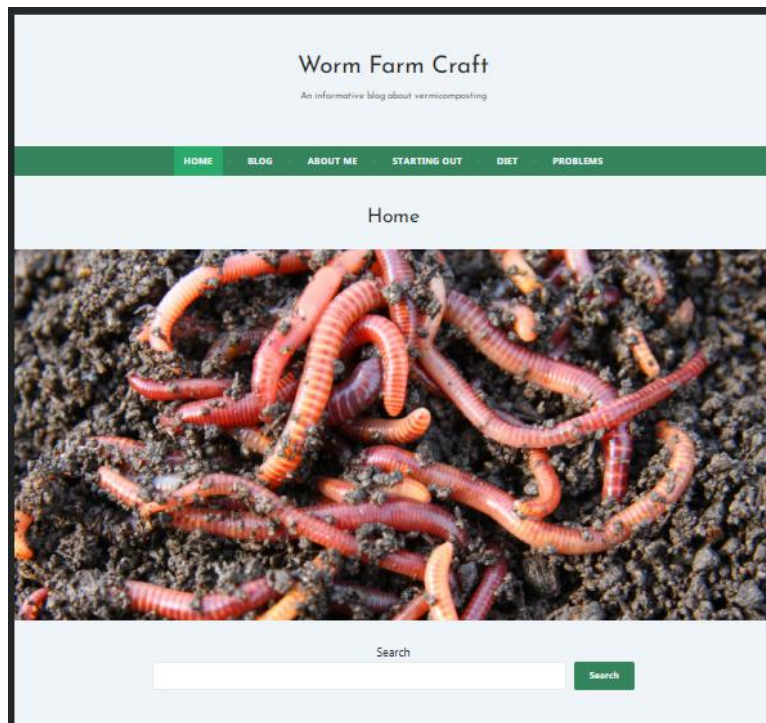

Figure 4: *Screenshot of current homepage on PC*

Responsiveness

The site shows responsiveness across platforms and the content will shift when window is minimized. On a mobile platform the content will go into a drop-down menu to allow for the links to remain accessible with a smaller screen. I kind of prefer this menu as the button is in the center and is also bigger than a hamburger style menu.
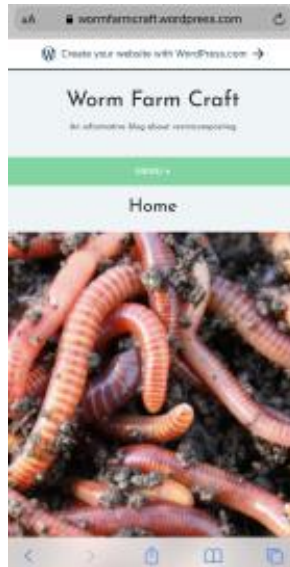
Figure 5: *Phone shot*

Universal Design
I plan to use this website to promote vermicomposting as a business that offers a form of sustainability. In order to accomplish this, I have a getting started section that might contain some paid content in the future with helpful additions that aren't commonly known or a sort of class-based set of videos that must be paid for to access about all the steps. The template contains business hours, so it works for the future if I turn this into a mix of virtual and in-person business. I changed the original template from darker colors and used green colors to evoke the greens that are in gardening within the design.

With the search bar and menus at the top it is easy for people who visit to figure out what my site is all about and the links are words that are standard for what people usually search for about worms. I will add a section about species beyond red wigglers as I've looked at posts and some people are searching for what the worm's species is and if it is environmentally harmful for the garden or towards their own worms.

I plan to add icons that link to social media and use widgets to link their content to see at a glance that will be shown on the homepage and blog.

Accessibility
I will have to research what kind of colors create the best contrast; my choice of green might be too light when paired with white. I used the fonts "Arvo" (heading) and "Merriweather" (base) as they have great contrast and are a bit bolder than the other fonts allowing for more contrast and readability. The text and background are black against white so they should be easy to read it is just the buttons that have white text against green. The background is plain color as images and text will be the most important content to draw the users' eye.

So far everything is consistent as I have one of the themes that can apply the same font across all pages automatically. I have chosen San Serif for the header and base font. I will have to edit it a bit as some of the content that is default on the homepage isn't relevant to my needs and PLN so I should have a better active space and the elements that are still relevant is grid aligned so it will still look structured after the other content is gone that I don't need. There is no "false bottom" on both PC and mobile.
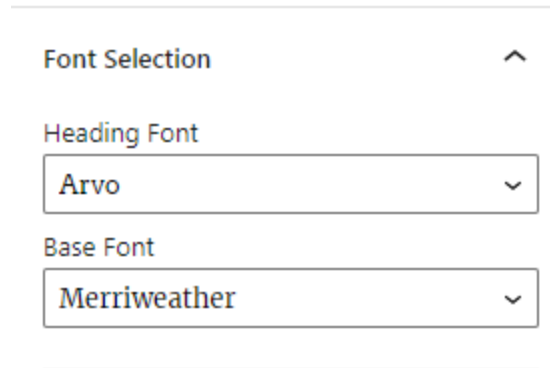
Figure 6: *Font Choice*

Backend Site Management

In this section my backend site management is displayed in detail with the content management system I will be using for my personal learning network.

Content Management System

The CMS I am using is the free version of WordPress of the .com extension. It is using the current version of 5.8.1 WordPress. The domain name is https://wormfarmcraft.wordpress.com/ with the WordPress as part of the link as per it's condition as a free model.

Search Engine Optimization Plan

My website has the site title as "Worm Farm Craft" with the tagline "An informative blog about vermicomposting". I may shorten the tagline as it may be a little too long for some displays. As I am using the .com version of wordpress unlike the .org version, I have no access to meta or header to my knowledge. I am planning to add images to posts in the future that will involve giving them appropriate file names and ALT tags for proper SEO.

I plan to employ us of:

- Keywords within page URLs
- Keywords within page title tags
- Keywords within body text
- Add ALT text to images
- Keywords within images' file name

Below in Table 2, I have compiled a list of keywords from Wordstream.com which searches multiple platforms for related keywords used when searching for entered topic.

SEO Keywords and Phrases			
Worm bin	Vermicompost fertilizer	Vermiculture worms	Vermi worms
Worm compost	Vermi bed	Worm farm	Indoor worm bin
Vermicomposting bin	vermiculture	Worm composting system	Organic vermicomposting

Table 2: *Here are some of the top keywords for vermicomposting*

Style Guide

I shall follow the guidelines of the Chicago Manual of Style with the elements it has standardized for styling and usage of spelling, grammar, and names/terms. For example, I will be capitalizing the scientific names of worms and using their scientific name to assure that the context is clear compared to using their non-specific nicknames like "red wigglers" when "*Eisenia fetida*" is specific.

Conclusion

This memo should provide you with a clear overview of my plan for creating a PLN website. Now you have an idea of my website's structure, accessibility, and usage. This website will nurture engagement in the community as there are few quality resources that go in-depth with vermicomposting. The website is being developed at: https://wormfarmcraft.wordpress.com/