Table 5.1  Web Design Best Practices Checklist

### Page Layout
- 1. Appealing to target audience
- 2. Consistent site header/logo
- 3. Consistent navigation area
- 4. Informative page title that includes the company/organization/site name
- 5. Page footer area—copyright, last update, contact e-mail address
- 6. Good use of basic design principles: repetition, contrast, proximity, and alignment
- 7. Displays without horizontal scrolling at 800x600 and higher resolutions
- 8. Balance of text/graphics/white space on page
- 9. Good contrast between text and background
- 10. Repetitive information (header/logo and navigation) takes up no more than one-quarter to one-third of the browser window at 800x600 resolution
- 11. Home page has compelling, interesting information above the fold (before scrolling down) at 800x600 resolution
- 12. Home page downloads within 10 seconds on dial-up connection

### Browser Compatibility
- 1. Displays on current versions of Internet Explorer (6+)
- 2. Displays on current versions of Firefox (2+)
- 3. Displays on current versions of Netscape (7+)
- 4. Displays on current versions of Opera (9+)
- 5. Displays on current versions of Safari (both Mac and Windows)

### Navigation
- 1. Main navigation links are clearly and consistently labeled
- 2. Navigation is easy to use for target audience
- 3. If image, Flash, or DHTML is the main navigation, clear text links are in the footer section of the page (accessibility)
- 4. Navigational aids, such as site map, skip navigation link, or breadcrumbs, are used
- 5. All navigation hyperlinks work

### Color and Graphics
- 1. Use of different colors in page backgrounds/text is limited to a maximum of three or four
- 2. Color is used consistently
- 3. Color has good contrast with associated text
- 4. Color is not used alone to convey meaning (accessibility)
- 5. Use of color and graphics enhances rather than distracts from the site
- 6. Graphics are optimized and do not slow download significantly
- 7. Each graphic used serves a clear purpose
- 8. Image tags use the alt attribute to configure alternate text to display if the browser or user agent does not support images (accessibility)
- 9. Animated images do not distract from the site and either do not repeat or only repeat a few times
### Multimedia (See Chapter 11)
- Each audio/video/Flash file used serves a clear purpose
- The audio/video/Flash files used enhance rather than distract from the site
- Captions are provided for each audio or video file used (accessibility)
- Download times for audio or video files are indicated
- Links to downloads for media plug-ins are provided

### Content Presentation
- Common fonts such as Arial or Times New Roman are used
- Techniques of writing for the Web are used: headings, bullet points, short sentences in short paragraphs, use of white space, and so on
- Fonts, font sizes, and font colors are consistently used
- Content provides meaningful, useful, information
- Content is organized in a consistent manner
- Information is easy to find (minimal clicks)
- Timeliness: The date of the last revision and/or copyright date is accurate
- Content does not include outdated material
- Content is free of typographical and grammatical errors
- Content provides links to other useful sites
- Avoids the use of "Click here" when writing text for hyperlinks
- If standard link colors are not used, all links use a consistent set of colors to indicate visited/nonvisited status
- If graphics and/or media is used to convey meaning, the alternate text equivalent of the content is provided (accessibility)

### Functionality
- All internal hyperlinks work
- All external hyperlinks work
- All forms function as expected
- No JavaScript (see Chapters 11 and 14) errors are generated by the pages

### Accessibility
- If image, Flash, or DHTML is the main navigation, clear text links are in the footer section of the page
- Color is not used alone to convey meaning
- Image tags use the alt attribute to configure alternate text replacement
- Captions are provided for each audio or video file used
- Use attributes designed to improve accessibility such as longdesc, title, and summary where appropriate
- If the site uses frames, use frame titles and place meaningful content in the noframes area
- Optional. To assist screen readers, the html element's lang and xml:lang attributes indicate the spoken language of the page.