

Five Crucial Components of Web Design

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Professional website developers know the importance of web design and the role it plays in making a website successful.

Designing a successful website is no easy task, especially for someone who is new to the world of web development. With the help of web development applications many people can and do create decent websites. But decent in most cases is not good enough to make a site successful from a traffic or financial standpoint.

There are five crucial components of web design that you must focus on in order to make a site valuable to its visitors and successful for you.

- SEO -

Getting free traffic to your site.

- Usability -

Ease of navigating around the site and finding desired information quickly.

- Aesthetics -

Visual appeal.

- Content -

Valid, up to date, relevant information.

- Graphics -

Eye candy that relays relevant visual information to the visitor.

SEO

Before you ever lay down a byte of HTML code for a site you have to know and understand at least the basics of SEO and how it fits into the design. SEO is the art of designing a site in a fashion that gives the site an advantage for obtaining free and abundant traffic.

The number one aspect of SEO is selecting keywords relevant to your site.

The keywords you select should be based on high usage, low competition and relevancy to your topic. Once you select keywords you can then begin the development of your site. Keep in mind keywords are a critical aspect of the design. The keywords you choose will be applied within the design in strategic fashion to benefit the flow of traffic to your site. To understand more on how to implement SEO you should read and learn more about this important subject. If you don't, your website success will be difficult to achieve.

Usability

Your website must be easy to navigate and designed in a way that makes it easy to find information. Visitors will not stay long if it takes more than one or two clicks to get the information they want or if it takes brain power to figure out how to get the information they want. One of the goals of your site design is to keep usability easy, and simple. To do this, apply the following three fundamentals of usability.

** Provide a site search tool.*

A visitor in a hurry can quickly find the info they desire then move on to the action they desire.

** Provide simple, intuitive and consistent site navigation.*

This provides visitors the tool they need to leisurely explore their way through your site.

** Provide logical and simple to follow content.*

The message of a site should start off in a simple and basic fashion with well defined links pointing the way to more detailed

information or explanation as needed.

In the cases above the goal is to make it easy for your visitor to find the information they want without frustration or difficulty. Doing this well will have a positive effect on increasing the return of your visitors.

Aesthetics

A website has to look clean, uncomplicated and strike a balance in layout that is pleasant to the visitor. Pleasing aesthetics come about when the colors of a site complement each other, the graphics blend and lend continuation of the theme and the layout brings unity and openness to the page.

Often overlooked by novice designers is the color palette of the site. While you can select color in a willy-nilly fashion and still provide a visually appealing site, a better idea for color selection should be based on an understanding of the color wheel and proven color strategies.

Many web designers often view a web page as an opportunity to blast a visitor with lots of information in hopes this will convince the visitor to take action. Usually this results in a quick exit due to the overwhelming visual effect and complicated look. A better approach is to provide less content and open space (referred to as white space) to allow visitors eyes to scan and explore with ease.

Content

An important feature of any website is the quality of the text content. Visitors come to a site expecting to find answers to their questions, solutions to their problems or for entertainment value. The content offered at your site must be well-written, without grammatical or spelling errors. It also has to be relevant to the theme of your site, with valid, up to date information for your visitors. Content is King!

Graphics

You can have a functional and usable website without graphic elements. However, if there are similar sites to yours that employ graphics, guess which site will get the most traffic. The necessary companions to any well-designed site are the images and illustrations that grace its pages. The images can't be any willy-nilly graphic that you might think is cool. Graphic imagery has to support your branding, and communicate the message you are trying to convey. Before you incorporate graphic elements into your site, take some time to look around the web. Notice what looks good and how elements are laid out. These same layouts techniques can be used as models for your site.

The Internet is a highly competitive business arena. To be successful with a commercial website, you have to keep these five crucial web design elements in mind. Contrary to what many will tell you, it is rarely possible to have commercial success without the benefit of a professional website. This is not to say that you must hire a professional, however you must implement professional design elements to improve your chances for success.