

Miscellaneous Website Design Tips

Keep it Simple!

The kind of website you make depends on the kind of target market you are trying to reach. Unless your target market comprises of teenagers or any other group that needs a jazzy snazzy website, we would recommend keeping it simple. This rule applies especially if you are a professional company.

Navigation

Make sure your navigation is simple ... a menu, either text or graphical should be available on each page ... if your site is huge, make sure visitors at all times know which section they are in and provide simple, easy to find links that lead them back to the main page and/or other sections.

Load Time

Surprising as it may sound but there are still people browsing with 14.4K modems. Not everyone has a DSL cable modem connection. A lot of people do not even have a 56K connection. A lot of people who have 56K or 33.6K modems and can have a fast connection are hampered by their telephone lines which are not capable of transferring data at that rate. Add to that a fast paced world where people do not have time to wait around for pages to load. Therefore, it is recommended that your page (including the HTML page and graphics) should not be more than 50 K in size.

Screen Resolutions

There are three major screen resolutions: 640x480, 800x600 and 1024x768.

Check your website at all three resolutions. Don't just design for one resolution assuming that if your monitor is set at that resolution then everyone else's is, too. There are still a lot of people surfing at a 640x480 screen resolution, some by choice and others because they do not know how to change the resolution. Please remember that 640x480 is the default screen resolution in most monitors. If your website is designed for a larger screen resolution only, then a horizontal scroll bar will appear for lower resolutions. A lot of people leave at the site of a horizontal scroll bar.

In Windows 95/98/Me:

Right click on your desktop.

Click on properties.

Click on the settings tab.

You can change your monitor's resolution by sliding the bar for Screen Area.

On a MAC:

Apple Menu > Control Panels > Monitors > Choose Setting

Animation

Unless you are making a site for teenagers or gamers try to keep animation at a minimum. It drives attention away from your content which should be the main focus of your site.

Links

Open links that lead out of your site in a new window. You can do this by placing a 'target=_blank' in the 'a href' tag. This way, visitors can get to browse new links as well as stick around at your site.

Banner Exchange

If you have banners at your site, make sure there is none on your front page ... that may take away your visitor before they have had time to explore your site. Keep the banners for the inner pages; preferably towards the bottom of the page ... you don't want visitors to run away before they have even started exploring your website.

Top of Page

If your pages are quite long, always have a link to the top of the page at the bottom ... that makes browsing easier for the visitor. Another option is to give text links at the bottom so that the visitor does not have to scroll all the way up for the menu.

Website Image

Does your website project an image ... and not just an image but the kind you want it to portray? Did you want it to look friendly and welcoming and does it look boring and dull? A website can be given an image by just manipulating color, layout and design of the website. Make sure you pick the right colors ... for example Red is a vibrant color, Blue is calm and peaceful ... hues can also make the difference ... different color combinations provide different results. Fonts can also help portray a jovial mood or reinforce a professional look. Use all these elements wisely to get the right look