

Secrets of Successful Websites

Websites can be difficult to design and maintain. Most businesses need a website in order to succeed, but what should you put on your website?

Your website is often the visitor’s first contact with your business, so you want to make sure that it makes a good impression. In this report we’re going to look at ten important website tips designed to help you make the best impression (and get the best results) with your website.

Tip 1 – Content

The internet contains a lot of information, and your site should too. Photos are good, but they’re not actually worth a thousand words in the case of your website.

Information is the most important commodity in the world today. If you use high-quality content on your website, you will be able to attract many more visitors.

The internet has lots of information, sometimes too much information. Your site has to give your visitors the information they want, and make it easy for them to find.

If people are impressed with the content and your site, they will return time and time again. And, hopefully, they will recommend your site to their contacts, friends, and associates. Word-of-mouth advertising is very important and very effective.

Tip 2 – Loading time

It is very important for your website to load quickly. Everybody is short of time these days. Expecting prospective clients/customers to wait a few extra seconds for a website to load is risky.

So how quick is **quickly**? Well, on a 56K connection (which is so out-of-date nobody should still be using it these days) your site should ideally load in under 10 seconds. This is still quite a long time, however!

You will, unfortunately have to make some small trade-offs between speed and the appearance of your website. If you want a fancy website, then it may take longer to load. But people aren’t actually as obsessed with “bells and whistles” as you might imagine—the Google © website loads in less than 2.3 seconds for most users, so use this as a benchmark.

How do you speed up your site?

To speed up your site, be sure you:

- Use limited, well-chosen graphics—Graphics take time to load, so use them sparingly.



- Optimize your graphics for the internet—Make your images small in file size, but still of a quality that is pleasing to look at.
- Don't put too much content on one page—Spread content over onto multiple pages, if necessary.
- Use as little site code as possible.

Tip 3 – Appearance

Your website must look good. People really do judge things by how they look. They won't trust a site that looks bad, works poorly, or has little or no useful information—or worse, contains misinformation.

An attractive, effective website will increase the credibility of your business. It should reflect that you put time, thought, and effort into the design and life of your website.

Tip 4 – Dynamic information

Many sites on the internet look fantastic, but if you visit them just a couple of weeks later you might notice that nothing has changed.

If nothing changes after a couple of repeat visits, then chances are you won't visit that site again. People like to see new information. If there's no new information on your website, then your visitors have little (or no) reason to return. They've seen it all before.

The average person will make contact with a business seven times before actually making a purchase, which is why a dynamic website is so important.

How do you keep content fresh?

Use a blog, or a newest-product page. You can add regular entries to your blog to keep the content up-to-date and fresh.

Tip 5 – Interactivity

People want something to do when they visit your site, they want to be entertained.

What could you do to make your site more interactive?

- Newsletter – Allow your visitors to sign up for a free monthly newsletter which could provide:
 - Tips
 - Events
 - Special offers
- Survey – Get useful feedback about your products and services.
- Report – Visitors can download a report for free.
- E-course – Teach your visitors something in a multi-part e-course.
- Forum – allow your visitors to communicate with each other using a forum.



Tip 6 – Search optimization

Search engines (Google ©, Yahoo! ©, etc.) are extremely useful for getting people to visit your site. Four out of five website visitors use search engines to track down the information they are looking for. This is why search engines are so important when promoting your website.

You need to optimize your search-engine results. To do this you need technical skill, patience, and a lot of hard work!

Tip 7 – Ease of use

You should make your visitor’s life as easy as possible, so don’t complicate your site. Make it as user-friendly as possible.

- Navigation – Appeal to all. Make sure that even people still new to the Internet can use your site.
- Search function – If your site is large, then you need a search function.
- Easy to read – Use black text on a white background.
- Attractive – No distractions!

Tip 8 – Market (promote)

It’s pretty obvious that you will need to promote your site. Unfortunately, you can’t just build your site, then sit back and relax assuming that people will magically appear at your new, virtual door.

No matter how fantastic and useful your site is, people won’t visit it unless they know it exists.

How can you market (promote) your website?

- Back links – Get other sites to link to your site.
- Articles – Write articles and upload them to your site.
- Participate in forums – Advertise your site.
- Newsletters – Promote top-of-mind awareness through regular contact.

Tip 9 – Measuring success

You should evaluate how well your campaigns are progressing. Look at how people normally find your site.

Think about the search terms that people will use to find your page. Look at which pages are most often viewed, which pages are the entry/exit pages, and how often visitors return.

Tip 10 – Expertise

On your website, you should clearly display your company’s proven expertise. You can do this best by utilizing professional website development expertise in the design and management of that website.



Whether you are considering a first-time presence on the Internet, or you want to review the value of your current website, we can help.

SureSite Design can bring value to your website vision with professionalism, outstanding customer service, and excellent design capabilities. To learn more, e-mail us at info@suresitedesign.com or call us at 1-800-582-0435.

