



## Working the Web

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### Create an Online Look/Feel that Wins Hearts/Minds

Inbound marketing is about attracting business through your website and web presence. So it's important to be attractive. Technology, online marketing trends and best practices change quickly. Businesses should, therefore, take a fresh look at their websites and consider revamping them every three to five years. This is a perfect opportunity to update your site's look and feel, too.

What do we mean by that? The look and feel of a website is its entire visual aspect, including colors. These visual elements convey an emotional impact, and emotion is a significant component of purchase decisions. Here's an example of how a change in look/feel can help a site be more pleasing to its audiences.

#### Color & Shape Can Change First Impressions

Recently, we re-did a site for a male psychotherapist. The old site was rendered in a too-bright, in-your-face blue – the opposite of the soothing feeling such a professional might want to evoke. For the new site we used soft blue-greys with deeper brown accents to convey masculinity.

The background now has curved corners, a further softening effect. We added numbers of Web 2.0 features and SEO to attract search engines, but it's the change in look and feel that is immediately evident to visitors.

#### A New Look/Feel Is Inspiring

Re-designing your website with an eye to look and feel provides a gateway to reviewing and updating brand image overall. This re-do inspired a new template for an enewsletter and matching business cards. The card's curved corners serve as a differentiator of the practice. You know we're big on leverage!

Look/feel includes your logo – if you have one. Many businesses launch without taking the basic step of developing a unique symbol to use consistently in all communications. A logo provides audiences with a shortcut to remember your company and what it represents to them. It's far easier to recall a handsome logo than even a well-crafted 'elevator speech'.

#### A Logo Elevates Your Brand

There's nothing better to let you know you're making a good impression than handing your card to someone and having them say, "Wow. Nice logo!" Do you think they'll be more likely to open an email or envelope when they see the same symbol? In addition, having a professionally designed logo makes a positive statement about your business. It's a serious operation.

The process you'll go through to either design or refresh your company's visuals will help you organize all of your thinking about your business and how to articulate it as a brand in the competitive environment.

## **What to Expect**

Ideally, your designer will conduct research about your company and industry – sometimes using a questionnaire known as a design brief. Then you'll see a number of designs, which you'll narrow down and refine to a final choice.

Your designer should be creative and sophisticated about what's appropriate for your audiences and what works in design. An 'edgy' look won't play to a conservative audience. And a logo should work as well in a smaller version -- for a business card or email signature -- as in the header of your website.

When you design a logo, it's generally less expensive to develop a typeface treatment of your company name than it is to create a unique symbol – like the Nike Swoosh. Whatever your budget, tapping into the right look and feel for your brand is well worth the time and dollar investment.

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