TOP 10
WEBSITE BEST PRACTICES

1SEO.com DIGITAL AGENCY

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Successfully designed websites generate increased engagement from their visitors. A well-designed site also creates a consistent brand identity, drives more visitors who stay on the site longer, and helps distinguish you from your competition.

Here are some of the best practices to follow to make your website a critical tool in getting you new and continued business.

1. INCLUDE CAREFULLY CRAFTED CONTENT

A website needs to be easy to read, including plenty of whitespace, and it needs to use compelling content with SEO-friendly keywords to inspire visitors to explore what it has to offer. Simple and clear language should be used at all times, and you should avoid run-ons and industry jargon, which can discourage users from exploring and engaging in your site.

2. BE MOBILE-MINDED

Studies show that over 50% of websites are accessed by mobile devices and tablets. This means your site needs to be mobile-friendly and easy to navigate on these devices. A mobile-first design will ensure that no matter what, your site can be accessed. You can either make your desktop site fit into a mobile format, or offer a completely different version on mobile. Either way, having a mobile-friendly site is vital to avoid losing out on potential traffic.

3. EVERY SECOND COUNTS

The loading time of a website is a major contributing factor to who stays and who leaves a page. A slowly running site can negatively affect and reflect poorly on your organization. Remember, the average loading time for a site is two to three seconds. Visitor abandonment due to slow loading times should be avoided at all costs.

4. FIRST IMPRESSIONS ARE EVERYTHING

There should be a clear hierarchy of your website's information. Sizes, colors, and spacing should all combine to accentuate what services and products you want to highlight. Visitors should be able to understand what your site is about without having to scroll down. Your first impression is crucial here, so put all calls to action and essential information first and foremost.

5. CLEAR LINES OF COMMUNICATION

At its core, your page should be clear and highly visible, and contain an easy-to-complete contact form. This allows for straightforward information gathering and makes it easy for someone to contact you.

Similarly, all your calls to action should be vibrantly colored or use secondary colors to subconsciously urge the user to action. It is especially important for local businesses to have phone numbers and addresses visibly listed in the header of every page. The less searching a user has to do, the better.

And when including a phone number, keep in mind that at least half of the people viewing your site will be doing so on a mobile device. A click-to-call phone number is ideal here to streamline the contact and communication process.

6. KEEPING TRACK

Tracking user activity through the use of thank you pages is essential for you to quantify and measure your successes. The information gathered through these pages will be useful when evaluating the effectiveness of a site.

7. INCLUDE QUALITY AND COMPELLING IMAGES

High-quality photos and images should be used on your site to make it more visually engaging. Try to stay away from stock images which can be cliché and boring. Creating your own images or commissioning them to designers and taking your own photos can be a great way to provide genuine artwork and pictures on your site, lending a perception of authenticity to your business. No matter which path you choose, make sure the images are unique to your site and serve to further encourage customers to call, click, or make a purchase.

8. CONSIDER YOUR COLORS

You want your website to have consistent messaging. Don't use different colors and fonts for each page, which will make your site look busy and unappealing. Too much variety will dilute and muddle your vision. Instead, carefully select a palette of just a few complementary colors, and use them tastefully to create consistency and a parallel structure. This unity of vision will enhance your brand recognition and create a pleasing aesthetic.

9. MAKE IT SIMPLE TO NAVIGATE

If you have a website that even Magellan himself would have trouble navigating, it's best to replace it with something more user-friendly. Complicated website structures will cause visitors to leave out of frustration. Keep your navigation menus clear and self-evident by properly using color, contrast, and spacing to your advantage.

10. STRAIGHT FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH

Providing reviews and testimonials on your site is vital to show customers and followers that you not only have credibility, but that it's been rightfully earned. In addition, any awards, accreditations, or association memberships should be highlighted to illustrate the personal touch that your organization has, and that it's deserving of trust from the community it serves.

PROJECT YOUR VISION AND AMPLIFY YOUR VOICE

An aesthetically pleasing, engaging, and easy-to-use website should embody your brand and create a unified message and perspective to your audience. It shows your professionalism, and that you care about the products and services you offer. In short, a well-designed website is your megaphone and projector. If thoughtfully sculpted, it can amplify your voice and project your mission to the masses, helping to get you more calls, clicks, conversions, and sales along the way.