Ten Tips for Tired Sites

Diagnoses the problem

- Before you begin solving any problem, investigate when the problem started and how long it's been going on.
- If it's sudden, make sure that your site has been running without problems.
- **Check your daily site statistics. If there are hours or days without any traffic, contact your developer or host right away.**
- **You might have a serious issue with server reliability.**
- If you just launched your site, your expectations might be unrealistic or your fears might be well founded.
- If your site has been up for more than three years, it's probably due for tune up, if not a complete redesign.
- If you haven't tended your site with loving care, your competition might have outdistanced you online.

Check Traffic Statistics for User Appeal

- Here's where your Web analytics really come into play.
- To check whether your site has lost its appeal, look at the following values in your traffic statistics:
- Number of Unique Users (a decline in this category alone is probably
- due to traffic)
- Number of Repeat Visitors
- Number of Sessions or Visits
- Number of Page Views per Visit
- Average Time per Page
- Average Time per Session

Review Your Design for User Appeal

- Whether your site is old or new, take time to review your site with new eyes.
- Use the Web Site Assessment Forms to rank your site for concept, content, navigation, decoration, and marketing efficacy.
- Have several people you don't know, but who fit the demographics of your target market, do the same.
- Ask several customers who have never used your site to accomplish a task or purchase something and give you feedback. Usually, a total of five people will give you enough feedback to get a good perspective on what's going on.

Make Site Operation Easy for Users

Review the following statistics for hints on identifying specific pages for repair:

- Most and least viewed pages
- Path through site
- Entry and exit pages
- Browsers and operating systems used
- Countries and languages
- Download time for key pages
- Page status reports, particularly Not Found and orphan pages

Most of all, make sure that essential calls to action are easy to follow.

Use Multiple Techniques to Build Traffic

- Use a combination of onsite, online, and offline marketing techniques to ensure that you have many ways to reach your audience. Choose from:
- **Free info tools:** Signature blocks, blurbs, FAQs, Yahoo! Groups
- **Onsite techniques:** Chat rooms, message boards, wikis, contents, games, coupons, surveys, free samples, event announcements, Tell a Friend
- **Word-of-Web online techniques:** Blogs, What's New, hot sites, award sites, online press releases, search engine optimization, inbound link campaigns, e-newsletters
- **Paid online advertising:** PPC campaigns, newsletter sponsorships, banner ads
- **Offline advertising:** Literature, stationery, packaging, promotional items, community events, direct mail, coordinated ads in other media

Optimize Your Site for Sales

Here are some of the techniques you might use:

- Update merchandise regularly.
- Offer products that people want at a price they're willing to pay.
- Sell benefits, not features.
- Use marketing's three-letter word *(YOU!)*.
- Require only two clicks to order.
- Make the shopping process easy — for example, offering options to keep shopping, change the order, view a total, estimate shipping.
- Offer reasonably priced shipping.
- State customer policies clearly.
- Provide onsite product search capability.
- Include detailed product info.
- Use marketing's four-letter word *(FREE!)*.
- Increase your conversion rate with calls to action — for example,
- offering options to Add to Cart, Reserve Now, Register to Save

Embrace the Worms

- When you turn over the Web rock, the business worms crawl out.

- If you have *any* problems with your business — from short staffing to problems with a vendor to poor recordkeeping — going online will make them worse. Solve your problems first.

- The following options might help you turn your Web site into a profit center:
  1. Improve the bottom line with back-office efficiency.
  2. Integrate your Web site with your real-world storefront and other marketing.
  3. Remember the 4 Ps of marketing: product, price, placement, promotion.
  4. Set a realistic budget.
  5. Set realistic expectations.