

Web Design -- Selecting and Implementing Key Trends that have Staying Power and Generate Traffic

Web Design - Understanding Negative Mass

With web design, it is often more valuable to understand what a website shouldn't have as it is to understand what it should. Sometimes less matter is more. Eliminating insignificant and periphery content and tools is critical in understanding what the productive, appealing and user friendly aspects of a webpage are.

As with the aesthetics of art, people have an intuitive understanding of solid web design. They inherently recognize content and design they like and content that is redundant, irrelevant, disconnected or meaningless.

Spritzweb.com makes it abundantly clear that it is absolutely necessary to avoid these pitfalls (1).

Too much text or white space, too many options or tools, an overabundance of animations and valueless interactive components or incongruous and directionless paths does more to drive traffic away from a website than a perfectly constructed site does to bring traffic in according to Brave Media, a social media firm that specializes in inbound marketing (2).

When determining which trends you want to implement into your new or existing website, utilize two criteria: ease of functionality and the production value of the tool. These two criteria are most important because if it is not user friendly people using your website will avoid it and if it's not productive (doesn't generate traffic or money), it has no purpose. MetricsMan, a website dedicated to "insight and opinions on social media and public relations research and measurement" posted an article on August 21 that emphatically stated functionality is even more important for driving traffic than up and download speed (3).

Constructing a website with an understanding of what drives traffic away from a website allows you to utilize the tools and tutorials provided by companies like WebHostingBlueBook.com and create a traffic generating website that is also financially lucrative. The following are some of the hottest trends that focus on keeping users engaged in a website once they arrive.

Target Mobile Devices

If there is a trend that is surefire, can't miss, soon-to-be-one-of-the-10-Commandments-of-web-design, it is appeal to and provide for the mobile device world. Fewer and fewer people sit down in front of a laptop or desktop computer for their digital information and this is especially true of younger generations. MarketingLand.com recently reported that 40 percent of internet use is on mobile devices (4).

In respect to the effort of attracting and retaining mobile device traffic, CreaCity -- an ecommerce solutions group and a division of Intertrade Enterprises -- posted an article which stated that the highest priorities for

cross-compatibility are utilizing simple social media concepts -- Facebook and Twitter for example -- and making certain the backend code of your website is both desktop and mobile device compatible (5).

The biggest key to making your website attractive to mobile device users is speed. If your website doesn't load within three seconds, people lose interest according to a recent NetMagazine.com article (6). The first step to making your website load faster, fill it with light pictures and graphics. Heavy photos and graphics slow a page's load time more than anything else.

--Make your website as light as possible to make it universally compatible.

Sharpen Headlines and Mince Words

Use text judiciously. Fill the website with sentences and paragraphs that impact with clarity and brevity. The biggest mistake you can make when designing your website is cluttering it with poorly written, adjective/adverb/article laden prose. Make every sentence concise and relevant and eliminate any that don't add to the quality of your content. That is the secret to SEO and traffic retaining titles and meta tags iAcuire.com wrote in an article about the subject (7).

As important as keeping your readers engaged, long titles effect the SEO performance of your website. Keep titles less than 69 characters and your meta tags less than 120 encourages MetaLenght.com (8).

--Minimize text.

Spartan Landing Pages and Design Simplicity

Research shows, people respond to less text, graphics and tools rather than more (9). Particularly if you are selling a product, eliminate confusion by making the interface completely intuitive and user friendly. Frustrating consumers with hidden or obscure links or a collage of static graphics is a sign of amateurism and sends users in search of a different product. It is often the case that your website sells your products more than the products themselves because a professional website is a sign of success.

--Decorate landing pages with light images, one or two word hyperlinks and a means of getting to any page on your website from the landing page, even if it is a search tool.

Video

There is a direct correlation between videos on a website and a website's ability to generate traffic A COMSCORE study showed that retail site visitors who view video stay two minutes longer on average and are 64 percent more likely to purchase than other site visitors and 96 percent of online shoppers watch online videos (10). Instructional videos are easier to comprehend than text explanations -- and work especially well in combination because not everyone learns the same way. A video and text combination allows people digest audio instructions while

watching an example and they can follow up by re-reading the instruction in the text.

--Again, add more video(s).

CSS

Cascading Style Sheet have been around for quite a while, but recently there have been major innovations that make them more appealing than ever. CSS code is the frame work language used to design the format of a website.

While CSS used to be almost as limited as HTML, code innovations now allow for background transparency, animations, mobile web compatibility, hardware acceleration, and website security. Best of all, if you understand HTML, it is not difficult to understand CSS concepts meaning if you have a rudimentary understand of web design, you can utalize CSS and enhance your website to a much greater extent than you can with HTML and DHTML according to HTML.net (11).

--Implement CSS anywhere you can because it loads fast, has a clear format and style and allows you to imbed almost any form of multi media.

Sources

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