



Extra Packaging Ltd. Website Report – May 2010

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Introduction

In this report I will examine the web site of Extra Packaging Limited (www.extrapackaging.co.uk/). I will report what is good and bad about the current site and recommend solutions to overcome the problems that are found. The report will be broken down into the following sections:

- Adherence to web standards
- Cross browser compatibility
- Accessibility and Usability
- Search engine optimisation
- How content caters to target audience

Each section will give a brief introduction into why that area is important to the success of the site and then as problems are found they will be described along with how the re-designed site will fix it.

Web Standards

Why?

A good place to start is to look at how well the site complies with web standards.

Web standards are produced by The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C); they have been created to ensure the web is a more accessible, fairer place¹. You'll probably be thinking who cares if it doesn't strictly adhere to some technical standard as long as it looks good and contains the necessary information. There is some truth in this, not every site on the web is fully compliant but there are many benefits to creating a standardised web site, such as:

- Improved search result ranking. Standards force a page to be well structured and as such can be indexed correctly by a search engine.
- Reach a larger audience. People access the web using a variety of different browsers new and old (some very old.) Standards are there so that nearly all of these browsers can view the page as intended by the designer, if they are too old to interpret the latest designs, it will still be able to display the content in the correct structure.
- More devices can read the page. Due to the well structured nature of a standards compliant web page, many more devices not just PC's can read the information such as TV's, PDA's and more importantly mobile phones.

¹ Source: W3C. (2009) *W3C Mission*. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.w3.org/Consortium/mission> (Accessed 23rd April 2010).

- Accessible to people with disabilities. A standardised web page can be read by a screen reader which will read aloud the web page for the benefit of people with sight impairments.
- Easier to maintain. Because a standards compliant web site is more accessible, you do not need to worry about putting in fixes or having different versions of your site for different browsers and devices.

I will describe in more detail how these benefits work throughout the report¹.

To get a site to be standards compliant you need to add a declaration to the top of your HTML page which specifies which standard the page will comply with (there are many different standards, some more strict than others.) This enables the page to be validated by the W3C validation service to see if it meets that standard.

Validation

Problem



The original site doesn't specify a standard. The declaration or doctype as its known should be at the very top of the page before the <html> tag:

```

1 <html>
2
3 <head>
4 <TITLE>Contract Packing | Packaging Derby</TITLE>
5 <META NAME="DESCRIPTION" CONTENT="Extra Packaging specialise in Contract Packing,
Distribution on a contract/ad hoc basis.">
6 <META NAME="KEYWORDS" CONTENT="extra packaging, extra, packaging, derby, extra pa
marketing services, derby, hand assembly, folder
7 assembly, inserting, collating, mail sort, product re-works, reworks, product, re
shrink wrapping, confectionary packing, tip on / belly bands,
8 tip on, belly bands, greeting card, fulfillment, pick pack dispatch, pick, pack,
9 <meta name="verify-v1" content="nUg9yOjvg5nsM43rqWkGcdNYtmAyJDY74wak/VDKb+8=" />
10 <META NAME="RATING" CONTENT="General">
11 <META NAME="ROBOTS" CONTENT="index, follow">
12 <META NAME="REVISIT-AFTER" CONTENT="1 Week">
```

¹ Many more reasons can be found at: Web Standards Project-WaSP. (2002) *What are web standards and why should I use them?* [Online]. Available at: <http://www.webstandards.org/learn/faq/> (Accessed 23rd April 2010).

Putting this through the validation service generates 26 Errors¹:

Errors found while checking this document as HTML 4.01 Transitional!	
Result:	26 Errors, 6 warning(s)
Address:	http://www.extrapackaging.co.uk/
Encoding:	windows-1252
Doctype:	HTML 4.01 Transitional
Root Element:	html

As expected it is not standards compliant, but notice that it has used a default standard, HTML 4.01 Transitional. This is because not specifying a standard switches the browser to “quirks” mode. In “quirks” mode the browser doesn’t know how to properly display your page, it will display because web browsers can accommodate a lot of error and will try their best to display the page but it will probably not look the same as the original. This can lead to cross browser compatibility problems as each different browser has its different “quirks”².

Fix



All that is needed is to declare a doctype at the beginning of each page.

Then each one can be put through the validator to ensure it meets the standard. A doctype was added to the original site’s home page (the standard we will use is HTML 4.01 – Strict):

```
1  <!DOCTYPE html PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD HTML 4.01//EN" "http://www.w3.org/TR/html4/strict.dtd">
2  <html>
3
4  <head>
5    <TITLE>Contract Packing | Packaging Derby</TITLE>
6    <META NAME="DESCRIPTION" CONTENT="Extra Packaging specialise in Contract Packing, Fulfilment, P
7    <META NAME="KEYWORDS" CONTENT="extra packaging, extra, packaging, derby, extra packaging derby,
8    assembly, inserting, collating, mail sort, product re-works, reworks, product, re-labelling, re
9    tip on, belly bands, greeting card, fulfillment, pick pack dispatch, pick, pack, dispatch, disp
10   <meta name="verify-v1" content="nUg9y0jvg5nsM43rqWkGcdNYtmAyJDY74wak/VDKb+8=" />
11   <META NAME="RATING" CONTENT="General">
```

¹ Source: W3C. (2010) *Markup Validation Service*. [Online]. Available at: <http://validator.w3.org/> (Accessed: 7th April 2010).

² Source: Community MX. (2008) *Rendering Mode and Doctype Switching*. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.communitymx.com/content/article.cfm?cid=E2F258C46D285FEE> (Accessed: 23rd April 2010).

Now running it through the validator again:

Errors found while checking this document as HTML 4.01 Strict!

Result:	63 Errors, 3 warning(s)
Source:	<pre><!DOCTYPE html PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD HTML 4.01//EN" "http://www.w3.org/TR/html4/strict.dtd"> <html> <head> <TITLE>Contract Packing Packaging Derby</TITLE> <META NAME="DESCRIPTION" CONTENT="Extra Packaging specialise in Contract Packing, Fulfilment, Print Finishing & Marketing Services, Storage & Distribution on a contract/ad hoc basis."> <META NAME="KEYWORDS" CONTENT="extra packaging, extra, packaging, derby, extra packaging derby, contract packing, fulfilment, print finishing, marketing services, derby, hand assembly, folder assembly, inserting, collating, mail sort, product re-works, reworks, product, re-labelling, relabelling, repackaging, repacking, shrink-wrapping, shrink wrapping, confectionary packing, tip on / belly bands,"></pre>
Encoding:	utf-8
Doctype:	HTML 4.01 Strict
Root Element:	html

This gave 63 errors!¹ Ostensibly this looks worse than before but there are only more errors now because the validator has checked it against the strict standard rather than the less enforced transitional standard. Throughout this report I will take these errors into account and detail the ways to overcome them which will result in creating a standards compliant website.

Page Structure

Problem



Whilst analysing the original site I noticed that there wasn't much CSS content:

The screenshot shows the Microsoft Internet Explorer Developer Tools interface. The title bar reads "Contract Packing | Packaging Derby - Developer Tools". The menu bar includes File, Find, Disable, View, Outline, Images, Cache, Tools, Validate, and Browser Mode: IE8. The toolbar below the menu bar has buttons for HTML, CSS, Script, and Profiler, with CSS selected. A dropdown menu shows the URL "http://www.extrapackaging.co.uk/". The main pane displays the CSS tree. The "A:hover" selector is expanded, showing three rules: "color : #ff0000", "font-weight : bold", and "text-decoration : none". Below it, the ".style1" selector is expanded, showing one rule: "color : #666666".

¹ Source: W3C. (2010) *Markup Validation Service*. [Online]. Available at: <http://validator.w3.org/> (Accessed: 7th April 2010).

All of the styling is being done inside the HTML. To highlight this I turned off the styling, below is the result:

The screenshot shows the homepage of Extra Packaging Limited. At the top, there's a horizontal bar with the text "Contract Packing Derby" and "Contract Packaging Derbyshire". Below this is a banner featuring several small images of products like CDs, books, and wrapped items. A green banner across the middle contains the slogan "Always looking to improve standards to enable us to focus on total customer satisfaction". Below the banner is a navigation menu with links: home | packing | finishing & marketing services | fulfilment | distribution | our service | contact |. On the left, there's a logo for "extra packaging limited" with a stylized 'e'. The main content area has a blue background with white text sections. One section discusses their service: "At Extra Packaging Limited we offer a fast, friendly, reliable and high quality service that is backed by good organization and a flexible approach to our customer's needs." Another section talks about their capacity: "We have the capacity to store 100+ pallets in our clean warehouse plus we have the added advantage of storage facilities off site, enabling us to store components ready to be called off for your fulfilment work. We are able to handle various products, small or large quantities in any shapes or sizes." A third section mentions food hygiene: "An 'Extra' service we now offer is packing of wrapped confectionery. We are compliant with food and safety regulations and have qualified staff who are Food Hygiene certified." At the bottom, a small note states: "Facilities, descriptions, details & prices correct at time of publication. For up to date information please contact us. Copyright © 2007 - 10 JWP".

Notice that the page looks almost identical which proves the CSS isn't' doing what it should be. Web standards specify that the styling of a web page should be done in a CSS document rather than inside the HTML. This leaves the HTML to dictate the structure of the page and the CSS to handle the styling. This provides a great benefit for future modification and maintenance, for example if the font style had to be changed in the future it would involve changing five different areas of the HTML on the home page alone:

```

<table border="0" cellspacing="1" style="border-collapse: collapse" bordercolor="#111111" width="100%>
  <table border="0" cellspacing="1" style="border-collapse: collapse" bordercolor="#111111" width="100%>
    <tbody>
      <tr>
        <td width="74%" valign="top">
          <table border="0" cellpadding="0" cellspacing="0" style="border-collapse: collapse" bordercolor="#111111" width="100%>
            <tbody>
              <tr>
              <tr>
              <tr>
              <tr>
            </tbody>
          </table>
        <td width="100%">
          <p style="line-height: 150%; margin-left:5; margin-right:5px">
            <b><font size="2" face="Verdana" color="#000080">
              "At Extra Packaging Limited we offer a fast, friendly, reliable and high quality service that is backed by good organization and a flexible approach to our customer's needs. "
            </font>
            </b>
          </p>
          <p style="line-height: 150%; margin-left:5; margin-right:5px">
            <span style="color: #000080; font-weight: 700">
              <font size="2" face="Verdana">
                "Since being established in 1999 we have acquired extensive experience in the range of services we offer, enabling us to fulfil our customer requirements."
              </font>
            </span>
          </p>
          <p class="MsoNormal" style="text-align: justify; text-justify: inter-ideograph; line-height: 150%; margin-left: 5; margin-right:5px">
            <span style="font-family: Verdana; font-weight: 700">
              <font size="2" color="#000080">
                "The areas we specialize in include Contract Packing, Fulfilment, Print Finishing and Marketing Services, Storage and Distribution on a contract or ad hoc basis."
              </font>
            </span>
          </p>
          <p class="MsoBodyText2" style="line-height: 150%; margin-left: 5; margin-right:5px">
            <b><font size="2" face="Verdana" color="#000080">
              "We have the capacity to store 100+ pallets in our clean warehouse plus we have the added advantage of storage facilities off site, enabling us to store components ready to be called off for your fulfilment work. We are able to handle various products, small or large quantities in any shapes or sizes."
            </font>
            </b>
          </p>
          <p class="MsoNormal" style="text-align: justify; text-justify: inter-ideograph; line-height: 150%; margin-left: 5; margin-right:5px">
            <span style="font-family: Verdana; color: #000080; font-weight: 700">
              <font size="2">
                "An 'Extra' service we now offer is packing of wrapped confectionery. We are compliant with food and safety regulations and have qualified staff who are Food Hygiene certified."
              </font>
            </span>
          </p>
        </td>
      </tr>
    </tbody>
  </table>

```

Multiply this by the 6 other pages which have even more content on them then you can see this is going to be a long process.

Fix



In contrast just one CSS declaration can style the font for the whole site,

e.g.:

```

body {
  font-family:Verdana, Geneva, Tahoma, sans-serif;
}

```

All of the style attributes in the HTML need to be stripped out to the CSS file, this would ensure separation of structure and style which would greatly reduce the 63 validation errors and get it closer to being standards compliant.

Problem



The pages of the site are created using tables:

The screenshot shows the Google Developer Tools interface with the URL <http://www.extrapackaging.co.uk/>. The top navigation bar includes links for Elements, Resources, Scripts, Timeline, Profiles, and Storage. The main content area displays the HTML structure of the page. A blue bar highlights the <html> tag, and the code below shows nested table elements with border-collapse: collapse and bordercolor: #111111. The code is as follows:

```
> <head>
▼ <body link="#000080" vlink="#000080" topmargin="0" background="ep%20logo%20slant%201000b.jpg" bgproperties="fixed">
  ▶ <table border="0" width="100%" id="table1">
    ▶ <table border="0" cellspacing="1" style="border-collapse: collapse" bordercolor="#111111" width="100%">
      ▶ <table border="0" cellspacing="1" style="border-collapse: collapse" bordercolor="#111111" width="100%">
        ▶ <table border="0" cellspacing="1" style="border-collapse: collapse" bordercolor="#111111" width="100%">
          ▶ <table border="0" cellspacing="1" style="border-collapse: collapse" bordercolor="#111111" width="100%">
            </body>
          </html>
```


The website has a yellow header with the company logo and navigation links for home, packing, finishing & marketing services, fulfilment, distribution, our service, and contact. Below the header is a green section titled 'About us' containing text about the company's history, services, and food hygiene certification. At the bottom, there is a red footer with small text and a copyright notice.

Using tables to create a web page is very common but it can lead to accessibility issues as tables are read out by screen readers cell by cell, many cells are blank in tabled designs for positioning so will sound confusing when read aloud. Also non-

essential graphics are often needed in tabled designs, blank spacer images are used to put gaps between elements to position them, these images aren't part of the structure and shouldn't be used as they will hinder people using text browsers, screen readers and people with slow connections. Also you can end up with "code bloat", that is too much code in your HTML file that it becomes overwhelming and hard to maintain. This is because lots of tables, rows and cells are required to create a nice looking page¹. For example if the company mission statement needed to be changed it would take a lot of digging through the code to find it:

¹ Source: Cederholm, D. (2008) Chapter 3 - Expandable Rows, In: *Bulletproof Web Design*. 2nd edn. Berkeley: New Riders, pp. 49-50.

```

▼ <html>
  ► <head>
    ▶ <body link="#000080" vlink="#000080" topmargin="0" background="ep%20logo%20slant%201000b.jpg" bgproperties="fixed">
      ► <table border="0" width="100%" id="table1">
        ▼ <table border="0" cellspacing="1" style="border-collapse: collapse" bordercolor="#111111" width="100%">
          ▼ <tbody>
            ▼ <tr>
              ► <td width="22%">
                ▼ <td width="78%">
                  ▼ <table border="0" cellspacing="1" style="border-collapse: collapse" bordercolor="#111111" width="100%">
                    ▼ <tbody>
                      ▼ <tr>
                        ► <td width="100%">
                          </tr>
                        ▼ <tr>
                          ▼ <td width="100%">
                            ▼ <table border="0" cellspacing="1" style="border-collapse: collapse" bordercolor="#111111" width="100%">
                              ▼ <tbody>
                                ▼ <tr>
                                  <td width="33%"> </td>
                                  ▼ <td width="35%">
                                    ▼ <b>
                                      ▼ <font size="2" face="Verdana" color="#05893A">
                                        ▼ <marquee behavior="slide" scrolldelay="1" scrollamount="50" width="659">
                                          "Always looking to improve standards to enable us to focus on total customer satisfaction"
                                        </marquee>
                                      </font>
                                    </b>
                                  </td>
                                  <td width="32%"> </td>
                                </tr>
                              ▼ <tr>
                                </tbody>
                              </table>
                            </td>
                          </tr>
                        </tbody>
                      </table>
                    </td>
                  </tr>
                </tbody>
              </td>
            </tr>
          </tbody>
        </table>
      </body>
    </html>

```

Fix



This isn't necessary; with separate structure and style you can have just the basic 'skeleton' structure in the HTML which is a lot smaller and style it appropriately using CSS without the need for tables.

Problem



As well as page structure in terms of overall appearance and layout you can also see how well a page is structured in terms of content. Just as in a normal document you have titles, section headers, sub-headings etc. You also do in

web pages. The heading `<h>` tags are ideal for laying out a structure for your page.

There are six in all from `<h1>` to `<h6>` with `<h1>` being the most prominent. Proper utilisation of these tags can create a well structured page which also has benefits for search engines (see search engine ranking section). Unfortunately there are very few of these tags in the extra packaging site. There is one `<h1>` tag on the finishing & marketing page but it contains a whole paragraph of information (`<h1>` tags are usually reserved for main titles) and is styled in such a way that it doesn't appear any different from the other text so you have to wonder why it was used in the first place:



Print Finishing & Marketing Services

We offer a finishing service to Print and Marketing companies, as the last port of call prior to your work being delivered into your Client. Our in-house quality checks ensure your products are finished to the highest standard in accordance with your specification and to the complete satisfaction of yourselves and your Client.

This text is inside a `<h1>` tag, yet the title 'Print Finishing & Marketing Services'

above is just a normal paragraph `<p>` element. It's the wrong way round.

Also on some pages the `<h2>` and `<h4>` elements are being styled:

```
12 <style>
13 <!--
14 h2
15     {margin-bottom:.0001pt;
16     text-align:justify;
17     text-justify:inter-ideograph;
18     page-break-after:avoid;
19     font-size:14.0pt;
20     font-family:Arial;
21     margin-left:0cm; margin-right:0cm; margin-top:0cm}
22 h4
23     {margin-bottom:.0001pt;
24     text-align:justify;
25     text-justify:inter-ideograph;
26     page-break-after:avoid;
27     font-size:14.0pt;
28     font-family:Arial;
29     font-weight:normal; margin-left:0cm; margin-right:0cm; margin-top:0cm}
30 -->
31 </style>
```

Yet there are no `<h2>` or `<h4>` tags in the body of the page, this is very confusing from a maintenance point of view.

Fix



Very simply create a page with `<h>` tags for every title to break it up into logical sections, as well as search engine benefits it will have benefits for screen readers and for people using text only browsers (or where styling has been disabled, on slow connections for example).

Problem



The text of the site has been set to bold using the `` tag:

```
▼ <b>
  ▼ <font size="2" face="Verdana" color="#000080">
    "At Extra Packaging Limited we offer a fast, friendly, reliable and high quality service
  </font>
</b>
</p>
```

The `` tag is intended to be used to emphasise parts of text. Setting the entire content to bold isn't necessary and loses its effectiveness. If you wanted to highlight something to the user in the future then it would be difficult¹.

Fix



The bold tag isn't necessary. We can use a good looking font specified in the CSS and then if we still want certain text to stand out we can highlight it with the `` or `` tag which will make it stand out. The amount of

¹ Source: Lynch, P J & Horton, S. (eds.) (2008) Chapter 8 - Typography, In: *Web Style Guide*. 3rd edn. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, pp. 224.

'emphasis' can then be controlled in the CSS. Proper structure using `<h>` tags will negate the need for most of the bold used in the site anyway.

Cross Browser Compatibility

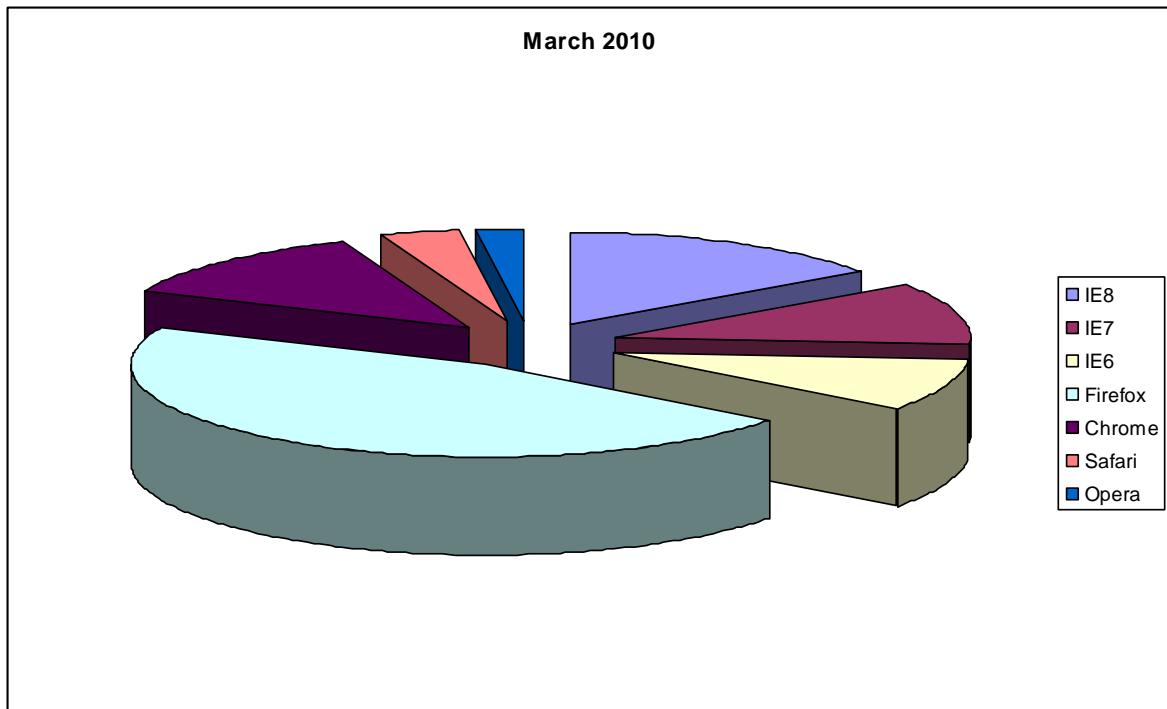
Why?

Your web site will be accessed in a variety of different ways. People are no longer just using Microsoft's Internet Explorer to access the web, there are now many browsers available for people to use and your site needs to work and look the same across them all.

Accurate browser usage statistics are hard to find as it mainly depends upon the target audience of the site as to what browser they're using. Generic sites are probably going to see a high percentage of Internet Explorer users than more specialised sites. The W3schools is a specialised site which has learning facilities for people wanting to learn web development. They publish monthly records of what browsers its users have accessed with¹:

2010	IE8	IE7	IE6	Firefox	Chrome	Safari	Opera	Total
March	15.30%	10.70%	8.90%	46.20%	12.30%	3.70%	2.20%	99.30%
February	14.70%	11.00%	9.60%	46.50%	11.60%	3.80%	2.10%	99.30%
January	14.30%	11.70%	10.20%	46.30%	10.80%	3.70%	2.20%	99.20%

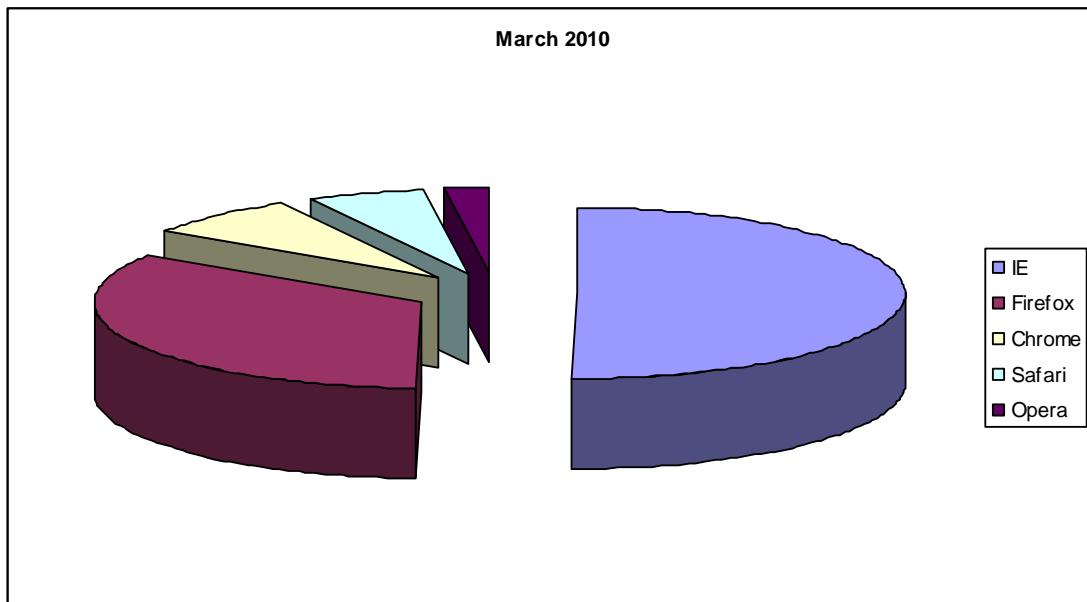
¹ Source: w3schools. (2010) *Browser Statistics*. [Online]. Available at: http://www.w3schools.com/browsers/browsers_stats.asp (Accessed: 8th April 2010).



As you can see there are five major browsers with almost 100% market share. But w3schools by its very nature will be attracting people with a keen interest in web development and as such will more likely be using different browsers. More generic statistics were necessary. The W3 counter is a free web analytics program that keeps statistics on browser usage. With it being a free counter tool it is more likely to have a general spread on web usage¹.

2010	IE	Firefox	Chrome	Safari	Opera	Total
March	47.90%	32.30%	7.40%	5.50%	2.10%	95.20%

¹ Source: W3Counter. (2010). *Global Web Stats March 2010*. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.w3counter.com/globalstats.php?year=2010&month=3> (Accessed: 9th April 2010).



As expected Internet Explorer (Versions 6, 7 and 8) is the most common browser, but more importantly it backed up the previous figures by showing us that there are five major browsers with almost 100% market share. As such I will be using these five browsers to do the compatibility checks and to test the re-designed site.

Original Site's Cross-Browser Compatibility

This section is intended as a general overview because most compatibility problems arise from not abiding to the standards we discussed in the first section (validating the mark-up will help enormously). I will mention other compatibility issues as we go through the rest of the report.

The original site looks pretty much the same across all browsers mentioned above, with only slight differences in positioning and font size. This is due to the different browsers having different defaults for the padding and margins of the various html

elements. To overcome this I will reset all padding and margins to zero at the start of the CSS sheet to ensure the site is going to behave the same across browsers¹:

As mentioned in the first section, applying a doctype will enable the site to be cross-browser compatible as it will prevent going into “quirks” mode which is when things start to go awry. The fact the original site didn’t break yet it didn’t have a doctype specified is down to the fact that the tabled design makes the site very rigid (in all honesty there isn’t that much to break either due to the simplistic design and lack of graphics). This may sound quite a glowing endorsement for the site but wait! It is a fair assumption that the content will be required to change in the future. Let’s say we want another couple of pages to be added to the site so we need to update the navigation menu:

The screenshot shows the homepage of Extra Packaging Limited. At the top, there are two small links: 'Contract Packing Derby' and 'Contract Packaging Derbyshire'. Below these are several small thumbnail images representing different services or products. A banner below the thumbnails contains the text 'Always looking to improve standards to enable us to focus on total customer satisfaction'. Below the banner is a horizontal menu bar with the following items: 'home | packing | what we can do | gallery | recycling & sustainability | finishing & marketing services | fulfilment | distribution | our service | contact |'. At the bottom left, there is a link to 'About us'. Below the 'About us' link, there is a brief description of the company's history and services.

About us

At Extra Packaging Limited we offer a fast, friendly, reliable and high quality service that is backed by good organization and a flexible approach to our customer's needs.
Since being established in 1999 we have acquired extensive experience in the range of services we offer, enabling us to fulfil our customer requirements.

Notice how the logo has dropped down the page due to the table cells expanding making it look un-professional. With a doctype (and table-less design) the transition would be flawless.

¹ Source: meyerweb.com. (2007). *Reset Reasoning*. [Online]. Available at: <http://meyerweb.com/eric/thoughts/2007/04/18/reset-reasoning/> (Accessed: 1st May 2010).

Accessibility

Why?

In 1999 the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) was established to make the web accessible to people with disabilities¹. It is now such an important part of creating for the web that the US has made it law for anyone wanting to do business with the US government². I could argue the case for wanting to make a site accessible but I think the following quote sums it up perfectly: *“It’s profoundly the right thing to do, because the one argument for accessibility that doesn’t get made nearly often enough is how extraordinarily better it makes people’s lives. Blind people with access to a computer can now read the daily newspaper on their own. Imagine that³.”*

Accessibility can be something as basic as visually impaired people wanting to increase the text size or blind users utilising screen readers to read aloud the page's contents. As accessibility is part of the overall usability of the site, I will also comment on how the site compares to common usability features and standards.

The most basic accessibility check is to increase the text size to see if a) its possible and b) the layout of the page isn't ruined (although every page has its breaking point, it should be able to handle a decent increase in text size).

¹ Source: Lynch, P J & Horton, S. (eds.) (2008) Chapter 2 – Universal Usability, In: *Web Style Guide*. 3rd edn. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, pp. 51-52.

² Source: BBC. (2001) *Digital Tools for the disabled*. [Online]. Available at: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/sci/tech/1723743.stm> (Accessed: 24th April 2010).

³ Source: Krug, S. (2006) Chapter 11 – Accessibility, Cascading Style Sheets, and You, In: *Don’t Make Me Think*. 2nd edn. Berkeley: New Riders, p. 171.

About us

At Extra Packaging Limited we offer a fast, friendly, reliable and high quality service that is backed by good organization and a flexible approach to our customer's needs.

Since being established in 1999 we have acquired extensive experience in the range of services we offer, enabling us to fulfil our customer requirements.

The areas we specialize in include Contract Packing, Fulfilment, Print Finishing and Marketing Services, Storage and Distribution on a contract or ad hoc basis.

Good



The above image shows the home page with an increased text size of 36 pixels. It has increased and the layout has coped. This is due to the text being defined with the font size tag:

```
<p align="center" style="line-height:150%"><b><font  
size="2">
```

This is good, it enables the text to be resized. Many sites specify font size in pixels which prevents the text being resized and failing this very basic accessibility check. But as mentioned before the text should be styled using CSS. One CSS entry could size the font for the whole site, whereas if you wanted to change the font on the site as it is many html tags would have to be modified in the home page alone.

Problem



The pages of the extra packaging site use an element called <marquee> to scroll the company's mission statement in from the right hand side of the page. This contravenes Guideline 7 of the WAI Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

because scrolling elements are hard to read for people with visual disabilities.

Movement can also distract users from reading the page (although it only scrolls in once). More importantly screen readers are unable to read moving text, so the mission statement is not accessible¹.

Fix



The marquee scrolling element isn't necessary and is generally considered gimmicky². It is also an Internet Explorer only element (although most other browsers support it) but this isn't a guarantee so isn't strictly cross browser compatible. I believe the company mission statement should be more prominent and accessible, so placing it in the header of the page and styled using CSS will fix this problem.

Problem



Images used on the site do not contain a text equivalent. The 'alt' attribute is required for the site to be standards compliant; it provides a text alternative that can be displayed if the user has images turned off (for speed purposes on a slow connection for example) and can be read by screen readers to describe an image that a visually impaired user cannot see.

¹ Source: W3C. (1999) *Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0*. [Online]. Available at:

<http://www.w3.org/TR/WAI-WEBCONTENT/#tech-avoid-flicker> (Accessed: 24th April 2010).

² Source: LINE25. (2009) *10 HTML Tag Crimes You Really Shouldn't Commit*. [Online]. Available at:

<http://line25.com/articles/10-html-tag-crimes-you-really-shouldnt-commit> (Accessed: 3rd May 2010).

The screenshot shows a website layout. At the top left, there is a logo with the text "Contract Packing, Packaging Derby". To the right of the logo, the text "Contract Packing Derby" and "Contract Packaging Derbyshire" is displayed above a horizontal menu bar. The menu bar contains links for "home", "packing", "finishing & marketing services", "fulfilment", "distribution", "our service", and "contact". Below the menu, a green banner states "Always looking to improve standards to enable us to focus on total customer satisfaction". The main content area is titled "About us" and contains several paragraphs of text describing the company's services, history, and capabilities. At the bottom of the page, a small note mentions "Facilities, descriptions, details & prices correct at time of publication. For up to date information please contact us. Copyright © 2007 - 10 JWP".

Only the logo image has alt text, this is the same for every page.

Fix



An easy one. Provide an 'alt' text attribute for every image. This will go a long way to ensuring the site's validation and accessibility. Also an additional benefit is that the alt text is able to be scanned by a search engine to help improve the search result ranking (see search engine section).

Problem



Screen readers will read out the content of the page in the order it was written in the HTML file¹. This can become tiresome because the title, navigation links etc. will all be read out before the actual content, repeat this process for each page and I'm sure you'll be able to imagine how frustrating it can be.

Fix



Links can be added to the very top of the page that skip the navigation and titles and head straight for the content. As the links are at the top

¹ Source: Cederholm, D. (2008) Chapter 8 – Fluid and Elastic Layouts, In: *Bulletproof Web Design*. 2nd edn. Berkeley: New Riders, p 206.

they will be read out by the screen reader first enabling the user to skip straight to the content. To prevent them appearing in the normal styled version of the page, CSS will be used to hide them.

Problem



As we have discovered the majority of the styling is being done inside the HTML mark-up. Many users wish to view web pages without any sort of styling (many mobile phone/handheld device browsers do this also). If CSS is turned off, currently the page is still styled. What's worse is that many visually impaired users have their own style sheets that override the site's style sheets. They do this to convert the appearance to make it easier to read (white text on a black background is a common one to increase contrast). Currently this will not be possible.

Fix



Again this adds to the argument that the styling should be done separately in a CSS document. This way it can be overridden or switched off if user's so wish.

Usability

As people have used the web usability conventions have grown up over time. People now expect to find certain items on a web page in certain positions. These conventions exist not to limit a page's design but as a guide to help you place things in the expected locations to help the user. I will look at how the site addresses such issues.

Problem



Link and visited link (vlink) colours have been set to be the same colour:

```
<body link="#000080" vlink="#000080" topmargin="0"  
background="ep%20logo%20slant%201000b.jpg" bgproperties="fixed">
```

This isn't good practice; people like to know which pages they have visited by the different link colours. Default is blue for unvisited and purple for visited.

Conventional design rules like this are there for a reason as they have evolved over time to meet users' expectations. Also by having a different colour for visited links people can see how much of a site they have visited¹.

Fix



Leave the link/visited link colours as default as that is what people will expect.

Problem



Many users print pages to read later as they find it easier to read on paper than on screen. Currently if the page is printed out what you see is what you get i.e. everything on screen is printed. Users would prefer just the content they are interested, no navigation, no images and less colour to save on ink.

Fix



A separate CSS sheet that is only used for printing shall be created. It will turn off the header, leaving just the content and other additional

¹ Source: Krug, S. (2006) Chapter 6 – Street Signs and Breadcrumbs, In: *Don't Make Me Think*. 2nd edn. Berkeley: New Riders, pp.22-23.

information such as the web address URL¹. Many sites do have a ‘print this page’ link on their site but having a CSS sheet for printing negates the need. The problem is people may not attempt printing because there’s no link pointing it out to them. I will add some text to the footer that informs users that the page can be printed. A date would also be useful but a date is useful no matter what the medium, screen or print, so a “date last updated” line will be added to the footer showing the last time the information was updated. This will give the users a good indication of how valid the content is².

Problem

Overuse of the **** tag in the site to make all of the text bold. As alluded to previously this prevents anything being highlighted or emphasised, links cannot show through and it also creates a nasty effect where the user feels they’re being shouted at. It is also difficult to read³.

Fix



I will make the text plain and divide the content by having a different background colour for alternate paragraphs making it easier to read.

¹ Source: Lynch, P J & Horton, S. (eds.) (2008) Chapter 7 – Page Design, In: *Web Style Guide*. 3rd edn. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, p. 175.

² Source: Lynch, P J & Horton, S. (eds.) (2008) Chapter 6 – Page Structure, In: *Web Style Guide*. 3rd edn. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, p. 158.

³ Source: Lynch, P J & Horton, S. (eds.) (2008) Chapter 8 – Typography, In: *Web Style Guide*. 3rd edn. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, pp. 222-223.

No Images

A useful usability test is to browse the site with all images turned off. This gives a good indication as to what people will see if they disable images (many users will do this if they have slow internet connections).

Good



The site does well with images turned off. The structure stays intact because the images have been given a width and height attribute which is important otherwise the layout will be squashed.

The screenshot shows a website layout. On the left, there is a sidebar with the text "Extra Packaging Ltd Derby UK". The main content area features a grid of seven small images. Below the grid, a green banner contains the text "Always looking to improve standards to enable us to focus on total customer satisfaction". At the bottom, a green footer bar includes links for "home", "packing", "finishing & marketing services", "fulfilment", "distribution", "our service", and "contact".

Contact or Find us

Contact us by mail at

Extra Packaging Limited
Unit 9
Centurion Way
Alfreton Road
Derby
DE21 4AY

Or

Telephone us on: 01332 206061
Send us a fax on: 01332 344006
Or e-mail: enquiries@extrapackaging.co.uk

Visit us



To view a more comprehensive map of our location please click on the map

Company Logo



A common convention is the clicking of the company logo (which by convention should be in the top left hand corner¹) to go back to the home

¹ Source: Krug, S. (2006) Chapter 6 – Street Signs and Breadcrumbs, In: *Don't Make Me Think*. 2nd edn. Berkeley: New Riders, p.64.

page. The vast majority of users expect this functionality in any web site¹. The original site meets this demand.

Utility Bar

Many sites incorporate what is known as a utility bar inside the header. This is to house links that aren't necessarily part of the content hierarchy such as help, about us, contact us, find us, shopping cart etc². I will incorporate a utility bar into the redesign which will contain a 'find us' link. Many users will expect to find these items here and I feel it's important to have a find link as well as a contact link so people know the contact page contains directions as well as contact details. Also even though the company logo as a link to the home page is ubiquitous throughout the web, some people still do not know about this functionality, so I will add a home link in the utility bar also.

Navigation

Users expect navigation links in the header of a web page, particularly 'overall' site navigation³. As this is a small site, this global navigation can be used as **the** form of navigation.



Contract Packing Derby Contract Packing Derbyshire



Always looking to improve standards to enable us to focus on total customer satisfaction

| [home](#) | [packing](#) | [finishing & marketing services](#) | [fulfilment](#) | [distribution](#) | [our service](#) | [contact](#) |

¹ Source: Lynch, P J & Horton, S. (eds.) (2008) Chapter 6 – Page Structure, In: *Web Style Guide*. 3rd edn. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, p. 154.

² Source: Krug, S. (2006) Chapter 6 – Street Signs and Breadcrumbs In: *Don't Make Me Think*. 2nd edn. Berkeley: New Riders, pp.65-67.

³ Source: Lynch, P J & Horton, S. (eds.) (2008) Chapter 6 – Page Structure, In: *Web Style Guide*. 3rd edn. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, p. 154.

The original site has this global navigation. However it could be more prominent and central, plus there's no way of knowing where you are on the site because as previously mentioned the visited and non-visited links are the same colour.

Fix



I will make the navigation more prominent and central. It will also be tab based to give users orientation as to where they are on the site¹.

Taglines

Tag lines or mission statements are very important to describe what the site's purpose is. There is only so much a nice logo or colour scheme can do before users want to know what your site can offer. Taglines should be descriptive and concise and be free of corporate rhetoric which just serves to put people off. Most users don't care about your mission statement they only want information². The original site is confusing the point of a tagline. Due to their prominent position and location on every page a tagline needs to explain what the site is. A motto on the other hand doesn't explain, for example take the original site's motto: "*Always looking to improve standards to enable us to focus on total customer satisfaction*". So you're going to improve standards to meet my satisfaction, that's great, but standards of what exactly?³

Fix

¹ Source: Krug, S. (2006) Chapter 6 – Street Signs and Breadcrumbs In: *Don't Make Me Think*. 2nd edn. Berkeley: New Riders, pp.79-84.

² Source: Lynch, P J & Horton, S. (eds.) (2008) Chapter 6 – Page Structure, In: *Web Style Guide*. 3rd edn. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, p. 165.

³ Source: Krug, S. (2006) Chapter 7 – The Home Page Is Beyond Your Control, In: *Don't Make Me Think*. 2nd edn. Berkeley: New Riders, pp. 103-106.



As such I will move the current mission statement to the About Us section
on the home page and put something more descriptive in the tag line (I'm
not claiming to be an advertising expert who can come up with catchy taglines here!)

We can also utilise search engine keywords (that we will look at later) to optimise it
for searching.



Readability

Web pages are opened in browsers, it is likely a user will have many other windows/programs open at the same time. To give some relief to a user the page will be centered to give some white space down both sides to make it easier to read¹.

¹ Source: Lynch, P J & Horton, S. (eds.) (2008) Chapter 7 – Page Design, In: *Web Style Guide*. 3rd edn. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, p. 187.

Search Engine Optimisation

Why?

It is a fair assumption that any site would like to be found easily using a search engine and if possible have a high a ranking as possible, this is especially true for commercial sites. I will look at how the current site fares using some typical search phrases and look at ways of improving the results.

Searching for the site



It would be unnecessary to do a search for 'extra packaging' as it will be at the top of the results. Instead we must get inside the customer's heads and think what would they be searching for (I will be using Google for this exercise). A typical starting point might be something along the lines of 'packaging companies in derby'. The site doesn't appear at all; out of 51 pages of search results this is very disappointing. The next search was for 'packaging supplies+derby'. The site still fails to appear in the results, this time out of 53 pages. So what if people just try 'packaging+derby'. Good, the site is on the front page.

[Contract Packing | Packaging Derby](#)

Extra Packaging specialise in Contract Packing, Fulfilment, Print Finishing & Marketing Services, Storage & Distribution on a contract/ad hoc basis.
www.extrapackaging.co.uk/ - [Cached](#) - [Similar](#)

[Packaging DERBY](#)

Results for Packaging in Derby, packaging reviews. **Packaging Derby** and results for trays, packaging, industrial packaging, refuse sacks, ...
www.cylex-uk.co.uk/derby/packaging.html - [Cached](#)

[Davenport Packaging in Derby, , DE21 7BF Contact Information ...](#)

Visit KellySearch.co.uk to find contact and product information from companies like Davenport Packaging and other businesses in Derby, , DE21 7BF.
www.kellysearch.co.uk/c/davenport+packaging/25918954 - [Cached](#)

[Derby packaging - Trovit Jobs](#)

derby packaging jobs, and your direct personal influence. job title: night shift supervisor..., derby packaging jobs.
jobs.trovit.co.uk/jobs/derby-packaging - [Cached](#) - [Similar](#)

[County Packaging Services Ltd | Packaging Machinery | Heanor ...](#)

County Packaging Services Ltd have been providing an independent sales, service and repair facility to the packaging industry since 1999.
www.countypack.co.uk/ - [Cached](#) - [Similar](#)

[Packaging Services in Derby area \(DE1 to DE55\) : SmileLocal Directory](#)

18 Mar 2010 ... Find a complete list of **Packaging Services in Derby** from SmileLocal. We provide contact details for local **Packaging Services** in and around ...
www.smilelocal.com/packaging_services/derby - [Cached](#)

[Packaging Jobs Derby Burton - Yakaz Jobs](#)

packaging jobs derby burton, engineering training ..., **packaging jobs derby burton**.
jobs.yakaz.co.uk/packaging-jobs-derby-burton - [Cached](#)

[Gift Packaging in Derbyshire - Hill Farm Crafts - Gift Packaging ...](#)

Gift Packaging Derby - Gift Packaging Derbyshire - Wedding - Personalised Gift Bags - Wedding Favours - Children's Party Bags - Wedding Busy Bags - Map of...
www.uksmallbusinessdirectory.co.uk/id.asp?CompanyID=71394 - [Cached](#)

[packaging Jobs in derby - Search derby packaging Jobs](#)

19 Apr 2010 ... **packaging Jobs in derby**. Search thousands of **packaging** Job Vacancies in **derby** and apply online or register for our jobs by email service.
www.redgoldfish.co.uk/packaging-jobs-in-derby - [Cached](#)



[Search within results](#) - [Language Tools](#) - [Search Help](#) - [Dissatisfied? Help us improve](#)

To optimise the site for search engines such as Google we need to understand how web pages are ‘crawled’. Of course Google aren’t going to publish their web crawling algorithms, if they did everyone would know how to get to the top of the results (and really defeats the object), but what they will say is that a well structured site with validated mark-up and good content will do well in any search¹. A search engine crawler will basically just follow links around the entire web, so crawlers will only find your site if there is a link to it. You can add your site to a search engine to

¹ Google. (2008) *Google’s Search Engine Optimisation Starter Guide, 1.1* [Online]. Available at: <http://www.google.com/webmasters/docs/search-engine-optimization-starter-guide.pdf> (Accessed: 8th March 2010).

'kick-off' this process but the following factors will dictate if the site does well in the future once the search crawler has found your site:

- Relevant page title - <title> tag
- Content headings - <h1> to <h6> tags
- Image 'alt' text
- Relevant keywords in the body content
- Meta keywords and description tags
- HTML file names

As well as these internal factors, external factors are now a major part of a good search result. Things such as number of links to your site, especially from other high ranking sites will count a lot. This switch to external factors was to prevent easy manipulation by web authors who were adding lots and lots of hidden keywords to trick the search engine into finding it. The idea behind external links is that the best sites will have more links to them than others¹.



The trick of stuffing web pages with hidden keywords to trick search engines is known as a 'black hat technique'. Using these techniques is a sure way to get blocked from search engines. I noticed the original site has certain phrases at the top of the page which may be cheeky ways of trying to get a good search result (I may be wrong, but whatever they are for I still think they are un-necessary). It is not obvious what these are for and as such I will remove them from the re-design.

¹ Source: Lynch, P J & Horton, S. (eds.) (2008) Chapter 5 – Site Structure, In: *Web Style Guide*. 3rd edn. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, pp. 136-149.



A screenshot of the website for Contract Packaging Derby. At the top right, there are two links: "Contract Packing Derby" and "Contract Packaging Derbyshire". Below the links are four small images: a blue CD-like disc, several small cards or brochures, a roll of tape, and a pile of colorful plastic beads. A green banner across the middle contains the text "Always looking to improve standards to enable us to". Below the banner is a navigation menu with links: "home", "packing", "finishing & marketing services", and "fulfil". A callout box with a black border and white text is overlaid on the bottom right of the screenshot, containing the text "It is not clear what this text is for".

Ok, so that's the theory, let's try some other searches to make sure we have covered as many keywords as possible and then we'll see where we can improve things.

I assume a lot of business comes from people in the trade. They will have a better idea of what to search for so would more likely be searching for specific things such as 'contract packaging services' – site appears on page 30. Or 'contract packaging companies' – the site isn't found at all. Specific packaging searches could include 'shrink wrapping+derby' – page 6. This doesn't seem bad but it is very unlikely people will go past the first page unless they have very specific requirements and even then probably not as far as page 6.

People might base a search on geographical location, such as:

packaging materials+derby	Site not found
packaging suppliers uk	Site not found
packaging company+midlands	Site not found

Potential customers might want packaging and delivery services, a typical search might be 'packaging distribution services':

 [Rex Corporation - Innovators in Paperboard Packaging](#) Structural ...
Rex Corporation is one of the leading manufacturers of premium and high-quality packaging solutions with over 30 years of industry experience.
rexcorp.com/ - [Cached](#) - [Similar](#)

✓ [Google Directory - Computers > Hardware > Storage > Optical ...](#)
Provider of CD duplicating and replicating services. Content development, design services, printing and packaging services, warehousing, distribution and ...
directory.google.com/Top/Computers/Hardware/.../Services/M/ - Cached

 **Contract Packing | Packaging Derby**
Extra Packaging specialise in Contract Packing, Fulfilment, Print Finishing & Marketing Services. Storage & Distribution on a contract/ad hoc basis.
www.extrapacking.co.uk/ - Cached - Similar

② [Ciba Expert Services - Composition analysis, Trace analysis ...](#)
Ciba Expert Services - Composition analysis, Trace analysis, Packaging & distribution, Dangerous goods. In 2006, the Company generated sales of CHF 6.4 ...
[www.contractlaboratory.com](#) | Job listing details #ciba2lab_id_1 Cached Similar

② [易目录](#) » [主目录](#) » [Business](#) » [Industrial Goods and Services](#) ...
Fox Packaging Services - Offering pallet wrapping, conveyor, ... Distributors of packaging machinery. Stretch wrappers, strappers and case sealers. ...
[Services](#)/[Packaging](#)/[Machinery](#) and [Distribution](#) Cached

Searches related to packaging distribution services

Searches related to packaging distribution services			
orbit distributing packaging service	empire distributors packaging service	packaging service center	advanced distribution system packaging service
packaging distribution center cell	packaging sales service	wetoska packaging distributor	opportunities packaging service

◀ Goooooooooooooooogle ▶
Previous 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 Next

Site appears on page 47. This is disappointing as the company has a convenient sister company that can handle delivery and should be making more out of this fact.

Search engine optimisation involves this sort of process. Constantly thinking what typical searches might involve and trying to get those words into the site in a prominent place as possible without overuse and more importantly without compromising the site's content and usability for customers.

So let's examine why the site didn't do too well in the attempted searches and look at ways of improving it for the new site.

Improvements



 As discovered earlier, the pages of the site have been created using tables. As such the actual content is nested quite deeply in the HTML mark-up. A search engine crawler will not scan this deep if it's not finding content

along the way. We can fix this easily by creating a table-less design which will also benefit the accessibility and maintenance.

Every page in the site has the same meta-data content. A good thing about having different pages is that you can distinguish them from each other (not every visitor to the site will land straight at the home page). To fix I will cut down the amount of keywords to lessen the risk of being ignored by the crawler and I will change the keywords for every page making them appropriate to that page's content.



To optimise the search ranking we must ensure each page's title is unique. The site meets this requirement but there are improvements we could make.

Three of the site's pages have title's that are too long; the W3C recommends a title no longer than 60 characters to ensure all of the major search engines can read the whole title¹. For example the fulfilment's page title is 79 characters long:

```
<TITLE>Fulfilment | Inserting | Collating Derby | Mail | Sort | Derbyshire | Inserting</TITLE>
```

This isn't very descriptive and is far too long. It can easily be shortened to say what the page is (Fulfilment Services for example). It is also risking getting ignored by some search engines as the title is not a readable sentence. To optimise searching we should also include the name of the company and location where possible.

The meta description tag is a good way of describing each page and is what appears in the Google search result below the title. The site has a



¹ Source: W3C. (2006) *<title>: the most important element of a quality web page* [Online]. Available at: <http://www.w3.org/QA/Tips/good-titles> (Accessed: 24th April 2010).

good description, short but descriptive. Unfortunately it's also the same for each page. We can easily remedy this by having a unique description for each page.



The actual file names of the pages (or URL's) have an effect on search ranking. They must be short and simple as people often quote them and type them directly into a browsers address bar to access a page. But they must be descriptive also. Hyphens must be used if more than one word is needed as crawlers use this as a break character, so we can change finishing.html to finishing-and-marketing-services.html for example.

Another fix is to change the name of the distribution page as the actual file name is transport.html, this could cause confusion.

Overall though the site's filenames are good and due to it being a small site no complex directory structures are needed making it easier to scan.

A good addition to any site is a sitemap. A sitemap is a page that contains just links to each page of a site. Crawlers use these a lot as they can use them to get to every page of a site from one place. A simple sitemap will be added in the re-design, this will be added to the utility bar.



As we have discovered heading tags are very important to give structure and meaning to a page. They also are given a lot of importance by search crawlers. The site doesn't utilise them at all (although paradoxically it is organised well). This will hamper search optimisation. This can easily be fixed by converting the page header and section titles to appropriate <h> tags which should increase the chances of a better search ranking:

The screenshot shows a web browser window for <http://www.extrapackaging.co.uk/finishing.htm>. The page features the Extra Packaging Limited logo and navigation links for Marketing Services Derby, Hand Assembly Derbyshire, Shrink Wrapping derby, Folders, Mail Sort, Mail Sorting, Inserting, and Collating nottingham. Below the navigation is a banner with images of various products and the text "Always looking to improve standards to enable us to focus on total customer satisfaction". A sidebar on the left lists services: Print Finishing & Marketing Services, Shrink Wrapping, Folders, Inserting & Collating, Tip On/Belly Bands, and Hand Assembly. Arrows point from each service name to its corresponding image. To the right, a large callout box contains the following text:

As you can see the pages are already broken up into logical sections. These titles can easily be changed to <h> tags to give the page better structure and make it easier to crawl. We can also modify the titles where appropriate to include the search keywords we identified previously.

Image alt text is important for crawlers. The site doesn't provide alternative text for the images except for the logo (which could have a better description). Also the image names can be important, the original images could be more descriptive. To fix I will re-name the images, provide alt text and put all images into one folder to separate them from the html files.



 Broken links are bad for crawlers as they can miss pages of your site. The original site doesn't have any broken links¹.

As we have seen search keywords are used by people to find a site, once they are in the site they are still 'scanning' for those same keywords². So it's not enough just to have these keywords in the titles and headers, they are also needed in the content

¹ Validated at: W3C. (2010) *W3C Link Checker* [Online]. Available at: <http://validator.w3.org/checklink> (Accessed: 27th April 2010).

² Source: Krug, S. (2006) Chapter 2 – How We Really Use The Web, In: *Don't Make Me Think*. 2nd edn. Berkeley: New Riders, pp.22-23.

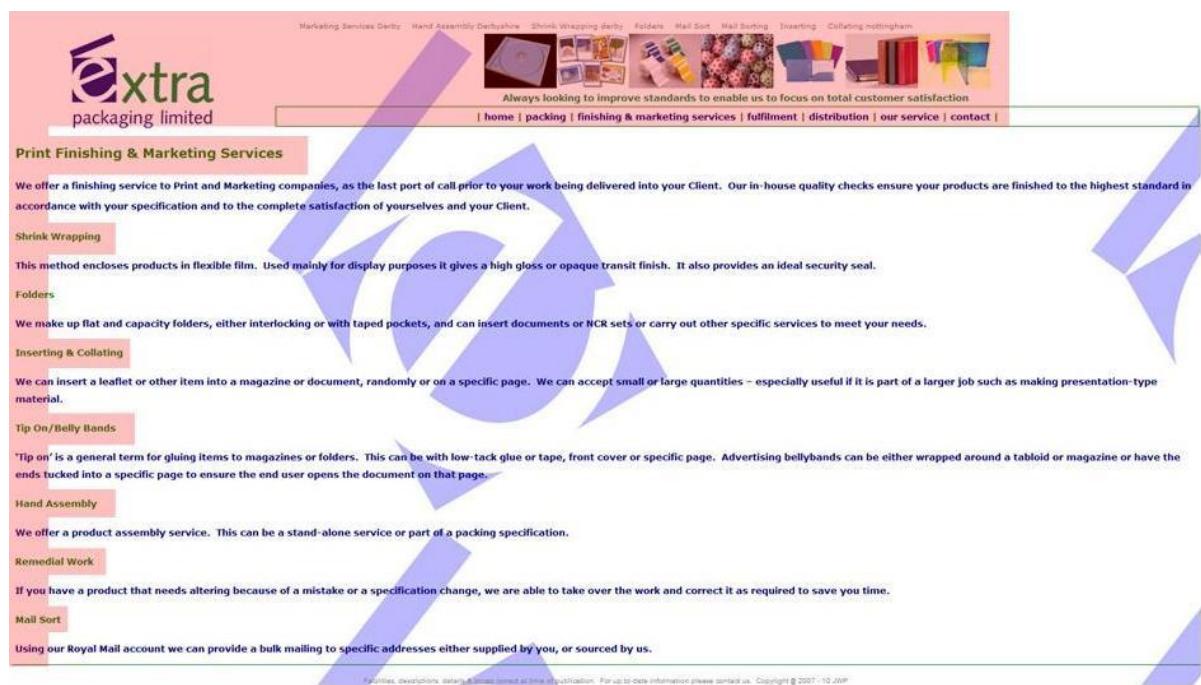
to convince the user that they are at the correct site for his/her needs. During the re-design of the site I will incorporate as many keywords and search phrases as appropriate into the elements described above. But there are many external factors which will affect search ranking. Only good quality content will keep people coming back, word of mouth will spread through blogs and message boards. To increase the chances of this, offers can be added to the site to show the content is always being updated. On the ‘our service’ page it mentions testimonials from clients. Add these to the actual site to increase credibility. Also think about adding content to deal with important topical issues such as recycling and use of sustainable sources. Only this will get more people visiting and linking to your site.

Site Content

Why?

If we are to include all of the improvements we have identified so far then we are sure to have a standards compliant, accessible and usable site that is optimised for search engines. That's all well and good but if the actual content isn't appealing to the target audience then our efforts have all been in vain.

People 'scan' web page content, it is not all read methodically like we would like to believe, so it is important to maintain the use of the search engine keywords in the prominent areas of the site, notably the header and titles, this is known as the 'F' shaped reading pattern¹:



So it makes sense to utilise these keywords inside this area as people are thinking of these same keywords amongst the content to find the information they want.

¹ Source: useit.com. (2006) *F-Shaped Pattern For Reading Web Content*. [Online]. Available at: http://www.useit.com/alertbox/reading_pattern.html (Accessed: 2nd May 2010).



Overall the site's content is very good; there are no un-necessary 'front loaded' messages such as 'Welcome To....' or 'How to navigate this site...'

The information is clear and sticks to the point. It is also broken down well into logical, easy to read chunks. It is important to maintain a good relationship with the user, especially for commercial sites as this can differentiate you from the competition. The site does this well with the use of first-person language to make it seem like a one-to-one relationship. However the content still needs to be checked as this relationship can easily be tarnished and the whole ethos of the site ruined by silly errors such as spelling mistakes or broken links.

Link sentences can also play a part in creating good content, page titles must match the link titles that take you there and if there are links to external sites it must be obvious what is going to happen when you click the link, many times you see on the web vague link titles such as 'Click here' or 'Next'. Renaming them will make the content more informative and will improve search engine ranking.

Background Image

The background should stay in the background and not compete for attention with the page content¹. As such I will remove the background image from the site. Although the contrast isn't bad (the content is still readable) I think it benefits more people being removed.

¹ Source: Lynch, P J & Horton, S. (eds.) (2008) Chapter 11 – Graphics, In: *Web Style Guide*. 3rd edn. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, p. 295.

Text

Research shows that serif type fonts such as Times New Roman are good for print but not for screen¹. Sans serif fonts like Verdana were specifically designed for reading on screen so I will use these fonts in the re-design.



Source: w3schools. (2010) *CSS Font*. [Online]. Available at:

http://validator.w3schools.com/css/css_font.asp (Accessed: 3rd May 2010).

The problem is you cannot be 100% sure what fonts a user has installed on their machine so I will specify a hierarchy, if the first font isn't installed go onto the next one, etc. Until finally the default 'sans-serif' on that particular machine is used:

font-family: Verdana, Geneva, Tahoma, sans-serif;

I will revert to serif font Times New Roman for the print CSS sheet as it's easier to read on paper.



The original site uses a blue coloured font. It's important to remember that the default link colour is blue so this could get confusing as to what is/isn't a link. I will revert to black for the text which will also maximise the contrast.

¹ Source: Lynch, P J & Horton, S. (eds.) (2008) Chapter 8 – Typography, In: *Web Style Guide*. 3rd edn. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, pp. 217-218.

Future Improvements

I was slightly confused when I first saw the site as to why the home page contains the ‘about us’ information. Normally the home page contains information as to what the site contains rather than who the company is. The best content should be placed on the home page along with any ‘teasers’ as to what is contained within¹. This should enable a separate ‘about us’ page to be added to the site.

Images inside the header also generated confusion, are these examples of what the company does or are they merely decorative? I would recommend having a separate ‘gallery’ section showcasing examples of what the company can do.

¹ Source: Krug, S. (2006) Chapter 7 – The Home Page Is Beyond Your Control, In: *Don't Make Me Think*. 2nd edn. Berkeley: New Riders, pp.95-97.

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Appendices

Testing

The site was tested to see if it could cope with the text size being increased and window re-sized. The layout coped well. The only affected item was the ‘selected’ effect of the tabs flowing into the content:



About us

We are a contract packaging company based in Derby. We offer a fast, friendly, reliable and high quality service that is backed by good organization and a flexible approach to our customer's needs.

Text Size increased to 36 pixels

As you can see the navigation has had to go into two lines spoiling the effect of the selected tab flowing into the page body. Nothing in effect has ‘broken’ and there isn’t a lot that can be done about it so I deem this to be acceptable.

The same effect occurs when the browser window is resized, to prevent this I added a min-width attribute to the CSS (I also added a max width to prevent the text spanning too far to be readable). The only issue is that min-width isn't supported in IE6:



Another IE6 problem was discovered during testing where the hover effect wasn't working quite as expected:



IE6

All other browsers

Notice the whole tab isn't being highlighted during hover. This is because IE6 only supports the :hover pseudo class for anchor <a> elements¹. For the effect to work properly I need hover to work on two elements, one anchor <a> and one list item (one left, one right to make the tab 'stretchable'). As it's only a slight visual anomaly I consider this to be acceptable.

Testing Screenshots

¹ Source: Explain That. (2008) *CSS Pseudo-Classes* [Online]. Available at: <http://www.explainthat.at/en/css/pseudos.shtml> (Accessed: 30th April 2010).

Extra Packaging Ltd. - Pa... file:///X:/Uni/ClientSideWebDevelopment/Assignment/Site-FINAL/home.html For quick access, place your bookmarks here in the bookmarks bar. Other bookmarks

 [Home](#) [Find Us](#) [Site Map](#)

Contract Packaging Services

Packaging Suppliers for Derby, Midlands and the UK

[home](#) [packaging](#) [finishing & marketing](#) [fulfilment](#) [distribution](#) [our service](#) [contact](#)

About us

We are a contract packaging company based in Derby. We offer a fast, friendly, reliable and high quality service that is backed by good organization and a flexible approach to our customer's needs.

Since being established in 1999 we have acquired extensive experience in the range of services we offer, enabling us to fulfil our customer requirements.

The areas we specialize in include Contract Packing, Fulfilment, Print Finishing and Marketing Services, Storage and Distribution on a contract or ad hoc basis.

We have the capacity to store 100+ pallets in our clean warehouse plus we have the added advantage of storage facilities off site, enabling us to store components ready to be called off for your fulfilment work. We are able to handle various products, small or large quantities in any shapes or sizes.

An 'Extra' service we now offer is packing of wrapped confectionery. We are compliant with food and safety regulations and have qualified staff who are Food Hygiene certified.

"We are always looking to improve standards to enable us to focus on total customer satisfaction."

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Firefox

Extra Packaging Ltd. - Packaging Suppliers - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

file:///X:/Uni/ClientSideWebDevelopment/Assignment/Site-FINAL/home.html

This site has not been analyzed yet. Notify us

Disable Cookies CSS Forms Images Information Miscellaneous Outline Resize Tools View Source Options

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Done

Opera

Extra Packaging Ltd. - ... X +

file:///localhost/X:/Uni/ClientSideWebDevelopment/Assignment/Site-FINAL/home.html

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Update Ready View (100%)

Internet Explorer 8

Extra Packaging Ltd - Packaging Suppliers - Windows Internet Explorer
X:\Uni\ClientSideWebDevelopment\Assignment\Site-FINAL\home.html

Favorites Extra Packaging Ltd - Packaging Suppliers

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Done Internet | Protected Mode: On 100%

Internet Explorer 7 (Using Expression Web 3 Super Preview)

Microsoft Expression Web 3 SuperPreview

Location: X:\Uni\ClientSideWebDevelopment\... 90% ?

-200 -100 0 100 200 300 400 500 600 700 800 900 1000 1100 1200 1300 1400 1500

100 200 300 400 500 600 700 800 900 1000 1100 1200 1300 1400 1500

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DOM Browser Size: 1280 x 1024

X X +

8 → 7

Internet Explorer 6

Extra Packaging Ltd. - Packaging Suppliers - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by EDS for Rolls-Royce Plc

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Back Forward Stop Home Search Favorites Favorites Back Forward Stop Home Search Favorites

Address F:\ClientSideWebDevelopment\Assignment\06-Site\home.html Go Links





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Google

Apple Yahoo! Google Maps YouTube Wikipedia News (57) Popular

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Validation

HTML (<http://validator.w3.org/check>)

 Markup Validation Service
Check the markup (HTML, XHTML, ...) of Web documents

Jump To: Notes and Potential Issues Congratulations · Icons

This document was successfully checked as HTML 4.01 Strict!

Result:	Passed, 1 warning(s)
Source:	<!DOCTYPE html PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD HTML 4.01//EN" "http://www.w3.org/TR/html4/strict.dtd"> <html lang="en"> <head> <meta content="text/html; charset=utf-8" http-equiv="Content-Type"> <meta name="description" content="Extra Packaging specialise in contract packaging services on a contract or ad hoc basis."> <meta name="keywords" content="packaging, packing, packaging services, packaging companies, derby, Derby, packaging suppliers derby, contract packaging, midlands, uk, UK"> <title>Extra Packaging Ltd. - Packaging Suppliers</title> <link rel="stylesheet" type="text/css" media="screen" href="style-screen.css"> <link rel="stylesheet" type="text/css" media="print" href="style-print.css">
Encoding:	utf-8 <input type="button" value="(detect automatically)"/>
Datatype:	HTML 4.01 Strict <input type="button" value="(detect automatically)"/>
Root Element:	html

Screen CSS (<http://jigsaw.w3.org/css-validator/>)

 The W3C CSS Validation Service
W3C CSS Validator results for TextArea (CSS level 2.1)

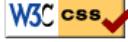
Jump to: [Warnings \(1\)](#) [Validated CSS](#)

W3C CSS Validator results for TextArea (CSS level 2.1)

Congratulations! No Error Found.

This document validates as [CSS level 2.1](#) !

To show your readers that you've taken the care to create an interoperable Web page, you may display this icon on any page that validates. Here is the XHTML you could use to add this icon to your Web page:



```
<p>
  <a href="http://jigsaw.w3.org/css-validator/check/referer">
    
  </a>
</p>
```



```
<p>
  <a href="http://jigsaw.w3.org/css-validator/check/referer">
    
  </a>
</p>
```

Print CSS (<http://jigsaw.w3.org/css-validator/>)

The W3C CSS Validation Service
W3C CSS Validator results for TextArea (CSS level 2.1)

Jump to: [Validated CSS](#)

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