Requirements of Intelligent Websites

Web intelligence is a combination of digital analytics, which examines how website visitors view and interact with a site's pages and features, and business intelligence, which allows a corporation's management to use data on customer purchasing patterns, demographics, and demand trends to make effective strategic decisions. As companies expand their reach into the global marketplace, the need to analyze how customers use company websites to learn about products and make buying decisions is becoming increasingly critical to survival and ultimate success.

Millions of developers are creating and using web in their desktop, tablets, phones, televisions, automobiles, digital billboards, watches and everywhere. According to Tim Berners Lee, very soon millions of sensors, appliances and other devices will take web to new places. He has mentioned that future of web is under threat to governments who are likely to misuse their power, to businesses who try to destabilize open market and from criminal activity. The future of web depends on normal people talking with responsibility for tremendous resource and on challenging those who seek to manipulate web against the public good. Tim has also mentioned that improvement of the infrastructure to provide additional functional, robust, efficient and available service web will play very pivotal role. Furthermore, future web, apart from being a space browse able by humans, will contain rich data in a form understandable by machines, thus allowing machines to take a stronger part to analyze the web, and solving problems for us.

Requirements

1. Attracts the Right Audience

The right audience is a qualified audience. And a qualified audience generates better conversions. In other words, a website can attract and appeal to many different types of people. But, if a website appeals to everybody, it unfortunately appeals to nobody.

An intelligent website knows exactly how to attract and convert the right people.

2. Data-Driven Design

Using both qualitative and quantitative research data informs more accurate design decisions. In other words, when it comes to websites, designers have two types of data to use when making decisions:

- **Qualitative:** Non-numerical data that shows the why and the how (e.g. user interviews, surveys)

- **Quantitative:** Numerical data that shows the who, what, when and where (e.g. traffic metrics, A/B testing)

The best design decisions are inspired from both types of data — not from a HiPPO (Highest Paid Person's Opinion). HiPPOs are leaders who don't need other's ideas or data to affirm the correctness of their instinctual beliefs. They are quick to shoot down contradictory positions - which lead to uniformed design decisions.

An intelligent website is designed using a qualitative and quantitative data approach, not opinions.

3. Creates Visibility & Grows Awareness

Nearly 90% of people use search engines to find information on products, services, or businesses. A website that is visible is a website that is viable. In other words, you could have the most beautiful and functional website in the world, but if search engines don't know it exists, expect to hear crickets.

There are 40,000 Google searches per second, and growing. Without visibility in today's "YellowPedia", your website is just an online brochure. Search engines are today's "YellowPedia" (Yellow Pages + Encyclopedia) — and 90% of people use them.

- An intelligent website is highly visible in Google and helps create awareness and trust for a company's product or service.

- An intelligent website is layered with valuable content and helps companies be more competitive online.

4. Outsmarts its Competitors

Either you, or your competitor, are going to engage your potential customer first. A smart content strategy is the key to winning this race. In other words, there's a long list of tactics a business can use to outsmart a competitor. But, there's not a more effective one today than generating regular and relevant website content.

A content strategy helps a business reach its ideal prospect faster (and more effectively) than traditional outbound marketing tactics.

5. Reduces Costs

Solid website usability and automation reduces the money needed for frivolous customer support. In other words, for a growing business, ensuring customers are properly supported can require exponential resources. Sales go up, support expenses follow.

Is that to be expected, or is there another way?

The formula for reducing customer support includes:

- Great website usability (people find what they're looking for because there's few common Pr website errors)

- Automation (using a systematic approach, like automatic triggers when a call-to-action is completed)

An intelligent website is easy-to-use and integrates with automated systems to decrease the need for perpetual customer support.

6. Educates & Inspires Action

Helpful content at every stage of the buying cycle, paired with calls-to-action, inspires people to take action — the vital metric for determining ROI. In other words, Traffic was a big deal a decade ago. If your website passed the eyeball test and people frequented it — you were ahead of the game.

Today's website takes much more than a great design and consistent traffic to be successful. You need more than "000hs" and "ahhhs" to evaluate its effectiveness. You need action. More specifically, you need various types of content matched with carefully placed calls to action that follow the Four C's.

An intelligent website is careful about pairing valuable content with contextual conversion elements.

7. Increases Leads for More Sales

Better than your best salesperson by communicating faster and more convincingly, while maintaining a unified voice. In other words, Salespeople are far from perfect.

They can read the prospect incorrectly, present the wrong information, forget to follow up and even get sick. Or worse, they put in their two weeks (gasp!) in the middle of nurturing your biggest lead ever!

A lead generation website doesn't carry those risks. It's on the job 24/7, never mucks up your company's value proposition and isn't prone to the common cold.

An intelligent website is your virtual salesperson and will generate more leads and sales than any individual salesperson.

8. Possesses a Long-term Roadmap

A documented plan is how content and features will grow, be supported, and routinely be measured. In other words, a website without a website strategy is like a hike without a map or compass.

A website needs a roadmap to be successful. It needs defined objectives, goals, user personas, a content strategy and planned reviews. This documented plan - that key stakeholders contribute to - is your map and compass to navigating the Web.

An intelligent website begins its journey with documentation and provides a Birdseye view of the website's past, present and future.

9. Retains Customer Loyalty

Provides compelling reasons to revisit the website and further engage with content, features and calls-to-action. In other words, so you've won a new customer, now what? Is there incentive for them to return to your website? Can they do anything if they visit?

If you're B2B, your clients continually rely on your knowledge and experience. There's not a more compelling asset than an expertise-rich website to affirm that you're still the best fit for them.

If your business is B2C, you should be thinking only about selling. Provide coupons, promotions, new products - all good reasons for existing customers to revisit the website (and to keep buying from you rather than your competitor).

An intelligent website doesn't stop working once the initial sale is made. It continues to think about ways to engage existing customers or clients.

10. Helps Companies Become Digitally Empowered

Prevent the Web from feeling too big, too powerful and too competitive. Knowledge is the antidote to fear. In other words, we realize websites can feel intimidating. There's idiom to understand, acronyms to decode, and things are constantly evolving (Google changes their algorithm 500-600 times a year).

The only thing constant on the Web is, change.

But, owning a website that was intelligently built can help you become more intelligent. You start to ask the right questions. You ignore the noise and focus on the important metrics. You fully grasp the notion that web design is not decoration.

An intelligent website helps build a company's confidence that they can own, operate and improve a high-powered website in a sea of change.