Title:
Flash Is Disadvantageous For Professional Service Firms

Word Count:
451

Summary:
Despite the aesthetic benefits that flash can bring to a website, far more
disadvantages exist when applied to the content-driven website of a professional
service firm. What you typically gain in eye-catching graphics and animation,
you lose in usability, navigation, and overall comprehension of your information
architecture.

If potential clients cannot effectively navigate your information architecture,
the website will not be a valuable tool in demonstrating the firm's ...

Keywords:
professional service marketing, flash, professional services

Article Body:
Despite the aesthetic benefits that flash can bring to a website, far more
disadvantages exist when applied to the content-driven website of a professional
service firm. What you typically gain in eye-catching graphics and animation,
you lose in usability, navigation, and overall comprehension of your information
architecture.

If potential clients cannot effectively navigate your information architecture,
the website will not be a valuable tool in demonstrating the firm's thought
leadership. Ultimately, prospects will not understand what services or solutions
can be beneficial to their organization, nor convinced that your organization
has the best people and experience to get the job done.

First, lets establish what applications of flash I am specifically referring to.
The following is a list of applications that I feel are most relevant, but this
is by no means comprehensive:

1. Flash Introductions
2. Rotating Logo, or Mission Statement
3. Flash Navigation

For the sake of time, I will just focus on Flash Introductions. You will find

that the rationale can be equally applied to the other two applications, and will give you a philosophy to make your own inferences on a case-by-case basis.

When I see an elaborate flash introduction (you know the kind, the one that takes 2 minutes to load and feels like a commercial) the only thing that I derive from the swirling animation and upbeat music is, "Well, at least they have a really good flash animation team." It may seem silly to say that, but what else is there to infer?

For all of the precious attention a flash introduction demands, it tells a prospect nothing about the firm's core competencies, prior experience, or caliber of their professionals. It is just a flashy commercial. Any firm can hire a great flash production company. However, the most successful firms will build a website with a simple and intuitive navigation structure where prospects can easily find and access firm knowledge.

Think of it from the point of view of your buying center. Your prospect's executives are concerned with answering questions like:

1. Who are you?
2. What types of services and solutions do you provide?
3. Have you worked with companies similar to my own?
4. What kind of success have you had?

Flash introductions are distracting and create roadblocks for executives to access this information and ultimately solicit your services. It is the answers to these questions that sell professional services. Not an animated commercial.

The prospect's time and attention, are precious. Professional service firms MUST adopt a philosophy to funnel prospects to their knowledge-base, effectively and without distractions.

Given that this could be your only shot, ensure that when a prospect comes to your website, they can find what they are looking for as quickly and easily as possible.

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