

10 Most Important Web Design Tips

Here are 10 items which are most important to observe when creating a web site. They are in no particular order:

1. Red On Blue Isn't Good

Not only red text on a blue background but any color (except white) on a black background, light text on white backgrounds and dark text on dark backgrounds don't work! Especially if you have a lot of text, it is very important that it is easy to read and doesn't hurt people's eyes. Surprisingly enough, red text is used on a blue background a lot, even though it is one of the worst combinations of colors.

2. I Don't Like Your Java Clock

Don't bother putting 'Eye Candy' on your site like java clocks and menus with sounds. You might think it makes you look clever, but it doesn't (unless you wrote the software yourself of course)! Anyone can copy and paste an applet from another website and they usually don't really improve your site. Some browsers don't support them either so it really isn't worth it. Read more about deciding between Technology and Compatibility

3. Popup Window? I'm Leaving!

One of the worst things I have seen on websites, both personal and semiprofessional ones is popup windows! Even on big sites like www.123webmaster.com you get a popup window when you visit. Personally I will usually leave a site with a popup window. They are extremely annoying. If your free web host gives you the option of a banner in a popup window or one at the top of the page choose the one on the page. Even if it makes designing it a bit more difficult and you can't have as many adverts, so many people hate them it is not worth it. If your web host doesn't do anything but popup adverts it may be time to get a new one

4. I Don't Wait For Adverts To Load

I have seen all too many sites which are covered in adverts! You open the page and 2 banners are at the top. Underneath is some text, then an Amazon.com search box, then some more text, then a CDNow search box, then more text, then another type of affiliate program and finally the page is finished with 4 different banners at the bottom. It isn't worth it! You will never make money that way. Although it may be tempting to have more adverts to try and make more money but just 2 or 3 highly targeted adverts will make you more money and your visitors won't give up and leave, either.

5. Hide That Counter!

Ask yourself this: "Why do I need to show the number of visitors I've had on my site?" Can you think of a good reason? It is extremely important to track your visitors, especially as your site grows, but showing the actual number of visitors serves no good purpose. If you have very few visitors then people who see that on your site will think it is unpopular, has no good content and will leave. If you have a lot of visitors then people won't really care about how many visitors you've had. It is better to use a good tracking service or hiding your counter.

6. I Don't Know How To Find What I Want

A very common mistake to make when designing a web site is to think that your users know exactly where on your site to find what they are working for. What you must remember, though, is that the people visiting your site did not make it. They don't know where you put each piece of information. They need to be shown exactly where to find what they want. Use descriptive links. Always have an obvious link back to your homepage.

7. Don't Keep Moving Things

When designing a web site, the first thing you should remember is to keep a consistent design. The only page which can be different is the main page. If you keep moving around your site's navigation or if every page is completely different from the others, your visitors will get confused. Sometimes they will think that they have left your site, sometimes they will not be able to find the link back to the home page. Make use of technologies like frames and tables to create consistent navigation and your visitors will like your site.

8. I Am Not Interested In You Or Your Awards

One of the mistakes that a lot of sites, especially smaller ones, make is to have too much on their website telling users about the person who built it and showcasing the awards the website has won. Most people on the web will be looking for information, they don't care about the name of your dog! It is all right to have some information about you on a separate section of your site but don't make it a central part. Also, don't put awards all over your front page. Most awards mean nothing and anyone who submits to them win.

9. Don't Crowd The Screen

A very important thing to do when designing your website is to leave a bit of space. Even though screen space is precious and you should try and make the best use of it, try to leave some blank space. Leave margins, use shorter paragraphs and don't fill up the screen with animated GIFs. If there is space, your site will look 'clean' and 'open' and users will like it. Using animated GIFs will draw your users' attention away from your content, which is what they are at your site for.

10. Make Your Site Sticky

Imagine this, instead of having to promote your site, your visitors would just come to your site. They would stay on your site longer, view more pages and keep coming back. This is actually possible if your users like what is on your site and return. Some ways of making your site 'sticky' like this is to offer a service like a newsletter, update regularly or include news headlines on your site.