

20

valuable
web design tips
that are good
for your business



Fields

Graphic Design

Grow your business with great design



a **WORDPRESS** website

Need a website or thinking about updating your old one?

It seems that everything to do with technology is changing rapidly, and web design is no exception. That said, wanting a website because everyone else has one is not a good reason for spending the time, effort and resources to have one.

Do you need a website if you're in business?

Yes!

Do you need an on-line brochure?

No.

Isn't a website an on-line brochure?

It doesn't have to be.

You're in luck

The blogging world has changed business websites for the better. How? Search engine bots scan the web constantly for new, original content. Blog posts often rank higher than traditional websites because their content is always changing. If you think like a blogger you don't have to spend a fortune paying for search engines to find you. And if you're constantly thinking and writing about your company, about what you do, and how you do it, you will drive more people to your website. The more traffic to your website, the more people will know about you. The more people who know about you, the greater potential for more customers. You get the picture.

You're in luck because one of the best blogging platforms also allows designers to create beautiful websites, that the end user (*you*) can easily update. If you can type and use Word, you can update your content -- and keep it fresh, original, and new so that search engines can find you, which means your prospects can find you.

20 Valuable Web Design Tips that are Good For Your Business

The following 20 tips are based on my 20 years of experience as a graphic designer and small business owner; marketing expert Christine Gallagher, members of the WordPress community, and books by Steve Krug, and Mark O'Brien. I hope the information will help you grow your business.

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PART 1



Keep The Focus on Your Customer

A website that works for *you*...is a website that appeals to *your customer*

Where to begin

1. Design your site for your ideal customer

Always keep in mind that your website is not for you. It's for your customer and your potential customer, so your words and message needs to appeal *to them*.

2. Keep your content short, simple, and sweet

Your website needs to be well written and concise, because most people visiting your site don't want to read — which seems like a contradiction. It's not. You need lots of good, original, compelling content for search engines to find you — so your prospects find you.

If you don't like to write, or don't have the time, hire a good writer. It's as important as hiring a designer who's good for your business.

3. Start where you'll get the most bang for your buck

1. Home page
2. About page
3. Contact page

Three pages is all you need when you're just starting out. Don't get overwhelmed. Your site will grow as your business grows and as your customers' needs change.

Keep it simple, and remember, done is better than none.

PART 2

Top **10** Ways to Engage Your Ideal Customer

A website that engages your ideal customer not only looks good, it also serves as a highly effective marketing tool.

How To Engage Your Ideal Customer

- 1** Be clear about what you want your prospect to do, and what they will get in return for doing it.

If you want your visitor to contact you by phone, your phone number should be large, above the fold (*see # pg. 9*), and on each page. Also include your time zone and business hours.

If you're asking them to sign up for your newsletter, describe what the newsletter is about. Have a newsletter on your site, so they can see what they are getting in exchange for giving you their e-mail address.

- 2** Ask for as little information as possible

Unless they're placing an order, name and e-mail address is all that's needed.

- 3** 3 questions you might want to ask your prospect

Do you want them to:

- make a purchase
- sign up for your newsletter, or
- register for an event?

Nothing should prevent them from doing that easily and quickly.

- 4** Tell them what they want to know

Are you selling a product? People will want to know:

- Product cost
- Shipping cost
- Product availability

Are you selling a service? People will need to know:

- How to get in touch with you
- When and how you will get back to them

Are you in retail? Prominently display:

- Your phone number
- Where you're located

5 Generate information they will need to solve their problem

Focus on your customers' top pain points, then speak with authority about what you do and how you do it. Let them know how your product or service will satisfy their need, and improve their immediate situation. Be the solution they are in search of.

6 Make sure your information is accurate and useful

Buying and reusing other people's content will not build trust. Instead, be authentic and speak from experience.

7 Present your information clearly

Your aim is to be clear, concise and compelling.

8 Use the three second rule

When prospects visit your site for the first time they will need to know three things within three seconds:

1. What your company is about
2. What you do
3. What things you are offering on your site

9 Save them steps whenever you can

Keep it simple. People *will* change their mind at the last minute if there are too many steps to complete a task or request.

10 Provide printer friendly pages

Web pages that print out on standard 8 1/2" x 11" sheets of paper, without the background color and sidebar information, are printer friendly pages.

PART 3

A website that works for *you*...
is a website that works well

A website that works well is easy to navigate and has information that's easy to understand.

7 Things That Work Well

1. A clear, easy to find navigation back to your Home page

Not all Internet searches link to your home page. Why? Search engines try to direct a search query to the most relevant page.

Regardless of where your visitors first land, or where they end up on your site, you don't want them getting lost. If there are too many places to click you will quickly confuse your visitor. A confused prospect will run, not walk to the nearest exit: Confusing = losing.

2. The upper right corner of your site draws the most attention

This is prime real estate for asking your prospect's name and e-mail address, as well as offering your 'free taste' (*see #7, pg. 10*).

3. Your next most valuable real estate is 'above the fold,' which is the top of your page, before your visitor needs to scroll

All essential information should be placed here.

4. You don't need to tell them everything about your company, just a few key points

Focus on what your ideal client is looking for. Keep it conversation and friendly and let them know:

1. Your company name
2. Include a tag line saying what you are about
3. Tell them what you have to offer

5. Most people visiting your site will scan only your Home page and your About page.

The About page is the most frequently visited page, and many times the only page a first time visitor will read before deciding if they want to go further into your site.

Don't be boring. Present your biography in an upbeat way and tell people what you can do for them, what types of clients you have worked for in the past, how long you have been doing this, and how you are different.

6. People love videos

Most computers, and all new cell phones come with video cameras. Flip camcorders are also an inexpensive way to record your message.

7. People love freebies

Like it or not, we are in a gifting society. Before people will open their wallets for your product or service they want to know if it will be worth the price. Offering a 'free taste' is a great way to peak their interest and let people know you're the real deal.

What's a good 'free taste?'

- An e-book or on-line guide with a snazzy cover
- Audio or video they can download

3 + 10 + 7 = 20

+1 = Bonus Round

You don't need to be flashy, you just need to connect

An effective website connects with your ideal client, and keeps them engaged. You do this by continuing to provide useful content, which builds trust in you, and your product or service. Once you have their trust they will reward you with their business.

Best wishes for continued success.

About Nancy Fields

Nancy, president of Fields Graphic Design, helps solopreneurs, coaches, consultants, accountants and other business professionals, refresh their brand presence with great graphic design, and easy to maintain WordPress websites.

Nancy Fields has been in business for two decades. Her client list includes private and not-for-profit companies, medical professionals, private schools, and colleges.

She is also a professional calligrapher and illustrator who brings attention-to-detail, and intelligent design into everything she does.

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