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30+ SUGGESTIONS FOR CREATING BETTER WEB PAGES

1. Define and know your audience.

2. Set and define goals.

3. Put as many keywords as possible in the title of your main index page.

   a. Search Engines consider a Web page title to be the most telling description of the content of a Web page. This does not mean the first major heading on the Web page itself, it means the caption which appears on the title bar of your browser and is controlled by the <TITLE></TITLE> tags within the <HEAD> of your HTML document.
   b. The Web Site Title is the descriptive title that will appear after your URL in most search engine listings. A common beginner's mistake is to simply place a company or program's name in this field, generally creating repetitive title's in the ultimate listing. The average listing on a displayed search is often 25 words or less, so you see how critical it is to catch the would be consumer's eye fast. Another consideration in determining a title is, IMPACT. Remember that your listing will be one of hundreds, or even thousands of competitors and related subjects. Studies have shown that while little tricks like all capitalization, graphic inserts, etc., will draw a consumer's eye, consumers are still most likely to follow the link which makes it's point quickly and succinctly.*
      *Quoted from WebWize, Houston, Texas;
      http://relee.webwize.com/urldesign.html

4. Make your site easy to navigate. Try to make your selections arranged in groups of five or less.

5. Use the three click rule. Visitors want quick access to your information and should be able to find what they are looking for without making more than three mouse clicks.

6. Test all links and update, continue to check links often. When visitors hit dead ends, they get frustrated. Test, test and test again.

7. Avoid dead-end links, always have a link for the visitor to follow to get back to the main page.

8. Test your site on the two main browsers, Netscape and Internet Explorer, to ensure that all links and elements will work on these two most popular web browsers. Testing your site on additional browsers is also recommended.

9. Use *select this*, instead of *click here*; include the link as part of your informative text.

10. Provide opportunities for feedback, through a comments page/section or by E-mailing the Webmaster.

11. Keep your pages up-to-date.

12. Check for typos, grammatical errors, and other errors after you've coded it and before you put it online.

13. Use a simple and consistent design. Use the "KISS" principle, Keep It Simple Silly.

14. Use a balance of graphics and text.

15. Keep your text easy to read, reading from a screen is approximately 28% slower than reading from paper.

16. Use upper and lower case letters.

17. Keep right text edges ragged.

18. Use a Serif font.

19. Avoid using underlines, it is too distracting because it looks like a link.

20. Use **bold** type when you want to shout!

21. White space is your friend, allow white space between your text and graphics and other page elements, it allows for easier reading.

22. Leave only one space between sentences. On the web, two spaces leaves too much space and thoughts get interrupted.

23. Write text in active voice.

24. Put the most important information near the top of the document.

25. Be brief and write clearly.

26. Develop and follow a theme.

27. Maintain a balance between the background and foreground. It's fun to be able to create textures and backgrounds, but it's also easy to let the background overwhelm the content in front.

28. Don't make the page longer than the window, split your information into several pages.

29. Use frames in moderation, some browsers will not support frames.

30. Use a 30 second rule for judging loading time of each page. Visitors get impatient and won't stay long, especially if they have to wait longer than 30-45 seconds.

31. Don't use blinking text or graphics, it is distracting.

32. Be careful using GIF (Graphic Interchange Format) or JPEG (Joint Photographic Experts Group) graphics. Large graphic files can create long download times, use thumbnails if possible.

33. Jazz up your web site with Java scripting. Some good sites for information are:
    http://javascript.internet.com
    http://www.javascripting.com

REFERENCES

Website Design Strategies by Douglas Zauha, Educational Service Unit Number 3, Omaha, Nebraska.
- http://www.esu3.org/prof/sitedesign/design.html

Creating Killer WebSites
- http://www.killersites.com

Guide to Web Style
- http://www.sun.com/styleguide/

Net Tips for Writers and Designers
- http://www.dsiegel.com/tips/index.html

WebMaster Reference Library
- http://webreference.com/

The JavaScript Source
- http://javascript.internet.com/

The following sites were listed in the National Business Education Association's November 1999 issue of *Keying In*:

Creating Web Pages That Sizzle
- http://broadcast-live.com/design/index.html#Design

Resources for Creating Web Sites
- http://home.netscape.com/browsers/createsites/

Web Page Style Guide
- http://info.med.yale.edu/caim/manual/index.html

Things to Consider When Designing a Web Page
- http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/web-page-create.htm

Tutorial for Good Web Design
- http://msdn.microsoft.com/workshop/design/layout/girvin.asp

Importance of a Good Web Site Title
- http://relee.webwize.com/urldesign.html

Internet Publishing
- http://www.apple.com/publishing/internet/index.html

Commercial Design
- http://www.dsphere.net

Web Development Resources
- http://www.eborcom.com/webmaker/

A Step-by-Step Tutorial for the Different Phases of Design
- http://www.fortressdesign.com/tutorials.html

Basic Style Rules for Creating Web Pages
- http://www.fuzzyfaces.com/build1.html

Tips for Keeping a Visitor Interested
- http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/6897/netools.html

Organization and Style
- http://www.hooked.net/~larrylin/4.htm

Pointers for Setting Up Your First Web Page
- http://www.htmlgoodies.com/tutors/sitelinks.html

Web Design Style Guide
- http://www.htmltips.com/