

Website 100

100 DESIGN AND FUNCTIONAL ELEMENTS OF A TERRIFIC WEBSITE

This checklist has been designed for service professionals, but it is also useful for anyone setting up a website and/or perfecting their website.

_____ **Current Score**

1. Design, Research and Planning

- I've selected a GREAT .com domain name and have reserved it. (<http://rs.internic.net>)
- I have described/outlined the 4 things that the people coming to my website will likely be looking for/wanting.
- I've downloaded/purchased an HTML software program that I like. (<http://www.claris.com> or <http://www.microsoft.com>)
- I understand at least the very basics of raw HTML (<http://www.junior.apk.net/~jbarta/tutor/makapage/>)
- I have sketched out at least 10 of the pages of my site and how they link together.
- I have found at least 10 well-designed sites of competitors/related fields and have made a list of the 25 design elements I want on my site.
- I've got a web hosting provider picked out and ready.
- I've got someone I can call or email when I get stuck on my webpage.
- I've obtained www.myname.com if available. (<http://www.netsol.com>)
- I know my financial and time budget for this website.

_____ **Section Score**

2. Basic Web Design/HTML Skills

- I know how to 'view source' to see the raw HTML code from any web page.
- I know how to set the background color of the web page.
- I know how to choose the default font so my web pages look clean.
- I know how to insert a graphic into a web page.
- I know how to
- I've experimented with at least two online 'create a site' systems. (<http://www.tripod.com>)
- I know how to open a graphics file, add text and save it as a jpg or gif file.
- I know how to transfer files (called FTP) from my website to my internet provider's computer.
- I know how to link pages together.
- I know how to create tables and do basic layout.

_____ **Section Score**

3. Include Important Details/Information

- I use a graphically great company logo/name.
- My toll-free and toll phone numbers and fax number are on each page.
- A copyright notice is on each page.
- The title matches each HTML page.

- I provide the city and/or state where I/my company is located (address optional -- don't provide it if a residence, for security reasons).
- The "last updated" date is included on the home page and selected pages.
- I've got a professional photo of myself on my site so people can relate to me.
- I have included a FAQ (frequently asked questions) section.
- Each page has a consistent look and feel.
- I have meta tags on each page, not just the home page.

_____ **Section Score**

4. Basic Content to Include

- I explain who I am and what makes me special.
- I explain the services I offer and how they work.
- I am clear on how much my services/products cost and what one receives for this price.
- I have a list of solutions that will appeal to most of my visitors.
- I describe at least 3 benefits to people who use my service/product.
- I offer several things/services for free at my site to get people started.
- I have a page containing links that might interest the visitor.
- The site is organized around what's important to the visitor, not just what's important to me.
- I explain who visits my site and what I can do for them.
- I've had someone read my site and help me remove all jargon.

_____ **Section Score**

5. Technical Details

- The site is viewable on a 14" monitor with no scrolling needed.
- I've viewed my site via other browsers to make sure it looks right.
- I've made sure all of my links work. (<http://www.linkbot.com>)
- I have had my HTML validated.
- I have verified by META tags.
- Whenever an email address is included, it is hotlinked.
- My average page is less than 30K text and 50K graphics.
- My email address uses the same domain name as my website domain name.

- I've compressed my graphics for fast downloading. (<http://www.gifwizard.com>)
- I am getting a traffic report from my web hosting company.

Section Score

6. Graphic Design and Appeal

- My site has a professional (vs hobbyist) look. It is not lame looking.
- My art (logos, illustrations) is clean and crisp, not scratchy looking. (<http://www.andyart.com>)
- My site looks distinct; it's not a cookie cutter of other's sites in my field.
- I use only 1 or 2 different fonts per page.
- I used interlaced gifs (they appear more quickly).
- I use ALT tags.
- I use only colors that all browsers can display properly. (<http://www.lynda.com/hex.html>)
- I chose colors carefully and artfully, not jarringly or slap-dashedly.
- There is a theme to my site; it is an expression of ME or my company.
- The names I use for the links even make sense to the ignorant visitor.

Section Score

7. Ease of Use/Navigation, Intuitive Feel

- The average user is never more than 3 clicks away from what they'll need.
- I don't give the user more than six options on any one page.
- I offer a site index.
- I use image maps for a clean, easy look.
- The visitor is guided as to what to do, see or go to next.
- There are forward, back, top of page and home page buttons throughout the site.
- There is a site search engine that is easy to find and that works well.
- The visitor doesn't get stuck going down any blind alleys.
- I've asked five people to visit my site and tell me what they didn't like about it or found wasn't clear/easy.
- I have walked all through my site and it flows.

Section Score

8. Selling Power and Ease of Buying

- I give the buyer 4 ways to buy (email, web, phone, fax).
- I have packaged my services to make them intriguing and appealing.
- I make 'ordering' a simple, online, immediate process.

- I am using a secure server; clients can sign up online. (<http://www.verisign.com>)
- Credit card transactions are processed in real time. (<http://www.commercepay.com>)
- I include testimonials of others who have used my services.
- I offer a guarantee of satisfaction.
- I offer enough content that shows that I know what I'm talking about.
- I've established my credibility completely.
- There is a mechanism or test or questions for the visitor to qualify/disqualify themselves as a potential client.

Section Score

9. Marketing and Links

- I have included properly used META tags on all of my pages. (http://www.zdnet.com/wsources/content/0298/hd_nt_wm.html)
- Visitors can recommend this site to a friend, right at the site.
- I am listed at Yahoo and the other search engines.
- I offer a free newsletter/tip nugget and people can sign up from the website.
- I am linked to at least 10 others in my field/industry and they are linked to me.
- I know where my site appears on the search engines. (<http://www.positionagent.com>)
- I am part of a web ring. (<http://www.webring.org>)
- I mention/refer people to my website in my email signature.
- I include my website URL in my stationary, brochures and tangible marketing tools.
- I am part of a professional/trade association that has a listing for me or links to my site.

Section Score

10. Ways to Engage the Visitor

- I offer a free TeleClass they can sign up for online.
- I offer a free newsletter/tip broadcast they can subscribe to online.
- I offer a free consultation/sample.
- I offer a chatroom at my site.
- I offer a discussion board at my site.
- I offer a free report (related to my subject/field) via autoresponder.
- I offer a book or tape they can buy or get for free.
- I offer to refer the visitor to someone who can help them.
- I offer the visitor a list of worth-remembering list of links that will continue their journey.
- I offer the visitor a chance to hello to me personally.

Section Score