

Prepared by Clients' website Company.com

## **Websites and their role in your business**

### **The number one rule, the one to walk away with, does your site pass the 5 second rule?**

When a person walks into your business you want them to purchase something, or have the opportunity to talk to that person and sell them something. Therefore your stores are laid out welcoming, you strategically position yourself, you smile, acknowledge their presence you have impulse items near the register, etc. Then when they go to purchase, you may suggest other items.

Your site needs to do the very same thing. That is where the 5-second rule applies. In a store if a customer holds an item for 8 seconds then there is a very good chance it will be purchased. On a website, we need the visitor to hold, so we have them click to the next page.

Example: Netflix.com

### **2nd rule is User Friendly**

From this point on the order of these can be argued. But I have found if a visitor goes to another page or is looking for something in particular, they do not want to hunt. Use the usability test included in your packet. Test your site. If you cannot check off 80% or more of what is applicable, then you need to revisit the layout of your site. A great reference is "Don't Make Me Think" by Steve Krug, great reading, fast and very informative.

### **3rd rule Know your Target Market**

To learn about them, survey your market, learn about their lifestyles, their level of technology, what they are looking for. You can achieve this by asking those who come into your store, research on line- Google something like typical buyers ages 18-29. Your site needs to reflect their interest. This includes the layout, the colors, the textures, the level of interaction, and the simplicity. A good marketing example is the cell phone, on one hand you have the blackberries and on the other the jitterbug!

Example: Myspace.com, AARP.com

### **4th rule Search Engine Optimization (SEO)**

Keywords are a must, but only if they are the correct ones and used in the right places. Keywords should be words your potential buyers would use. Not ones you think would work. You also need to understand you cannot reach 100% of the market. You can't please everyone, so don't waste your energy and advertising dollars. Focus on the market you want and hit it strong.

Your main keywords should be on all three lines of the search engines list and in the content of your site. The three lines are the title tag, Description tag, and the domain

name. If you are a Singer you would have your name and type of music you sing in all three, if you are a business that carries cameras then you would use the words such as camera and digital camera. If you have a business name that is generic, like, Bayberry Group, then you have your work cut out for you. This was a real estate office.

Example in Google Search

In addition to keywords, submit your site to as many search engines as possible. there are other tools that are free, but the best suggestion I can give is to make sure your site is coded well, and is validated. Even if you have good keywords, poor coding or invalid coding will cause the search bots to abort the page.

### **5th rule Keep Your Site Fresh**

Web 1.0 began as a means to provide information from the company/business to the consumer. With the evolution with Web 2.0 the communication and level of interaction increased and changed websites into a two-way interactive form of media.

Now you can have a fresh site by adding new content to the site on a regular basis, or having some form of "social medial" embedded into your site or linked to it. The best based on research is a blog. A blog is a great way to open up channels with your visitor, freshen the content, and update you visitors about specials, upcoming events and points of interest.

Other sources of social media are facebook, myspace, You Tube, twitters, and wikis. All of these have some merit. Facebook and myspace were once just for audiences under 30. They had it figured out as a source to network; our group is just now figuring it out. Twitters are still out there; some sources are saying they may be a good avenue for sharing links. Others are not sold on that yet. However, if you have an opportunity to share your web address, do it.