



WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

An Internet Marketer's Guide To Website Development

Website Development

Introduction

For the average webmaster, design and development are words that are most often associated with the overall character of a website. How it looks, how it presents itself to the viewer, how it will adapt to future “design” changes.

Of course, if your primary objective is to earn money online, the concept of design and development has a slightly different (and much less flamboyant) meaning.

The design factor merely relates to simplicity and function. Basically, you want a viewer to be able to interact with the website in an efficient and effective manner. That could mean...

- following a pre-planned sales letter “trail” to a specific order button for a specific product
- easily navigating through valuable content where products are sold or Google ads are displayed (or both)
- accessing information which is directly linked to searchable keywords that are associated with Google ads

With those three purposes in mind... earning money online means you'll be involved with one or more of these primary website categories:

Sales Letter - using a single sales page to sell a specific product

Content Driven - developing a substantial volume of content pages that are based on a particular niche area or subject matter

AdSense - building a website with the sole purpose of generating income through your Google AdSense ads

Each one of these requires both a different approach and a different design. We'll take them one at a time, starting with the ever popular sales letter website.

Sales Letter Websites.....

Unlike the other two categories, a sales letter website relies solely on text content to get results. But just because the sales copy is the number one focus doesn't mean that design elements aren't important.

For example, you still need to present a professional front. Otherwise, the viewer might not bother to stick around for the sales pitch. For the most part, just keep the look clean and simple (much like the look of a quality newspaper).

If you decide to include audio, make certain that the viewer has the ability to turn it on and off at their own discretion. And don't ever allow audio to come on automatically with the loading of the web page.

For one thing, spoken words shouldn't be the first thing a viewer experiences. Secondly, it can prolong the time it takes for the sales page to load. Even worse, it could cause the page or browser window to freeze up.

Remember... just because you happen to have the fastest computer and the fastest

internet connection, doesn't mean everyone else does. Always "design" your pages for the worse case scenario. That would constitute a somewhat slow computer capability and dial-up connection.

The other area where sales letter design comes into play is text emphasis. That would basically include things like bold, italic, and highlighting. Arriving at the correct formula is key to getting maximum results.

It's kind of like the comparison in the story of Goldilocks and the three bears...

Too little emphasis and all the sales copy will just blend together. Too much emphasis and the sales copy becomes way too intensive. A comfortable balance somewhere in the middle is just right.

Graphics

There are two trains of "design" thought on this one. Some say that you should include a good-looking, quality header graphic at the top. Others insist you don't need graphics at all because the only thing that matters is the sales message itself.

Here's the call on that one...

If you're selling a product that is geared toward professional marketers or people who are already experienced in that area of the business, you'll be approaching them much different than you would the "average" viewer audience.

In that particular instance, you need only be concerned with the sales copy. In other words, design graphics are purely optional.

Adversely, if your product is geared toward a more general or less professional audience (which in most cases it will be), you need to consider how the "average" viewer will perceive your overall sales page.

If it's too bare bones, they'll assume you're a newbie or amateur. Why? Because they've been conditioned to perceive a website - even a one-page sales site - in a certain way.

For the most part, that means they expect to encounter some sort of familiar layout or design. With a sales letter site, that would equate to a "proper" header graphic or logo at the very top, one that represents either the product or the company.

Naturally, a good professional 3D cover image of your product is also a must have. These days, a lot of marketers have decided to forego this particular detail. But that's not necessarily a good idea.

No matter who your target audience is, "showing" someone what you're selling is and always will be powerful stuff. So rather than perceive your 3D cover graphic as merely an image, think of it as yet another important ingredient in the overall process of creating killer sales copy.

The Text

With a sales letter website, you have one purpose and one purpose only... to SELL a product. That being said, it's extremely important that you don't get carried away when dealing with the text content.

In most instances, your sales copy will be rather lengthy so whatever standard you set from the beginning, it's something a reader will be subjected to for quite some time. If you utilize a relatively hard-to-read font, or use color combinations that strain the eyes, you

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