



Website Design Best Practices

Did you know over 75% of people admit they base their impression of a company's credibility purely on its website design alone? That is why it's essential to follow our website design best practices when maintaining your website to avoid common design mistakes such as slow page loads and cluttered layouts and ensure you provide a clean professional presentation.

Fast Page Loads

Recent studies show website visitors will leave your website if the loading process takes more than 3 seconds. Over 50% of a website's page load time is determined by the image weight on the page. This doesn't mean you can't use images on your website, but rather you should prepare images for optimal display online. If you want to ensure your website looks great and is quick to load, use our [Guidelines for Formatting Website Images](#). These guidelines will help you prepare your images for optimal display on your website by helping you select the right file format, quality, and resolution.



Background Images

Background images are images which underly text or other objects on your website. They are one of the core features that determine how visually interesting a website is. When choosing a background image, it is important these images are high-quality and sized appropriately for your website. Most of all, it is important the background image does not include text. Background images with text distract from overlay text or objects, are difficult to read, easily distorted, and not easily viewed on smaller screen sizes. If you need to include text with your background image, use a text overlay on top of the image to make the text visible without ruining your design.

High Quality Images

We've all heard the expression, "A picture is worth a thousand words". Crisp and clear website images can help show visitors just how clean, secure, and well-maintained your organization is, which all



work toward the end goal of converting a potential lead into a paying member. Don't stretch or distort images to fit in a specific area of your website. Start with a high-resolution image and crop it to the appropriate aspect ratio. If the images on your website are high quality and sized appropriately, your visitors are more likely to form a positive impression of your chamber.



Consistent Color Scheme

Choosing the right color combinations is crucial to creating a successful website. The colors used throughout your website should be hand-picked to compliment your brand and intuitively guide your visitors through the layout of the website. Avoid using random colors that are not in your color scheme. These colors will look out of place and work against your clean modern design. The colors in your website should be consistent, warm and welcoming, encouraging visitors to continue browsing your website.

Internal vs. External Links

Knowing the difference between internal and external links helps create a great user experience for your visitors. Links that take visitors to another page on the same website are internal links, which should never open in new tabs but rather in the same tab the visitor is on. External links are links that take visitors to a different website and should always open in a new tab, so that your website stays open in the browser, and can be returned to easily.

Use of Whitespace

Give your website elements room to “breathe” visually by incorporating white space, also called negative space. Grouping elements too closely together risks overwhelming visitors and causing important information to be easily overlooked. When designing your website, use

margins and padding to increase the space between images, copy, and other elements. The use of whitespace throughout your website helps create harmony and balance. It can also be used to lead or guide the visitor from one section of your website to the next.

BAD:

My dog loves costumes

My dog Bruiser truly loves costumes. That is the only we spend so much money every Christmas and Halloween buying ridiculous getups for him. has nothing to do with the pleasure we get out of pointing and laughing at him. If that were the case, it would be cruel and inhumane. Look at his face. Doesn't he look amused?



GOOD:

My dog loves costumes

My dog Bruiser truly loves to wear costumes. That is the only reason we spend so much money every Christmas and Halloween buying ridiculous getups for him. I promise that it has nothing to do with the pleasure we get out of pointing and laughing at him. If that were the case, it would be cruel and inhumane. Look at his face. Doesn't he



Review, Review, Review

Copy is just as important as the visual design of your website. A beautifully designed website is no more than a pretty picture without good content. Make sure the text on your website is relevant to your business, simple for visitors to understand, up-to-date, and error free. Broken links/images, outdated information, or typos in your copy text damage your people's perception of your organization you're your credibility. Be sure to thoroughly review your website at least once a month to ensure content accuracy and functionality of the website.

Are you using all these website design best practices? If not, it's time to start! Contact us at Chamber Data Systems, if you have any questions about how to start using these tips in maintaining your website or to learn more about our Website Design & Hosting services.