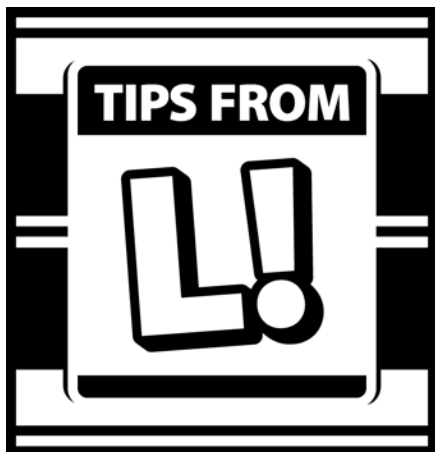


5 Tips for First-Time Company Website Owners



If you have a website at all, you're actually further ahead of the curve than you may realize. The internet game is one that continues to grow outwardly and competitively. No matter what your business, having an online presence is becoming increasingly important for sustaining business at all. Finding your way to L! Marking & Design means you've not only acknowledged this fact, but even if you're confused in the jargon of SEO you must be an innovative enough thinker to realize that you need more than a dot com to make your internet presence worth the time, effort, and money. That being said, truly owning your website's BRAND really only comes down to a few simple basics. Thanks to inspiration from OfficeMax and Go Daddy, here is a list of 5 tips for new and first-time website owners to build their online business on a strong foundation:

I dub thee...

What's the first thing any website needs? A name! And choose the name of your website CAREFULLY. Think about it: the name of your website is the basis for your entire Internet presence. Your company name, your brand, search engine results and everything in between will be determined by the name of your website, so you want to be sure you choose something not just catchy, but also easy to remember, relevant to your business, and reflective of what you wish to convey about the quality of your work or services. Keep it simple but feel free to be creative. If the domain you wish to use is already taken, consider first the easiest second options such as adding generic words like "the" to the name, describing your business like "bestcontractor.com" or even consider making it .net or .info instead.

WOW! factor

First impressions are lasting. In today's technology age many people's only interaction with a business is through their website. However the average internet user spends no more than 20 SECONDS on any given web page they've clicked on after a search engine inquiry. That means you have less than 20 seconds to amaze and capture your customer. You don't just want your page to look flashy and frilly though, you also want it to be easy to understand and navigate. Don't over-do it. Make sure it is useful, direct, and memorable.

1-800-OBVIOUS

Accessibility is a key point of contention for many novice internet users. No matter how pretty or informative you make your site – no matter how fancy or pragmatic – your website will only carry you so far if you do not ensure that any user that finds it can contact you EASILY and INSTANTLY so that you can receive ACTUAL BUSINESS. While everyone is in an uproar to add their facebook, twitter, pinterest, and so on and so forth on to their homepage, don't overlook the obvious: place your primary phone number smack-dab in plain view, as well as a general and public-friendly e-mail address. After all, the point of all of the flowery web design, internet marketing and social networking is to reel in clients and customers. If your potential customers can't contact you without jumping through hoops, you'll lose them in the blink of an eye. In as fast as a user tends to leave a website, you have to let that person know that if they want to know more, they can speak to you immediately. Furthermore, any opportunity to interact with a user directly is a bonus opportunity to capture their interest, so even if all of the information any user could EVER possibly want is found throughout your website, don't miss out on a chance to snag the person who doesn't have the time or patience to scroll down.

GO GO mobile site gadget!

A year ago, my "cool new" cell phone was the size of a brick. Now I feel like a dinosaur if I don't upgrade my phone every 6 months. Mobile devices of all kinds – be they smartphones or tablets – are what internet technology is currently gearing toward. Having a mobile version of your site allows anyone on the go to find you and access you. Because this

is a new technology and still so few sites are built with mobile optimization in mind from the start, having a mobile version of your site from the get-go puts you significantly ahead of your competition. How many times a day do you Google questions like, "What's name of that actress in that one movie?" or "How many ounces are in a liter?" on your iPhone while sitting with friends or cooking dinner? Think about your site providing the answer to that on-the-go question about whatever service it is you provide and you've got the right idea about mobile web browsing boosting your business and internet presence.

Is that your Google ranking or are you just happy to see us?

SEO is critical to driving traffic to your website. The bottom line is that no one outside of the family and friends you force to check out your new site is going to even find it if you don't optimize it for search engines, and Search Engine Optimization is where internet marketing gets pretty complicated. While, as first-time website owner, you may feel confident in your ability to maintain the four tips on this list, do not be fooled into thinking that letting this last one slide won't dramatically affect the success of your website. The bottom line is that SEO is essential for internet business success, and as such you deserve to give it the proper treatment. Don't hesitate to hire a seasoned expert. SEO is more than just complicated; it is also an on-going process that needs expert engagement.