Web Design Mistakes Businesses Make

Your business might as well not be marketing if it doesn't have an internet presence. That said, the home base for every business online is the business website. Your business' website is one of your most fundamental tools for ultimately increasing revenue and presents an enormous opportunity for you to gain clientele. However, if your website isn't done right then it not only hinders your potential to find new customers, but it can even actively *hurt* it by making your competition look better in the viewer's eyes. The last thing you want your website to do for your business is turn customers away. That is why it is incredibly important to emphasize that simply having something slapped online with your business name on it isn't going to cut it. You need a properly designed and maintained website in order to meet your internet marketing potential.

To avoid running off potential customers with a poorly designed website, consider the following questions, inspired by painfully common errors that business website owners make when designing their own sites:

"Do you even know what you're talking about?"
I know that's something you normally hear from your spouse but it's one of the deepest website pit falls. Modern shoppers are totally spoiled by the internet. The expect accurate detailed information. Your website's design cannot be catered to your personal preference and needs, because you are NOT the target audience. Make sure you are aware of the market your website is catering to, and design your website accordingly. Put yourself in your customer's shoes, what kind of customer will visit your site and what they will want to get out of it.

"What is all this?"
Cut out "busy" and "flashy" gimmicks. Your website should be aesthetically pleasing, but it shouldn't be distracting. No matter what your business industry or who your customer is, internet users are impatient. The New York Times reported in 2012 that the magic number is 250 milliseconds (http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/01/technology/impatient-web-users-flee-slow-loading-sites.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0). Even though that seems extreme it does bring into to focus the need for speed. Keep your website user-friendly and fast with a clean focus on what is important to your client so they can get the information they're looking for as quickly as possible.

"Popcorn! we got popcorn! Get your popcorn!"
Your site is beautiful; it's simply, fresh, and meaningful. So what? Potential customers need to know what you're selling and what you want from them. Make it extremely obvious what you're selling and why they need it. Don't lose your message in the artwork. Your site needs a goal and a call-to-action to make it effective. Direct your customer's attention toward what you want them to do on every page on your site.

"What is this, the '90's?"
Having an outdated website could mean your business' online death. If your website looks and is dated you have automatically told the viewer that your company doesn't keep up. Your website content must have current information, up-to-date graphics and a relevant concise objective. Cut out vague information and include social media that you update on a weekly.

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"I don't know much about websites, but I know what I like"
Know your customer and your target audience! Unfortunately, not everyone cares about what you're selling. While you might know its great, you need to be realistic about who you're selling to. A lack of focus means spreading yourself too thin and wasting time and effort. You don't want to alienate demographics outside of your target market, but don't try to please everyone. Determine who your audience is and master your technique of selling directly to them. This is the best way to ensure you attract and keep the type of customer you truly want most.

"You paid HOW MUCH?"
Website design is a tricky business. The best way to know if you're getting the best value for your investment is to do your research. Be careful about over or under paying for web design or big claims of what it will do. If you over pay you didn't do your homework, if you under pay the site's not effective and doesn't do the job intended. Likewise, know exactly what you're getting for your money. Like any big ticket item "add-on's" is the name of the game and in many cases they are good. If an ad-on is suggested be clear of exactly it will do, how much it is per month and how will it create revenue.

"I don't know why my free website isn't working."
You may know an awful lot about your business, your market, and even what makes a good website. But the best way to ensure your brand is put online in a successful way is to hire a professional. Do not be afraid to let someone who has been formally trained take your business to the next level with an excellently designed website and consistent maintenance.

Thanks to the internet, your website is the first face that potential clients see of your business. Don't let easily avoided mistakes pull the rug out from under you. Talk to a professional today.