

Does Your Website Suck?



Finally, small business owners everywhere realize they need an online presence if they are going to compete in today's world. Small business owners who just a year ago adamantly argued that their customers aren't using the web are now jumping on board and admitting – yes, indeed they are.

But slapping up a website just for the sake of having a website can defeat the purpose – and can even harm your image if it isn't done right.

Does your website suck?

In other words, does your website *work* for your business? Does it accomplish your objectives for success? (I.e. generates leads, sales, educates and informs customers, etc.) Do visitors know what to do when they arrive to your site? Is there a strong and *EFFECTIVE* call to action to respond?

We are amazed by how many lousy websites there still are out there. It may be because most businesses do not value a website as a key part of their marketing. They've been "getting by" for so long that they figure it doesn't really make that big of a difference. **Wrong!**

Often it can be simple things that might largely improve a website, sometimes a complete redesign might be recommended. Are you unsure if your website sucks? Read through the following checklist.

Users can't instantly tell what your company does

✓ Fixes:

- Add a slogan/header
- Add an introduction or description of what you do
- Add graphics and video that illustrate your company's purpose

Annoying media

✓ Fixes:

- If website has Auto-play audio/video then it should be controllable, and controls should be noticeable and easy to control (once disabled should not return)
- Pop-up windows should be avoided, minimal or easily controllable
- Organize advertisements so it's not cluttering your website
- Avoid animated .gifs or tacky images

Unattractive

What you see above isn't a website, it's a train wreck. A website should feel comely and welcoming. Just as you would (hopefully) clean your home when expecting guests, don't leave a huge mess for your online visitors, or they won't be staying very long.

✓ Fixes:

- Fix clashing colors
- Remove if number of colors is excessive
- Add colors if website lacks color
- Remove or organize text if too text-heavy
- Fit as much as possible above the fold
- Don't have too much to scroll vertically. And no horizontal scrolling.
- Remove or replace low resolution images

Slow load time

✓ Fixes:

- Upgrade or switch hosting/server
- Image compression
- Use gzip compression
- Login to Google's Webmaster Tools for extensive website speed suggestions

Difficult to find or lack of contact information

✓ Fixes:

- Add easily noticeable contact information (i.e. phone number at top of website)
- Add contact forms in strategic places

Broken links

✓ Fixes:

- Use a link checker tool (such as [Xenu](#)) to assess broken links
- Correct typos or incorrect URLs contained in broken links
- Implement a 301 redirect (via .htaccess) from broken, outdated URLs to reflect pages' new, updated locations. This is especially useful if many links from different sources direct to an old address that no longer works.

Hard to Navigate

✓ Fixes:

- Clearly list the main sections of your website in your main navigation menu.
- List sub-sections via menus that “drop down” from your main section.
- Mirror your main navigation links in the footer.
- Ensure your website is compatible with all major web browsers (Internet Explorer, Firefox, Chrome, etc.)
- Avoid an over-abundance of sections. Building a website that’s harder to navigate than the hedge maze in The Shining will scare away your visitors faster than you can say “Redrum.”
- Make a Sitemap

No call-to-action

✓ Fixes:

- Direct your visitors to the goal. Tell them where to go and what to do in your copy
- Use enticing tone and language

All About You

✓ Fixes:

- Remove pictures of yourself if not appropriate or conducive
- Keep all the information about yourself in one page (like About Us)

Lack of Trust Factor

✓ Fixes:

- **Establish credibility:** Be sure to use testimonials and/or clients served to show your experience satisfying others.
- Add testimonials
- Add certifications
- Add that your website is safe/secure to visit
- Add case studies
- Include a contact information page

Absence of basic social media links

✓ Fixes:

- Add Social Media links and/or Google+

No way to collect the names/emails of your visitors

✓ Fixes:

- Grow your database of leads - Add a Lead Generation opt-in

Poor Copywriting

✓ Fixes:

- Have your copy written by someone with experience or expertise in your field
- Avoid the temptation to over-optimize copy with excessive key search phrases (aka “keywords”). SEO copy can quickly get ugly if you’re not careful
- Keep your copy relevant and pithy. Don’t bore your guests with generic articles that say nothing.
- Include calls to action

Can’t Track a Website’s Traffic or Conversions

✓ Fixes:

- Install [Google Analytics](#) on your website
- Specify Goal URLs in the "Conversions" section
- Use [Google’s Website Optimizer](#) to test different designs and determine what’s most effective in creating conversions

We hope this has helped you at least navigate yourself to a better path. Your website is extremely important and the better you make it, the more it will reward you. If you still have questions or would like to discuss further, we invite you to contact our friendly team with specifics about YOUR website, and much more.

Thanks and all the best!!

- BBEX