

Seven Aspects of a Successful Business Website

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What makes a website valuable?

As a developer, this is a question that I have often been asked as I create websites for people. The answer has been unique for each individual client and their circumstance. Through these projects, there has always been certain recurring design principles and content elements that have become essential ingredients. From a sociological view, these ingredients have dual characteristics. On one hand, they represent the way in which we are all basically similar to one another and this affirms our [collective](#) spirit. On the other hand, it is the non-utilitarian, “dis-functional”, impractical, random, elements that make a website intriguing, creative, and thus affirms the [individual](#) spirit, giving a website personality.

This list explores the “stuff” of a website and offers a method for testing its value. There is only so much real estate on a website’s key pages, so it is not only important to decide what to include, but more importantly, why? There is no perfect formula for a great website, but I would venture to say that a website that affirms our collective and individual spirit while creating value for the user stands a great chance of being successful.

Instead of portraying this subject in the typical outline you might encounter when retrieving an online search result from the question:

“What makes a successful business website?”

I am suggesting a nonlinear “value-based” approach. This is not just a “to-do” or “do-to” list of website functions that get willed into existence based on how well it serves monetary goals, but, rather a list of functions based on how it is sustainably valuable to the user, including the ultimate “end-user” Earth, the seventh value. How will our website affect the Earth? Our collective Self?

To this aim I have placed an image of our planet at the center of this diagram with the six other aspects of “value” surrounding it, so we can conveniently ponder this relationship with each of the items on the list.

Using This Diagram

I have grouped the various functions and elements of a website under six values. They are grouped according to their predominant purpose or characteristic, although, you may find them just as appropriately listed under some other value heading, either way, it is a starting point. All of the items listed should be considered in multiple ways. Doing so, will create insights and give a deeper understanding of how your website is valuable in the world wide web.

Steps

Choose a function/element you will need on your website. For example: "Great Content". Now keeping in mind an overall idea of the content you are offering people who visit your website, ask the following questions while looking at the diagram. Note: Adapt the "Who, What, Where, When, How, Why" part of each question as you feel fits.

1. How is my content "Desirable"? Who desires it? When would they need it?
2. How is my content "Credible"? Is it from an authentic source? Why is it...?
3. Is my content "Accessible" to the people I want to reach? Does it reach the desired demographic group? Is it accessible to people with limited abilities?
4. Is my content "Usable"? Can it help? Are the viewers of my content able to see it properly in their particular environment or settings?
5. Can my content be found easily? Is it "Searchable"? Can it be shared?
6. Is the content "Sustainable"? Will it satisfy my viewers needs in ways that are enduring, repeatable, efficient, ethical....?
7. How is this content valuable to the Earth?



Desirable

Great Content
 Well-Chosen Images
 Services and Products
 Effective Sales Copy
 Social Media - Giving
 Strong Opt-In Offer
 Deals, Freebies, Free Shipping
 Latest News & Popular Items
 Bonuses, How-To Guides, Education Based
 Video Presentation

Credible



Professionalism
 Trust Marks
 Portfolio
 Personality Behind Company
 Testimonials
 Reviews, Write-ups, Events, Activity
 Excellent Customer Service
 Warranties, Refunds, and other Policies
 Industry Terminology – Read More Details and Specs.
 Straight Forward, Simple Presentation and Language
 Follow Through After Contact, Gratitude, Updates
 Personal Touches
 Social Media – Acceptance



Accessible

Brand
 Personality Behind Business
 Photos of People and Business
 Essential Business Information
 Sign-Up Forms, Subscribe, Email Marketing
 Social Media Integration
 Universal Access

Useable

Online Usability
Clear Navigation
Logical Roadmap
Fast Loading Time
Graphically Pleasing
Shopping Cart Easily Accessible
Cross Browser Compatibility



Searchable

Customized Search Bar
Frequently Asked Questions Page
Product Finder/Store Locator
Sitemap for Search Engines & Users
Analytics, Tracking, and Statistics
Excellent SEO
Off Page SEO
Customized Meta Data
Increased Page Ranking



Sustainable

Efficient Maintenance program
Content Management System
Ethical and Ecological Considerations
Sustained Will Power & Service to Others

Sustainability permeates all aspects of a website if each of these values is given consideration and applied.