Company Website Tips

For a small to medium sized business, initiating a Website can be one of the toughest jobs you'll face.

This collection of how-tos is designed to provide basic knowledge in site structure, content organization, the selection of keywords, and writing page descriptions. Used as a basis for further learning, it'll help you establish a strong foundation for your company's Website.

How To Structure Your Website

Unsure of how to structure your information and visualize what their Websites should contain? For most small to medium-sized businesses, there are two types of content sections you'll need to think about.

- ***Common sections:*** those elements you see on most commercial Websites.
- ***Company-specific sections:*** those sections that are unique to your business. They may be sub-sections of the above.

Common Sections

These will contain general information about your company. It will be up to you to decide which sub-elements should be included, of course, but consider:

About us
You'll see this on almost every commercial Website, both large and small. People like to know who they're doing business with, and this is your opportunity to tell them. Your information might fit on a single page, or stretch to several. Elements you might include are:

- Who we are
- Company history
- Company profile
- Mission statement
- Contact us

Contact Us

It may seem obvious, but many sites either don't provide adequate contact information, or they forget it entirely! You should include as many different ways for customers to contact you as possible. Common elements for a 'Contact Us' page are:

- telephone and fax numbers
- email addresses
- email forms
- physical address
- a 'We Are Here' map
- emergency contact details

Products and Services

Most companies will want to include information about their products or services on the index page (the front or home page), but it's important to also dedicate a separate section of your site to your products. This will help your customers find your products and services easily, and allow them to research and assess your offering quickly.

Company-Specific Sections

The best way to go about creating company specific sections for your site is to follow the same general structure as above, creating logical subsections for each section.

The first page of a subsection should contain general information on the subject, as well as links to more detailed information if your visitor requires it. For example, a second hand car site may have an accident and repair section that contains the following sub-sections:

- Paintwork repairs
- Body repairs
- Insurance assessments
- Accident and Repair FAQs

Take a logical approach to the organization of your site, group related material, and always offer general information first, followed by optional, more detailed information for your users.

How To Choose Keywords

Targeting keywords increases traffic and qualifies visitors. Keywords and search terms are those words or phrases that your customers may enter on a search engine in order to find a Website that offers products or services like yours. Choosing keywords is not difficult if you follow a few guidelines.

Basic rules for choosing keywords

1. Think Like Your User
Try to think like your customers, and choose words or phrases that you could imagine them entering into a search engine. How would you find a site like yours? If you can find your competitors via a search engine, what search terms did you use to locate them?

2. Be Specific
Be specific. If you sell cars, for example, it will be almost useless to choose 'cars' as a keyword, as you compete with too many other sites. 'Affordable second hand cars' would be a much better choice.

3. Use Words From the Page
Use words that appear in your page's content. Let's say your site sells second hand cars and you have different sections for Fords and Toyotas. An effective choice of keywords might work like this:

- Front page: 'second hand cars', 'used cars', 'affordable cars'
- Ford page: 'second hand fords' 'used fords' 'previously owned fords'
- Toyota page: 'second hand toyotas' 'used toyotas' etc etc.

And make sure you use these keywords in your page titles.

How to Write Page Descriptions

Good page descriptions can make a big difference to your site's traffic. Some search engines such as msn use a page's description as the text that appears beneath the title in a list of search results. This provides Websites with an excellent opportunity to create the right impression pre-click.

Combined with a good page title, you can use your description to further qualify your visitors. Here are a few rules of thumb:

- Page descriptions should be a maximum of two sentences long and be as concise as possible.
- Be as honest as you can. It's far better to attract visitors that really are looking for a company like yours than to mislead people.
- If possible, write descriptions that also contain the keywords or phrases you're targeting.
- Do not use overly promotional language -- people don't like it and some search directories may refuse to include pages that do this.
- Don't use all capital letters or multiple exclamation marks. People will think you're insane.

A practicle example: Let's say you sell second hand cars and that you've already chosen a title. Here are some examples of what to do and what not to do:

Bad example:

CARS CARS CARS!!!!! LOWEST PRICES GUARANTEED!!!!!!!! CHEAP CARS AT LAUGHING LARRY'S BARGAIN BONANZA!!!!!! CARS CARS CARS!!!!

Good example:

We sell affordable second hand cars and will deliver anywhere in Denmark for free. Check out our online showroom here.

I won't bother explaining why the first example is so dreadful --

What makes the second example so good is this:

The first sentence tells the reader exactly what you do, while at the same time making sure that the site doesn't lose potential customers due to the business's location: they can deliver for free.

The second sentence tells the reader what kind of site to expect when they click the link. The whole description is accurate, informative and appealing, without being overly promotional.

Conclusion

When you're writing page descriptions, try to think like a user that's looking through a list of search results. What would make you choose one link rather than another? Try to keep your descriptions short, to the point and honest: a user who's tricked into visiting your site will not buy from you.