

# YOUR WEBSITE CONTENT

## STEP 1

### Setting Your Web Site's Structure

The structure of your web site is how it is set up: the Navigation scheme. The navigation of your web site is one of the most important considerations in constructing your web site. If people can't find what they want in 3 clicks or less, they will leave and likely not return.

You must also make your web site's structure intuitive – that is, there should be a natural and logical flow which people can understand and follow with ease. It's easier than it sounds. Here's our tried-and-true method:

1. Brainstorm your topics. Write down all the topics you can think of which you want covered in your site.
2. See which topics you can arrange into categories. Complicated or long topics should be broken down into subcategories.
3. Look for logical sequences, and rearrange as necessary.
4. Assign a page name to each category and subcategory. What you will end up with is something of an outline.
5. Count your pages.

Remember: It is better to have several short topics or subcategories than to have everything on one long page. Subcategories will also help visitors find specific information easier.

## STEP 2

### Deciding on Web Site Content:

#### Text (Copy)

1. For each web page you named in [Step 1: Setting Structure](#), grab a page of blank paper. Put a page name at the top of each paper.
2. Now comes the hard part: writing your text. We'd love to say we'll do all it for you, but since you know your business better than anyone else, you'll get the best results providing at least the basic information for your own text.
3. Keep it simple. Don't get too wordy. Vary the length of your sentences. Don't worry about spelling and grammar at this point, just get the information down.
4. As you write, keep this old marketing adage in mind:

\*\* When logic and emotion come into conflict, emotion always wins. \*\*

No, this doesn't mean to put a lot of **exclamation points!!!** or use a bunch! of **BIG** text and different colors!! to get your point across **!!!!!!!!!!!!**

(ew, tacky, wasn't that?) What it does mean is this: People aren't going to stay at your site just to read about you bragging about your company. They want to know what's in it for them. Always. How can your service or product make *their* lives better, make them happier, better-looking or healthier, give them more time, or whatever? Always gear your sales pitches to the customer's point of view, asking yourself, "If I were a potential customer here, WHY am I here? What would I want to know or see?"

5. Not sure what your customers are looking for? Uh oh. Boy are you in big trouble. Nah, not really! Just do more surfing. Millions of web sites have support forums. People ask all kinds of questions. This will give you an idea about what potential web customers will want to know about your own products or services, too.
6. Keep your credibility intact while you're writing your text. There's a fine balance between jazzy, engaging ad copy and the snake-oil-salesman oversell.

# STEP 3

## Deciding on Web Site Content:

### Graphics

Graphics are a very effective way to break up text and create "white space" -- an open area that gives the eye a break from reading.

Used properly, graphics can be an extremely valuable and indispensable tool to hold interest and generate enthusiasm for your web site, your products, your services, and your business.

Used improperly, graphics can distract from your message, slow page loading to an intolerable level, or actually turn people off of your product or what you have to say.

Below are some guidelines for putting together the graphics content to be used in your web site. *(Caveat: If you are going to use graphics in your web site, you MUST either own all rights/licenses to use the images, or you must have written permission from the copyright owner/s to use the images in your web site. You must also have written permission from all identifiable people in your photos to publish their likenesses online.)*

### Digital Images:

- Digital graphics on disk are preferred only IF they are of exceptional quality with sharp focus, good detail, and 72 to 96 pixels per inch resolution.
- Preferred digital formats: PNG, BMP, TIFF or TIF, and GIF. JPG's or JPEG's are ok if not overly compressed or blurry. Try not to "tweak" or resave your jpg's. Every time a jpg is saved, it is further compressed, which removes pixels from the image and results in a blurry, low-quality image.
- Resolution of digital images: We use 72 to 75 pixels per inch for web images and we speak of images in pixel height by pixel width. This means if you provide a 3" x 5" digital image that has a resolution of 300 pixels per inch, it will be 900 pixels by 1500 pixels. However, when that same image is converted to 72 pixels per inch to make it web-ready, it will end up only 216 pixels by 360 pixels.
- We can make any digital image smaller with very minimal loss of quality.
- We cannot make any digital image larger without significant loss of quality, because the enlargement process results in a "spreading out" of the pixels and a dithering type of effect to create "filler" pixels.

- If images need to be enlarged, OR if they are already at proper dimensions but are higher than 100 resolution (instead of 72-75), please provide print photos or graphics. Our professional 45-bit-color scanning equipment can quickly scan a photo or image to nearly any size and resolution with much better results.

### **Print Photos or Images:**

We can do some "tweaking" of photos and images to improve lighting, colors, and contrast; repair red-eye; crop, disguise, or eliminate undesirable elements; repair cracks, spots, etc. However, there's not much we can do for a blurry or badly-focused photo or image.

When selecting photos and images for your web page, keep these in mind:

- Content and quality matter
- Product photos should be clear, close-up, with good lighting, and well focused.
- If you can afford it, hire a professional photographer. We have an in-house Award Winning International Photographer please call us on Freephone 08000 434 513 we provide an excellent service at reasonable rates.
- Consider including a few good-quality "people shots" -- photos of people enjoying your product or service. This is like a built-in testimonial. Be sure you have written permission of all subjects to use their photo/s online. If you can, also get your subjects' permission to use their names with their photos on your web site.
- If you offer gift packages, include good-quality close-up photos showing what they look like with what items are included etc. People like to see what exactly they're sending especially if they order items to be sent as gifts.
- Print Photos: We can scan these quickly and easily with our professional scanning equipment. Results are usually far superior than images scanned by customers with home scanning equipment.
- For Logos: Provide letterheads, business cards, brochures, or whatever has your logo on it or displays your current business "look".

### **Custom Graphics:**

- If you need a custom graphic such as a logo, then just draw or doodle what you have in mind on a piece of paper. You don't have to be an artist. You can add a written description with labels etc. to tell us what you have in mind. We'll create a new logo for you based upon your concept and ideas. You will, of course, have final approval.

## STEP 4

### Deciding on Web Site Content:

#### Color and Style

The colors and style of your web site will have a large impact upon your web site's visitors, and should be carefully considered with your target visitor in mind.



Ideally, your web site's colors should coordinate with those of your business logo or business colors. This is a part of "branding" -- establishing your business identity firmly in a consumer's memory through consistent use of name, colors, style, trademark, slogans, etc.

Your web site's style or theme should be an expression of your business and its services or products. Is it professional, entertaining, fun, informative, soothing, educational, or strictly utilitarian?

We can choose a color scheme for you and suggest an overall look for your web site. Or, if you have a specific "vision" for your web site, describe it to us. We'll advise you what is likely to work consumer-psychology-wise, and what is not.

To help us get your site right, we will request that you send us 6 URL's (web site addresses): 3 for web sites you really love, and 3 for web sites you really hate (they don't have to be relevant to your company or product). This will give us a feel for your own personal preferences in various web sites' "personalities."