



What Every Business Owner Should Know About Their Website An Overview

– Clarity –

The first and last word about what your website should be, and how it should look is - **CLEAR**.

Everything else is details.

An Overview of the Details:

- **When a viewer comes to your site**, and isn't engaged, they will leave in a matter of **SECONDS**.
Really! – First impressions matter on the web more than anywhere before, so the initial impact needs to be strong, clear and appropriate.
- **Have a purpose for your website! No kidding!**
If that sounds ridiculous, go look at some sites, and see if you know their intention right away. Surprisingly, not as often as you'd think.
- **Be Consistent.**
Once you've set a tone, stick with it. You've introduced yourself. Let the conversation follow. Confusing people can really get in the way.
- **Be Yourself.**
Speak to your audience the way you would speak to a client/customer in person.
- **This is Your Site.**
Of course, you say. ... But wait, there's more!
Be particular. Do some research. Find other sites that you like, and think about why, and how it may apply to yours.
Choose the right person/people to work with.
Let your instincts tell you if it's the right fit. This can be a collaborative process, an educational process, or at the least, a

working relationship. Read your meter for your comfort level. Will you be listened to the way you want, have your questions answered so that you understand what's going on and why? **You own it. (literally)** Your web designer should be designated as the contact person, but you own the domain and pay the host and should have that information. (that might seem to fall into the category of obvious, but I can't tell you how many times I've been hired to re-do or update a site, and my client never had access to the information that makes it possible for the site to go online.)

Rules of Engagement

- **Choose 1 main focus for your site.**

Choose carefully.

You're making a lasting impression (hopefully).

This can be a process of sorting through priorities, since, you may have said to yourself, "1 focus? - How do I get it down to that? - or That doesn't apply to me. We have 3 things of equal importance going on here. ..."

It's about the engagement of the visitor with your business.

- **You are starting a conversation.** (Building a relationship.)

Imagine trying to start a conversation where you just blurted everything about yourself all at once, in no particular order. What response would you expect? It could vary (though not by much) in person, but on the web, it means you've just turned someone away. We've all seen these sites. You had a purpose when you went there, but the onslaught on visuals, or the lack of focus leaves you confused and repelled.

This is the web. If one site doesn't have what you're looking for, or isn't communicating to you that they do, you look elsewhere - fast.

- **Who are you?**

- **How would you describe your business in a nutshell?**

Your goals, the way you see your business, how you want to be seen,... - and by WHOM?

- **This is the essence** of the thinking that comes before planning your site.

- **Color, Design and Your Message (Putting it Together)**

- **You've crystallized your message, now the fun part!**

Fun? Yes, though it can feel intimidating if you look at the blank 'canvas' for too long.

- **Color – Start with One.**

This is both a helpful way to decide what the central color for your website should be, and a good way to start working out a color scheme in general.

- **Design**

Grace and Harmony.

A Shock to the Senses.

Whichever is true.

Don't always open the bottle that says, "Open me first". Or just go through any rabbit hole. Follow the path that makes the most sense. In the real world.