

Guidelines

The following is a list of design “do’s and ‘dont’s” to help keep your site looking professional and well managed. We have found that none are more passionate about their product or service than the people providing them, and often there is a tendency to ‘over emphasize’ the points that they are passionate about. Unfortunately, this usually serves as a detriment as this over emphasizing can make the web site look unbalanced, confusing and unappealing... the opposite of what we want a web site to do! Of course, there are always exceptions to every rule, but if you are just starting out, we recommend you stay within these guidelines until you become comfortable with design and function.

1. Home page information. The purpose of the front page, or home page, is to welcome your visitors and introduce them to the main benefits of your product or service. This must be accomplished within 10 to 15 seconds, therefore, keep it to the point.

Do state clearly what the main benefits of your product or service are with links to other pages describing these benefits in greater detail. Use words in the text that people would type into the search field of Google to find your product or service.

Don’t try to tell the visitor everything about your product or service all at once. Give it to them piecemeal with teasers and lead ins to explore further. This will keep the reader far more interested and will make it much easier for them to read and absorb information.

2. Allocated font sizes. Each of our sites is designed with a specific size for main headings, subheadings, and text, so that there is sufficient contrast to help the reader distinguish quickly and easily what to look at first and to naturally guide their eye around the page. When these size allocations are changed, your visitor’s can easily become confused and not know where to look first.

Do use the allocated sizes for main headers, subheadings and text.

Don’t use size allocations anywhere else to ‘make a point’. If you do need to make a point in your text, use bold or italics. This will draw sufficient attention to what you wish to make a point about. Using non-allocated sizes in places not intended for these sizes will only serve to add ‘visual clutter’ to the page and make it clunky and confusing. It may also reduce your rankings in the search engines.

3. Side menu ‘news’ items. It is important to remember that the purpose of a side menu news item is to draw the reader’s interest to want to read more about it.... not to read everything all at once.

Do keep it very short and sweet with a link to view more. Two to three short lines of well-chosen text will suffice.

Don’t try to put everything about the topic in this space. Tease them with a little and draw them in. When too much text is placed in this space, it causes the reader to have to scroll down, which we want to keep to a minimum when possible, and can make the overall page design look off balance.