

# Secrets of Web Site Design

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Sean Mize

[Secrets of Internet Success](#)

I have recently written an ebook that teaches you step by step how to create a large online income.

Check it out here:

[Cash Flow Business Model](#)

## Table of Contents

Secrets of Web Site Design.....	1
Table of Contents .....	1
How to Design a Website for Maximum Profit .....	2
Web Site Design: Use of Graphics and Fonts .....	3
Website Design and How to Guide Visitors .....	5
Some notes from Sean Mize .....	7

## How to Design a Website for Maximum Profit

Designing a website is a skill in itself, without the added requirement of search engine optimization that is not the subject here. There are many references to SEO on the internet, but not so many about what salient features should appear on a website. Beginners to internet marketing can find the features required in a website confusing and frequently require some help.

Your website will presumably be based on a theme that may or may not be intended to make you money. Not all internet sites are for making money, and in fact it is only recently that the information sites have been overtaken by the explosion of websites used by people hoping to make their fortune through internet marketing. Unfortunately, over 95% will fail and part of this is due to not being aware of the elements that make a good website.

You can have a graphic near the top of your site that can be either your logo, or some other graphic suggestive of the theme of your site. It can be obvious, such as a dog if your site is about dogs. Many people make the mistake of using altruistic graphics that seem to have no connection to the theme, and that only confuses and annoys visitors.

Try to keep clear of flash graphics: that is those that have a lot of movement and take an age to load. Many people will lose patience and leave. Flash graphics have their place, but it is on the corporate site of a well known company, not on the website of somebody trying to make a few bucks from the visitors that they get. Keep the graphics static, but relevant.

You must also have a heading, or title, for each page that gives the visitor some information about the topic of the page. Also useful to many is an indication of where on your site they are. This is as simple as providing the URL of the specific page. You don't often see that provided on web pages, but it can do no harm and can do you good.

Your home page should have navigation to the main sections of your website. If your website is large, then split it into sections and provide a link from the home page to the first page of each section. Do not link to every page on your site from the home page. The first page of each section can then provide links to the rest of that section, plus a link back to the home page.

Some standard pages are essential to any website intended to attract and retain visitors and customers. These are a 'Contact', 'About Us', 'Privacy' and perhaps a 'Disclaimer' page. The Contact page should, wherever possible, include an email address and a geographical address, and also a telephone number. Many people do not like supplying the last two, but it makes a big difference to the trust that your visitors will have in you if you do. The About Us page lets the visitor know who you are and what you do. This also builds trust and has been proven to increase the conversion rate of visitors to sales.

The Privacy statement is important since it provides a bit of security about the personal information with which buyers may have to provide you. The Disclaimer is

essential if somebody could conceivably come to harm using the information you give them. If you think that this does not apply to you, provide it in any case. You never know!

A link to these pages should appear on every page in your website, along with a link to your home page. A good place to put them is in a separate one-column table at the bottom of each page. Placed there they will not be spidered until the main text has been crawled, and will therefore not lead the spiders away until it has checked out the main content of your page.

All websites that are designed to make money must contain a squeeze page. That is a page specifically intended to persuade visitors to provide you with their email addresses to add to your list. Without a list, you will struggle in internet marketing, and your squeeze page is essential. So is your sales page. You should have a sales page for every product you are selling on your site. If you are selling ten products, have ten sales pages, each designed to persuade the prospect to purchase the product.

These are the main elements of your site, and anybody that knows how to design a website will include all of them. There are many tips you could be given: an example is to make it easy for people to buy from you. Do not be restrictive in the payment methods you allow. Offer a conventional order form they can print out and post to you with a check. There are many people that will not trust the internet with their credit card details. Why prevent them from purchasing from you?

If you include all of the above essential features in your website, you will benefit and have a better chance of success in your internet business.

## **Web Site Design: Use of Graphics and Fonts**

The use to which you put graphics and fonts in your web site design is more important than you might believe. It is more than just personal preference since they can not only affect the readability of your web pages, and hence the time that visitors stay on your site, but also your search engine listings.

Both graphics and the fonts that you use for your text should be chosen carefully, and not just because it looks good to you, or even different. You might think that your graphics look nice, but they should not dominate your web page. Graphics should complement a page, and be used intelligently to convey a message.

Website graphics are in either GIF or JPG format. JPG formats are generally better for photographs and GIFs for general website graphics such as buttons and menu bars. When inserting a graphic into a web page it is important that you state the dimensions as in:

```
<img src='myphoto.jpg' width=150 height=100>.
```

This is because it takes time to load a graphic, but if your browser knows how much space is going to be needed it can set that aside and continue loading the rest of the

page. The whole page then appears to load faster than if the graphic size was not specified. Some graphics can take a long time to load and you will have to keep an eye on that. Animated graphics especially can take ages, and your visitors will tend to disappear since they are generally not very patient when they visit a site.

It is best to keep animation to an absolute minimum, if it is necessary at all, and you frequently see sites that allow you to click a button to skip the animated introduction. There's not really much point in having it in that case! Studies have shown that visitors are more attracted by text than by graphics, and large banner ads are complete turn-offs. In many cases, therefore, your web page would perform better with more text and fewer graphics. Where graphics are necessary, because many sites do not look like right with none at all, try to keep away from Flash since they can take ages to load.

There are circumstances where graphics are useful, such as photographs of yourself or your products, and most online businesses like to display a logo. However, to help your search engine listing you should provide alternative text for two reasons. One is that if the browser fails to resolve the graphic for any reason, your reader will see a textual description rather than a blank, and also the search engines do not read graphics but read the HTML description of it. Use the 'alt' attribute such as: `<img src='myphoto.jpg' width=150 height=100 alt='mykeyword myphoto'>`. In this way you can let the search engine find a keyword and so improve the value of your web page.

Search engines cannot read Java, although they are learning to, so try not to use Java generated navigation bars and buttons because you will dilute the relevance of your website. This is not a hard and fast rule, and if your page is otherwise search engine friendly, then it will probably make little difference, but, where search engine listings are concerned, every little helps. A high listing is frequently not due to one or two specific reasons, but to a combination of lots of little things such as using meta tags, using the 'alt' attribute in your graphics, and letting search engines see the keywords on your navigation buttons.

Text, too, is important. There is no evidence that search engine algorithms have a text element, but easily readable text is useful in keeping visitors on your page. There is a big difference between reading on a screen and reading a book or magazine. Serif fonts are generally too fussy for on-screen reading, but are better than sans serif for paper text. The serif is the little tail that many letters have in fonts such as Times New Roman. If you must use a serif font online, Courier is better than Times.

However, sans serif (French for 'without serif') always wins hands down, and the two best are Verdana and Arial in that order. Arial tends to be a bit difficult to read in the smaller font sizes than Verdana, and most computer software have both available.

However, just in case, allow an option by phrasing your HTML thus: `<font size=2 face=Verdana, Arial, Sans>`. The HTML will load the Verdana first, but if that is not available then it will load Arial. Your text should be crisp and easy to read, and rather go for fancy text and background colors, stick to black on white for the majority of your web page. You can use other combinations for specific highlighted areas, but not all over.

Finally, your text size should preferably be HTML size 2 or 3. Size 1 is too small and can even be penalized by search engine spiders if they think that you are trying to hide the text behind its size. The same applies to insufficient contrast, and if a spider reckons that you are trying to hide keyword stuffing by reducing the contrast between text and background, it will penalize you. Keep in mind that spiders have no eyes for color: they read only the HTML. Try to use only two font sizes on a page, one for the main text and the other for headlines and titles.

Intelligent use of graphics and fonts in your web site design can benefit you, both in the black and white view of spiders and in the eyes of your visitors who like attractive sites. Keep it simple and natural to succeed.

## **Website Design and How to Guide Visitors**

Some people have no idea of website design or how to guide visitors round their website. Have you ever read down a web page, reached the end, and then wondered what to do next? If so, you know how frustrating it can be if you really want to know more or want to buy something.

What you tend to do then is either to click away from the site, which is generally the usual reaction to that situation, or scroll up and look for a relevant link. This is not the way that a web page should be designed. Every page should have a purpose. It does not matter what that purpose is, but it must have a purpose. There are some specialized pages that have a specific purpose and others that are there simply to provide information. All of them, however, should tell or show the visitor what is expected of them.

This should be clear and concise. Even if it is just a button saying 'Click Here'. That, at least, is a guide to the visitor. Let's have a look at some typical pages that might be on a website, and how they should guide visitors to carry out the task that is the purpose of the web page.

A squeeze page is designed to collect email addresses and at least first names by means of an opt-in form. It is not difficult to make the purpose of this page clear to visitors and what is expected of them. Your offer should be clearly stated and there should only be one action for the visitor to take. Do not give options or you will confuse them.

Tell them unambiguously that they have to enter their first name and email address so that you can send the offer to them. Then tell them that they will also receive any news relating to the topic of the website that you think might interest them. Then repeat that they must fill in the opt-in form so that you can send the offer. Then say 'Click Here' and provide the button.

This is simple and easy for anybody to follow. Tell people what they must do and they are liable to do it. When they have filled in the form, and 'Clicked Here' they

should also receive a note telling them that must confirm their address by clicking on the link in the confirmation email now in their Inbox. That confirmation email must also make it clear exactly what they are clicking for, since they might have forgotten by the time they get to their emails.

Simple. Even a simple straightforward web page containing an article as content should not end with just a period. Beneath that you should have a link. You could provide a link to a related article on the topic or to a sales page for your product. If visitors are not ready to leave your website, give them a way to remain. People either want to learn more or they want to buy something, so let them do so. You could even offer an option.

It is sometimes wise to offer a link to more information on the subject, and also a link saying something like 'Purchase This Product with Our Money-back Guarantee: Click Here'. Only you can judge the right time to offer the sale. The point is that you have to provide your visitor with positive action to take. If they are interested in your products, and perhaps wanting some prices, then allow them to get that information.

Even better is to design your website in a flowing fashion, so that Page 1 leads to Page 2 that leads to Page 3 and so on. Each page should be written in such a way that your visitors are keen to find out what is next. The bottom of each page then leads to the next and so on. A separate section at the bottom can be used to provide end of page navigation to, for example, a sales page, or pricing details, that the visitor can click on when their mind is made up.

Other page types, such as specific landing pages from articles or adverts, should be designed to provide information that is specific to the article or advert that the visitor has just read. If such landing pages are not specifically sales pages, designed only to sell a product, they will be information pages. Try to provide that information so that there is an option available to the visitor after reading it.

Keep in mind that you will need a similar page for every different article topic that you write on, and that each of these should lead the visitor to the next page that you want them to see. Your squeeze page, sales page, perhaps another article or straight to your home page. Provide that as the only link on the page, and provide it at the end of it. You should know where you want your visitors to go next.

If you know how to guide visitors round your site by good website design, then you will make best use of every visitor that you get. If you are not sure where you want them to go, then send them to your squeeze page with a promise of further information and some offers relevant to the subject they have been reading about. Then at least you will have the chance of collecting their email address so that you can keep in touch with them, and they will have the opportunity of a great free offer.

The only page that should send your visitor somewhere else is your sales page. Keep them on that as long as you can!

## Some notes from Sean Mize

After having read this, you might be thinking...all of that sounds so simple...why aren't more people doing it?

Actually, they are: significant incomes are regularly made with web site design.

Of course, in order to adequately monetize your online business, regardless of where it originates, you have to have a game plan, something that will get you from the very beginning to the point where you are consistently making money.

One of my most popular learning tools is my monthly newsletter, delivered to your doorstep by the postal service:

[Monetizing Online Businesses](#)

I trust that you will use these materials to grow your own internet business, and achieve your online and financial goals,

Sean Mize