

TIP SHEET #1 – WEBSITE BASICS

Define the goal of your website

- Inform
- Educate
- Market
- Other

Use current technology, but avoid ‘special effects’ look

Keep the dial-up, basic client in mind

- More than 80% of internet users are dial-up users
- Pages should be less than 55KB
 - 55KB will take 10 seconds to load on a 33K modem
- Find a dial-up friend who will agree to be your test case
- Keep graphics to a reasonable limit
- Go to a web page size checker to get an analysis of your website

Keep your website up to date unless you want to be seen as:

- Unprofessional
- Unreliable
- Untrustworthy
- Unconcerned about your own business

Include the basic information

- Mission statement, or a brief description of your services
- Company name
- Address
- Phone number
- Hours of operation (if applicable)
- Location, with directions and map (if applicable)
- Parking availability
- Your credentials, experience, relevant memberships and associations

Make it easily navigable; avoid:

- Opening new windows
- Disabling the back button
- Using frames
- Changing top navigation menus
- Missing ‘Home’ navigation button
- Changing link formats
- But include a search box if your sight is a growing source of information

Linking

- Embed links in the text; web visitors may be scanning for information
- Press releases should contain appropriate links

- Use action words to describe links
- Explain what the user will find on the other end of the link

Press page

- Include your basic information, as above—especially contact information
- Keep a succinct description of your services and benefits that can be downloaded
- Post all articles, interviews, press references, awards, testimonials, etc.
- Archive all information for continued reference

Use your site for collecting needed information

- Provide email access to you directly from site
- Capture names, email addresses, etc.
- Consider a brief survey if you are looking for market data
- Include security assurance statement if you are collecting information or sending information, such as a newsletter. “We will not share or sell your address...”
- Include ‘unsubscribe’ option if you offer a newsletter or other routine messaging

RESOURCES

Online

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| http://www.bytelevel.com/reports/loading | report on the optimum page size |
| http://www.searchengineworld.com/cgi-bin/page_size.cgi | webpage size checker |
| http://www.useit.com | Jakob Nielsen’s Website on Usability |
| http://usableweb.com/ | Links to usability sites |
| http://www.usabilitynews.com/ | Usability News |
| http://www.webtechniques.com/archives/2001/02/killian/ | Effective writing for the web |

Survey Sites

Zoomerang.com
 Surveymonkey.com
 Websurveyor.com
 Surveyconsole.com
 Nationwidesurveys.com

Books

Don’t Make Me Think: A Common Sense Approach to Web Usability
Designing Web Usability
Homepage Usability: 50 Websites Deconstructed
Web Style Guide: Basic Design Principles for Creating Web Sites