# What to Consider When Designing a New Website

by Ivana Katz

f you are looking to have a new website designed, there are a few factors you should take into consideration - what will appeal to your target market and how are you going to attract the best traffic from the search engines.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF BALANCE IN YOUR NEW WEB DESIGN.

Some people starting a new online business tend to go to one of two extremes - either they will focus exclusively on visitor useability or they will focus on search engine optimisation. Both of these are critical for your success online - if your website is not properly search engine optimised, then no one will see your website in the first place.

If, on the other hand, you focus exclusively on search engine optimisation then you may find that people visit your website once, don't buy anything and don't return because they didn't like it.

Keep a balance and you will get the visitors you want, as well as keep them and encourage them to purchase your products or services.

#### DESIGNING YOUR NEW WEB DESIGN FOR YOUR TARGET MARKET.

In order to create a web design that will appeal to your target market you need to have a clear picture in your mind of who you are trying to reach. What do they look like, how old are they, what interests do they have and why are they here? If you can answer these and other questions about your target market then you will be in a better position to design a website that will

attract their attention, keep them interested and compel them to the action you want them to take.

Start by thinking about the type of graphics and colours that appeal to them. Bright colours may be more suitable for a young, vibrant target market; whereas darker, duller colours such as navy and black may appeal more to a profes-

sional market. Use what will appeal to the people you want to reach.

Think about the type of language your target market uses - do they use slang and a more informal language or are they professionals who use a particular type of vocabulary related to their position e.g. medical vocabulary?

# SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMISATION - HOW TO ATTRACT YOUR FIRST-TIME VISITORS.

Many people will find your website using the search engines - if your website is properly search engine optimised. If you have not properly optimised your website then you could be losing out on some important traffic. Search engine optimisation is often difficult to get right because so many different factors influence it but there are still some basic considerations.

The first aspect to consider in search engine optimisation is your keyword optimisation. Choose keywords that people are searching for but where there is relatively little competition and you will be able to reach a wider audience.

Once you have chosen your keywords you should ensure that they are included in the title of your page, in bold somewhere near the top of your page and then scattered throughout your content, in hyperlinks and alt tags for images.

You should also ensure that you do not

negatively impact your search engine optimisation by using text in graphics that cannot be read by the search engines, use too much Flash as opposed to normal text content, and that your page is long enough to get good results from the search engines (generally over 200 words).

Your new web design should be a combination of what appeals to your target

market including the colours, graphics and type of words you use; as well as obeying good search engine optimisation principles such as keyword optimisation and technical optimisation. Follow these basic principles and you will attract the traffic you want as well as keep your visitors and compel them to take the action.

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