

10 moves that will improve your website

*People make a decision
about whether or not
they like your site
within the first 1/20th
of a second.
Leave a good impression.*

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SPEED IT UP. No one wants to wait 5 minutes for your site to load. Keep graphics optimized, use a quality hosting company, and delete plugins you don't use.

SIMPLIFY. Make things easy to find. Don't clutter up sidebars and with every gimmick known to man. The best sites are the ones with a clear focus and call to action.

USE ON-BRAND IMAGES. A picture's worth 1,000 words. Make sure yours are telling the right story. Hire a professional photographer and use custom branded images when possible.

KNOW YOUR ANALYTICS. What are people searching for when they stumble upon your site? What makes them stay? What are they clicking on? Learn how to reach and interpret your analytics. Google Analytics has a great series of tutorials on the subject.

BE EASY TO CONTACT. Potential clients/customers/employers will want to hire you, but they can't do business with you if they don't know how to get a hold of you. Make your phone/email/contact form/social media icons quick to find.

CLARITY IN YOUR COPY. If it takes longer than a few seconds to understand what you offer,

you need to revamp your homepage. Visitors need to understand who you are, and what next steps they should take. Make it easy for them. Keep jargon to a minimum, and explain industry terms. Personal-ity is great, but simplicity rules.

MAKE SURE YOUR SITE IS MOBILE-FRIENDLY. Use tools like MobiReady and Google GoMo to get more information on how your site displays. Platforms like WordPress and Joomla have special plugins you can install to improve mobile functionality.

PROVIDE VALUE. Educate your audience. Provide something of value, like an ebook, blog, or video. Bonus: You can use this for an opt-in to generate leads.

ADD A SEARCH BOX. Studies have found as many as 40% of web users will immediately leave a website if they do not find what they're looking for. They don't have the patience to poke around, trying to guess where you've hidden the good stuff.

MAINTAIN. Make certain your site is backed up on a regular basis. Set aside one day to correct misspellings, broken links, etc. When things on your website don't work, you lose your credibility and your visitor's interest.