

10 tips to make your website successful

1. Define your aims and your target audience

Plan in advance what you want to accomplish with your website – do you want an online company brochure to confirm your status in the market place or a destination site offering resources and important trade-related information. The answer to this question will affect the design of the site, the type of website address and the quantity of dynamic elements used.

Who are your target audience? Imagine what words they would use to find your website and how they would they describe your services. Use these words and phrases throughout the website to help them find what they are looking for easily.

2. Publicise the website

Have a “website launch party”, involve your whole team and explain to them why it’s important to promote the website to both existing customers and new prospects.

Add the website address to everyone’s email signatures, to printed adverts and brochures, business cards, use on radio and television adverts, building signage, car adverts etc.

Enlist the help of a specialist website development company (that’s us!) to help you get the website listed in all the appropriate search engines and directories.

3. Keep the content up to date

New useful articles and commentaries about your trade will keep the visitors coming back for more. It also helps improve the search engine positioning of the website, as each time you update a page the search engines revisit the site and add the last updated date to their index. We recommend updating some of the website content at least once a month.

4. Easily readable short chunks of text

The homepage should clearly state in plain language what your company does and who the website is aimed at. Test the homepage by asking non-colleagues to visit it and describe what the company does and find out whether the website is easily understood.

Text should be written differently to printed materials, use short sentences and bullet points where possible. The most important message should be at the top of the page.

Ask a specialist website development company to research into a list of niche key phrases related to your website content and use these as your page titles to help quickly improve your search engine positioning but also to explain quickly to your visitors who you are and what you do.

5. Quality incoming links

As well as visitors arriving from search engines, it’s important to provide routes in from other relevant, but non-competitive websites in your trade. Look at your competitors’ websites and assess which sites link to their websites and list their incoming links. If some of their incoming linked sites have quality content that would also be relevant to your website’s content, then either request a reciprocal or two-way link from them and/or enquire how much a banner advert or text link would be for a one-way incoming link.

However, reciprocal linking should never be the only source of incoming links to your website. The best links are those that happen naturally simply because your site provides quality information or services that other website owners also want to share with their site visitors.

We’re sure you’ll find that Fox Web Works is a team you’ll like working with. We are:

**Interested. Intelligent. Worldly. Knowledgeable. Experienced in our field.
Artistic. Flexible. Realistic. Honest. Innovative. Friendly. And above all else,
we’re Professional. You can trust us to deliver a website that works for you.**



6. Give the visitor total control

Give the visitor a high level of “user control” because if a site isn’t responding in a way they expect, visitors leave, quickly! One example of this would be if a link to a new page opens up in a new window with no visible navigation options and the visitor doesn’t realise that the previous page is still open underneath, they have lost their control and in turn you lose them.

7. Communicate with your visitors

If a visitor has bothered to send a message through the website, ensure that they receive a response. A good way to do this is to set up automated instant replies to email forms, which tells the visitor that their message has been received. Be motivated to respond fully to all enquiries within three working days of receiving them.

8. Accessible to everyone

Everyone agrees that websites should have quick loading pages, there are many ways of accomplishing this e.g. small thumbnail images linked to larger versions etc. Ideally, sites shouldn’t be reliant on any one type of technology, e.g. a Flash-only website alienates a part of the population who don’t have the latest version of Flash viewer installed. If a certain technology is used, an alternative general version of the site should also be available. Add relevant html tags to the page to enable screen reading software to translate the tags into readable content for a visually-impaired visitor. Ensure that any images used on the site use high contrast colours, especially important for navigation buttons.

9. Measure the traffic patterns and constantly adapt to improve

Analyse your website’s monthly traffic statistics, always focus on the number of visits not hits – which pages did the visitors arrive at, which did they leave from, which are the most visited pages, how long did they stay on each page, which search phrases brought them to your site etc. For example, if your site is rich in content but visitors are only spending less than a minute in the site on average then consider changing the wording used to attract a more interested audience. Enlist the help of a specialist website development company to help you analyse the “hidden” information in your own website’s statistics.

10. Keep an eye on your competition

Define a list of your competitors, it may be a longer list than you initially think! Search for some key phrases that you think your potential customers would use to find these competitors. Look locally and globally. Look at your their websites and assess what’s good and bad. Copy the good ideas, ideas have no copyright.

For a no-obligation FREE consultation about your website plans, please contact us:
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We’re sure you’ll find that Fox Web Works is a team you’ll like working with. We are:

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