

Some wise human once said "Learn from the mistakes of others. There isn't nearly enough time to make them all yourself." Hence this article. Here are five of the most annoying and common web design mistakes.

1. Slow download time

Don't be that site that is filled with the coolest gizmos in the world. You know, animation, music and other "cool" things. Why? Because nobody is going to go to it because it takes too long to download. A nice clean site that downloads quickly will get you much further than a site with all the fixings that takes forever to download.

2. Unreadable text

If a user has to struggle to read the text on your web site, chances are they won't. Here are some common readability issues:

Low contrast text and background - Don't use light colored text on a light background. Also, don't use dark text on a dark background. Text is most easily read with extreme contrasts between the background and text. Black on white is about as good as it gets for readability. Red on black is pretty bad. Yellow on white isn't so hot either.

Text on a busy background - Text is most easily read on solid color background. Putting text on textured backgrounds can make it much harder to read.

Small Text - Text that is really tiny may look cool, but is hard to read. If you must use small text, make sure changing the text size in a browser will change the size of your text. Using style sheets can some times over-ride a browser's ability to increase text size.

3. Unpleasant designs

Designs that use too many colors, colors that clash, or a messy layout, are just plain hard to look at. A site should be pleasant to look at, not a chore.

4. Long pages

Long pages are a problem because your force people to sift through piles of information to get what they want. Pages that focus on just a few topics with links to related topics on other pages are much better. This approach allows the reader to isolate the specific subject they are interested in.

5. Poor Navigation

It is extremely important that a user be able to access all pages of your site from every page. Users will often enter your site from a search engine listing with a link other than your home page. You do not want your visitors at a dead-end with no way to access the rest of your site. You will have wasted the traffic and given the prospect a bad impression of your business.

As you surf the web, you should keep a list of annoying things you find on other sites. Every so often, check your site to see if you have the same problems. Regardless, if you avoid the common web design mistakes listed above, you will stand a better chance of running a successful web site.

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Could your Web site benefit from a 'make over'? If so contact Spiral Sites today for further information.

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