WELCOME

WEBSITE LAYOUT

DESIGN. BUILD. MARKET:

HOW YOUR WEBSITE CAN BOOST YOUR BUSINESS

VERBINDEN

We empower businesses with results-driven content, technology and digital marketing solutions.

A business website is important for your company to compete and succeed in the modern marketplace. It is the backbone of your business, supporting all your digital marketing efforts.

It is essential for every business to have a website. The more professional your website is, the more advantages you can gain.

Contents

Introduction

> Are websites too expensive to build and maintain?
> They are not.

"Do I really need a website?"

"Yes. You have never needed a website more than you will now."

A record number of consumers research online about a company or product before purchasing. Even if you are not selling products online, they will Google it and look for businesses in their area selling what they need. You are missing all this potential business if you don't have a business website.

In this digital modern era, a website is a powerful marketing tool.

A business website is important for your company to compete and succeed in the modern marketplace. It is the backbone of your business, supporting all your digital marketing efforts.

A website is also important as it helps you establish credibility as a business. There is always the danger that potential customers will assume that you are a small-scale company that doesn't take your business seriously, if you don't have a good website.

A website can also help you by giving consumers an impression that your company is larger and successful than it may be.

Are websites too expensive to build and maintain? They are not. In fact, a website can be built for very little money. Surprisingly, you can even generate revenue from your site!

You don't need a huge thousand-page website for your business. A simple and professional site that clearly talks about your company, products, services, and contact details is just enough.

The online world is expanding enormously, with over 2.2 billion people online, and is not showing any signs of slowing down. A good online visibility is all you need if you are looking for an audience, more customers, or people to influence.

It is essential for every business to have a website. The more professional your website is, the more advantages you can gain.

This eBook sheds light on the importance of having a business website, how to build and run it, things to take care of while running the website, how to generate revenue using it, and lead your company to success by utilizing the marketing advantages of your website.

1

A Peek Under the Hood: What Makes a Website Run?

> Websites are built using a combination of technologies. The choice of technology has long-term implications on your website and ultimately your organization.

Today, it is almost unheard of for a company to not have a website. Internet has become the de-facto place for companies to advertise their products or services. Although web development created a revolution a couple of decades ago, its technologies are constantly evolving even to this day.

This is because web developers have been hard at work to create complex web applications for almost every sector. However, there are different platforms and technologies that you may or may not know about that your favorite websites are running on.

We must keep in mind that when building a website, we must consider its speed, maintainability, and ease of scalability. Let's get to the bottom of this and see what they are.

To get to the root of the website puzzle, you must know a little about Web Stack. The basic structure of a stack looks like Lego blocks. Web Stack is a collection of software applications built one on each other, such as programming languages and frameworks, needed to develop applications and websites. Some of the popular stacks available today are LAMP Stack, WISA Stack, MEAN Stack, .NET Stack, etc.

Front-end or Client-side Technology

Front-end technologies are the underlying scaffolding used by web browsers to show the web pages that users interact with and what your clients see on your website. Front-end development is also known as client-side technology.

While these languages vary from application to application, the three main coding languages are HTML, CSS, and JavaScript. No website can be built without either one of these languages and web developers should be experts in them.

- **Hypertext Markup Language (HTML)** tells the browser what to show on the website. This language makes up the content of the website.
- **Cascading Style Sheets (CSS)** is used to describe the presentation of a page or your entire website. It gives the HTML a visual

appeal. It lets designers define colors, fonts, and transitions.

- **JavaScript** is used to create interactive effects on your website.

When a user visits a website, the browser renders the HTML, CSS, and JavaScript. This process happens on the client's computer which is why it is termed as the client-side technology. Although not commonly used, you may hear of other front-end technologies like Ajax, jQuery, Angular, React, View, etc.

Database

Databases permanently store volumes of data needed for a website like product information, orders, transactions, user records, etc. Even the content from the **Content Management System (CMS)** is stored here. The choice of the database depends on several factors such as usage of programming languages, frameworks, and the web server.

Oracle, MySQL, and Microsoft SQL Server are some of the commonly used databases for

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Back-end or Server-side Technology

Back-end developers build what actually makes websites work. Back-end or server-side technology is an essential technology layer or stack that builds the website.

Programming Language

Developers use programming languages to program business logic or custom functionality on the website. If you are using WordPress for your website, a front-end developer would create a theme with images, presentation, and styles, while back-end developers may work on managing the database, as well as the website's security and performance issues.

Different websites use different programming languages. For instance, Twitter is built on Ruby while Facebook, WordPress, Google, and Wikipedia use PHP. Amazon, YouTube, and LinkedIn are built using Java technology.

websites. Oracle, an enterprise database that many regard as the most complex, requires an expensive license to operate while MySQL is an open-source database engine.

Web Server

Web servers deliver the necessary content to users. They also typically store application codes. It is the combination of the hardware (computer) and the application (software) that delivers your website to users.

Web servers function as a layer between the operating system. The choice of web servers depends on the type of technology used to build the website and the place of hosting. The two dominantly used web servers are Apache by Linus and Internet Information Services (IIS) by Microsoft.

Operating System

The operating system is the interface between the hardware and the software components. Two operating systems that are most used are Linux and Windows. While Windows, from Microsoft, requires a license to run, Linux is an open-source operating system available in different functionalities such as Ubuntu, RedHat, Debian, Fedora, etc.

Framework/Platform

We have learned the layers of the website/web application cake, and now it's time we knew more about the framework/platform. Frameworks or platforms provide a way to build and deploy web applications. It is a set of tools to help you build your website faster. A framework is a group of libraries of optimized code that provides the building blocks to construct a website. If you have a framework, you need not build everything from scratch.

Complex websites need a framework to reduce the time required to build the website. Frameworks also help in expanding the capabilities of the Web Stack by providing additional features such as extra programming languages or proxy servers.

Some popular frameworks are Bootstrap, a front-end user interface framework that is a combination of HTML, CSS, and javascript. Node.js is a back-end or server-side framework, while Meteor, Django, Ruby on Rails,. NET, which are full-stack (front-end and back-end) frameworks. The most commonly used framework is WordPress, which powers almost 20% of all websites.

Knowing how a website or web application works and what goes into making them is fascinating. This will help you decide on the technology to employ while building your website. As explained, a website is like a cake with several layers of technology supporting the front end and the back end.

2

From Idea to Live Website: The Best Tools to Design and Build Your Website

> " Going online is not just about creating a social media page for your brand or uploading your business to Google My Business. Having a well-designed website for your business is now the norm. "

The very first thing that entrepreneurs do when they hit upon a new idea is to go online and snatch a domain name that's a good fit. This is true for small businesses as well. With consumers whipping out their phones to google every query they have, maintaining an online presence is all but common sense. People are more likely to find you online through a search query than they are to find your brick and mortar store – if you have one – through word of mouth.

But going online is not just about creating a social media page for your brand or uploading your business to Google My Business. Having a well-designed website for your business is now the norm. You might be wondering how to get on the website bandwagon and just how easy or hard it is. According to an article, about 380 websites are created every minute! Starting a new website is incredibly easy and people with absolutely no coding experience have created some wonderful websites.

In this chapter, we will introduce to you the best in each category of website builders, CMS, hosting and other resources to build your online presence.

Find a Host for Your Online Home

Finding a suitable host for your website should be a priority task always. It is not recommended to go the cheap way. Your host is where your website lives and breathes. If you don't get a reputed hosting service for your website, you might be compromising on loading speed and security. Lots of web hosting companies have starter packages that are as cheap as $2 a month. If you're low on budget and willing to sacrifice on certain features, then they may be good enough for you. If you're serious about your website security and scalability, you should go with an established hosting service like Bluehost or Hostgator.

Fix it Up With wix

This first-in-class website builder boasts an AI assistant that will automatically build your website for you.

If you choose to do it yourself, a simple drag and drop interface awaits you. You can get started in minutes and have a fully-functional website in under 2 hours! In addition to the huge number of templates on offer, Wix also comes equipped with an app store that has an add-on for every functionality that you can think of.

You can try Wix for free and even design your complete website to get a good idea of how it looks like when it is live. But if you decide to go the professional way and add more features before publishing it, Wix also offers you four, very affordable, pricing schemes.

Get the Word Out With Wordpress

Content Management Services (CMS) like WordPress and Joomla, which are typically used for Enterprise Content Management and Web Content Management, have changed the website development landscape completely. With an intuitive and powerful dashboard, WordPress is the undisputed leader in CMS. With a massive community of developers behind it who are constantly building new plugins to add to an ever-increasing plugin market, WordPress has turned out to be the standard solution for newcomers to design and develop their website.

There is very little coding knowledge required to get on board with WordPress, which is what's attracting the newbies. If you find yourself limited by the WordPress dashboard, you have the liberty of customizing it to your needs, provided you have some level of PHP or CSS proficiency. It is extremely unlikely you will have to do this. The WordPress community has thought of and solved almost every problem and need that a typical website owner would have.
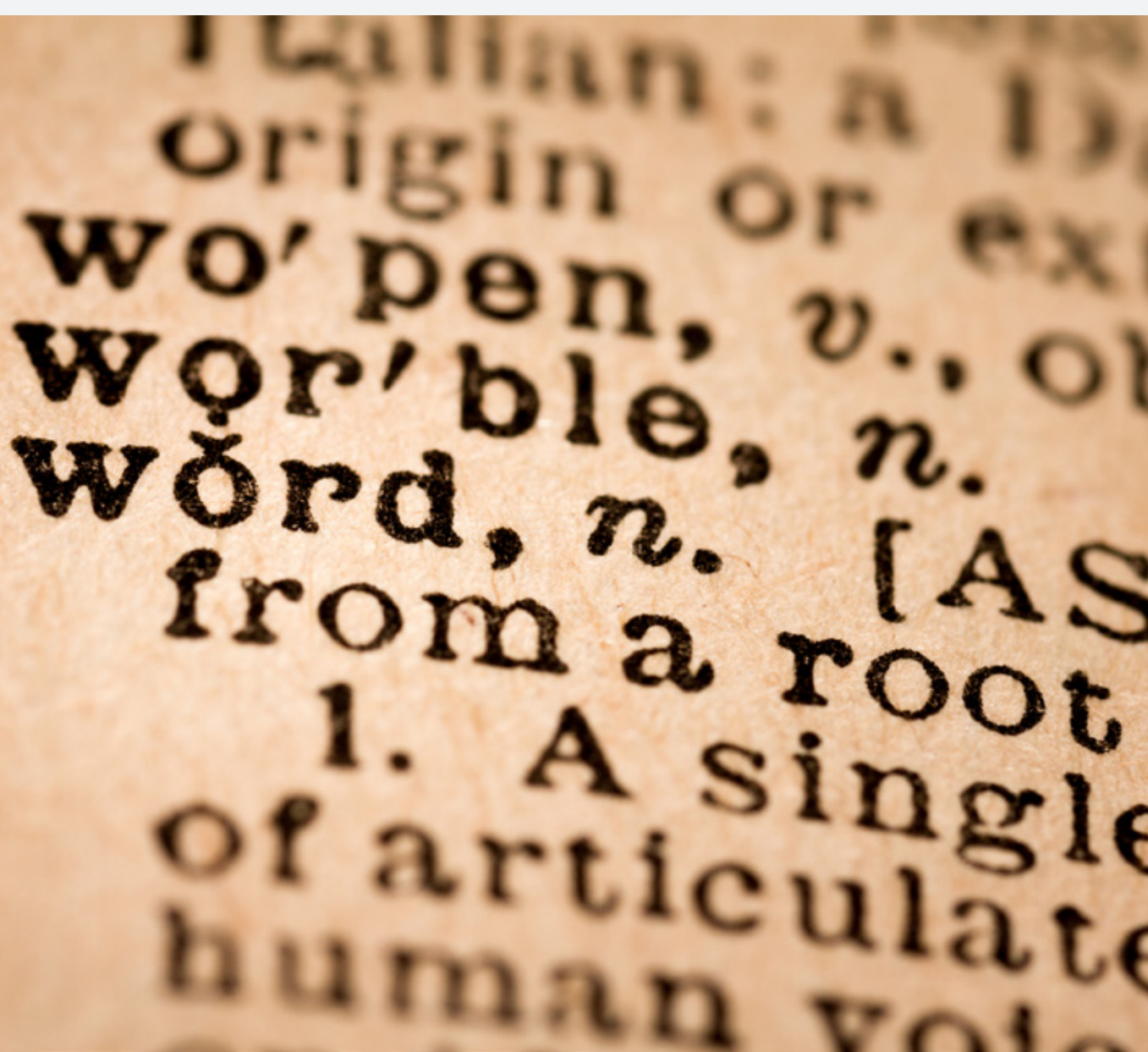
What makes it truly attractive is that Wordpress is completely free!

Here are just a few features you get for the low price of zero dollars per month:

- Social media integration
- Increased site security
- Responsive web design
- Convenient syndication
- SEO ready

Paint the Canvas With Canva

By now, you should have a very good idea of how your website is going to look like and what the content should be about. What would really

> Starting a new website is incredibly easy and people with absolutely no coding experience have created some wonderful websites.

make your website stand out is a customized design that incorporates your brand guidelines and color palette. Of course, you can just hire a freelancer to do this on Fiverr or Upwork, but if you really want to go the cheap way then head over to canva.com.

From website banners to creating infographics, Canva has a huge variety of free resources to help your project. Canva also offers some paid creatives that can be bought as a one-time purchase or you can access all paid creatives by subscribing to any of their plans.

Most websites nowadays have a page dedicated to a blog. No doubt each blog will then require a featured image to go along with it. Canva will help you create those as well.

Images for the Imaginative
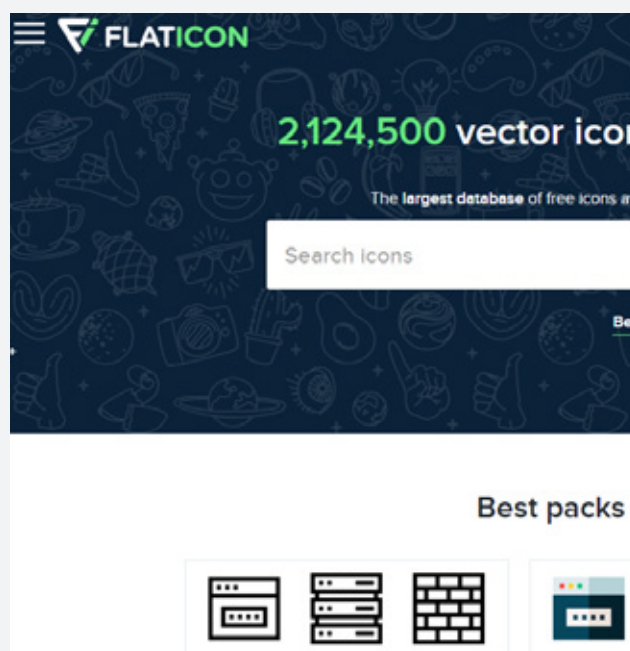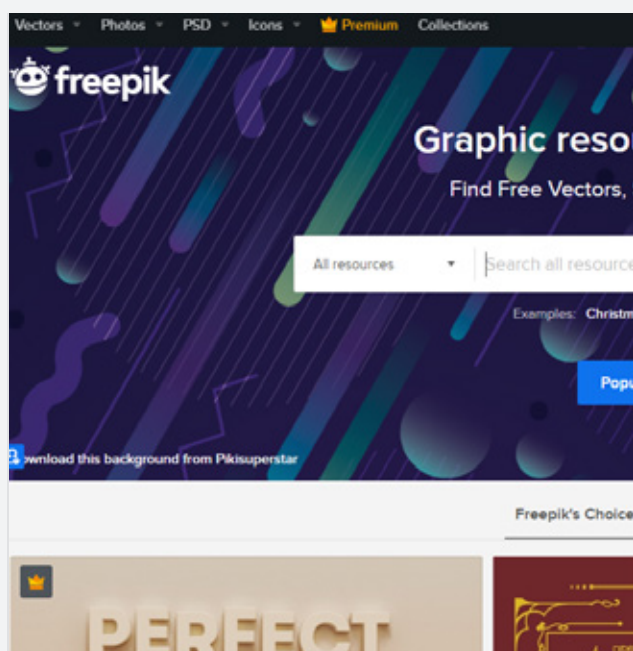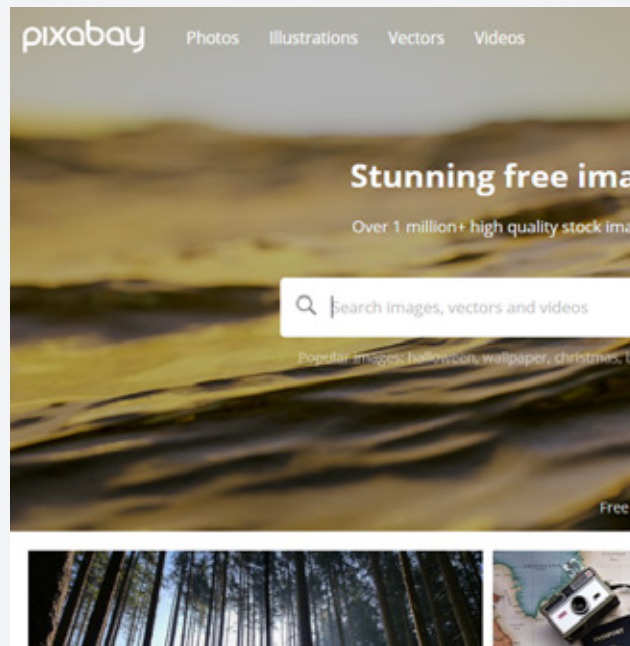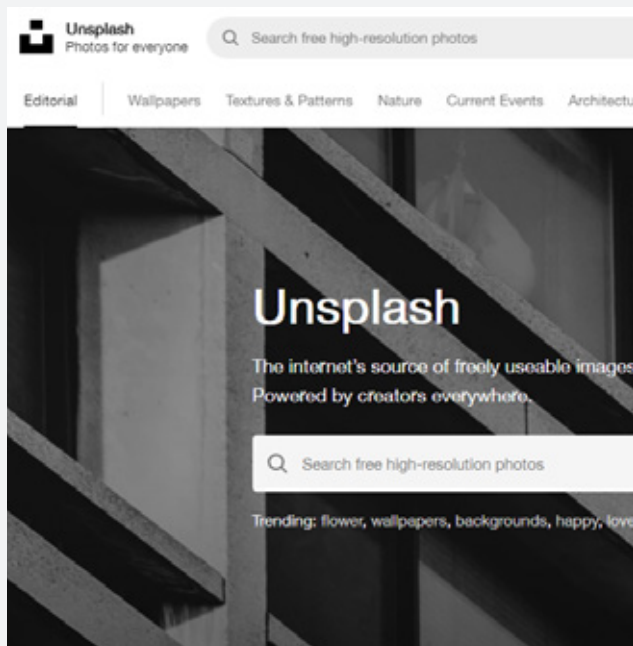
Once your website is operational, you will find that content with images has more traffic and attracts traffic from a wide variety of sources. A good image accompanying your blog or advertisement will surely get more eyeballs. And the best part is that you don't have to shell out $$$ for top-quality images! Here are some resources to score some sweet pics:

- Unsplash
- Pixabay
- Pexels
- Freepik
- Flaticon (for vectors)

Posting these images on social media channels is sure to drive more traffic to your website.

To Sum it Up

If you fully commit yourself, taking an idea and building a website around it is indeed a doable task. However, this commitment requires significant time investment and a lot of re-works if you're not particularly of a creative bent of mind. What's more, if you decide to take on well-established competitors within your niche, then you need to up your game by going the premium way. This involves purchasing themes, upgrading your hosting, buying image licenses and paying freelancers to design and code for you.

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A To-do List Before You Start Designing Your Website

> These days a website is a fundamental building block for everything from retail stores to art museums. With websites coming up like mushrooms, website designs must be top-notch to grab the viewer's attention.

When you come across a website, be it intentionally or otherwise, your level of interaction with the website is based on its content. Whether it is for academic purposes, online shopping, or finding your correct shoe size, what you see on a website has a lot of impact on your actions within the page.

If it isn't appealing enough, you exit the website with just a few scrolls. And if it is even a little interesting, you stay for a bit, check out a few menus and then leave. When the website is interesting and has the right information you need, you stay for a longer time.

A lot of work and time goes into creating a website. Below are a few key elements you should lock down on before you start crafting your website.

Use the Right Colors

Colors make or break a website. Their purpose is to make the user experience more enjoyable and easier. Every website must have a predefined color palette. A website's color palette is the combination of colors you choose for your site's design. Using colors that don't go well with each other or even using neon and fluorescent colors outside the right combination can take the user's interest away as the website wouldn't look appealing.

Here is a great example of how colors make all the difference. The website Affirm uses multiple colors, but they all go well with each other.
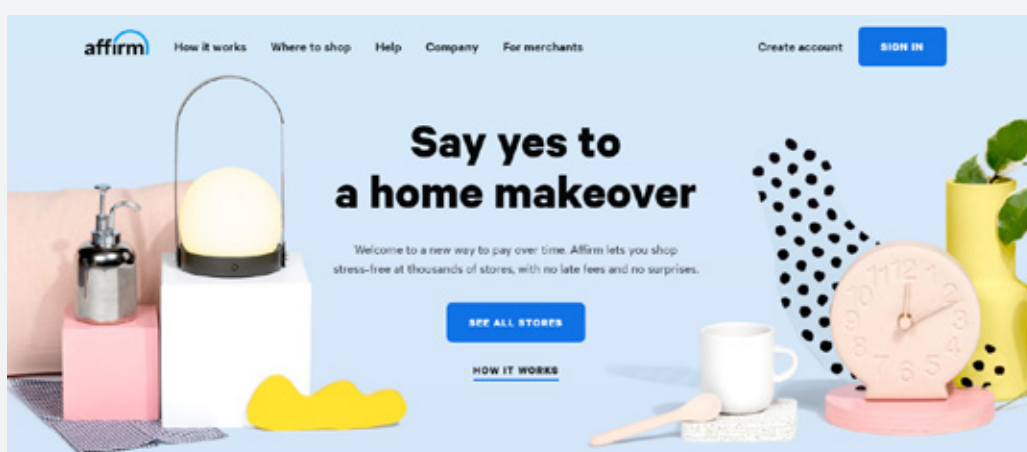
Blink and You Miss it

A website communicates through text and images. Some websites have blinking effects to text and images, under the impression they'll be more attractive. Although, this assumption is not false. It does attract your eyes, but it also takes away attention from the content otherwise present.

Text must be clean, precise, and to the point. There must be a clear hierarchy of text, making the reading journey easier for the viewer. There should be a fine balance between the amount of text and the number of images used.

The Winchester College website has the right number of images and text. The font is clean, crisp, and grand, which gives the viewer a glance into the lifestyle followed in the college.

The Lesser the Load Time, the Better

Having videos, graphics, and animation on your website is always recommended. Having to read long paragraphs of text is plain boring. Having said that, it is prudent to ensure your website doesn't become too heavy to load. If the viewer is impatient and easily distracted – and in most cases they are – they may end up bouncing off your website.

This website is for a cafe in France. Although the website has some eye-popping graphics, it takes longer to load since the graphics and animation within the website take up time to load. This could lead to visitors leaving the site prematurely.

Make the Navigation Easier

A search bar on a website is a must-have. This makes navigating through the website less cumbersome when the viewer is looking for specific information.

Make sure your content is properly categorized. Have a less cluttered main menu. Try to avoid using lengthy dropdowns. These are just a few

When the website is interesting and has the right information you need, you stay for a longer time.

precautions you can use to make sure your viewer does not feel confused by the path they have to take while within your website.

We3 is an example of how navigation within websites should seem smooth and easy. The content within the website is clearly segregated.

Have Clear CTAs

A CTA is your Call to Action. The CTA must be encouraging enough for the viewer to take action, by clicking on it.

CTAs can range from 'Know More' or 'Read More' to 'Check Out Our Journey'. Ensure your CTA messaging is clean, precise and to the point.

A CTA can either be a button, links, or even content urging the viewer to take an action such as the Netflix website that has very clear and to the point CTAs.

Be Different. Be Innovative.

Websites are evolving. Standardized websites

with all your content, images, graphics and whatnot are not going to make you stand out. Play around with colors and text placement.

Above all, the website must be aesthetically pleasing. The colors, fonts, images, content, and graphics must all be in line with your color palette. It must be aesthetic enough for the viewer to avail of your services.

This website is for a digital marketing conference. The website is a near VR experience and can be opened in VR mode as well.

Websites are the face of whatever it is you're selling, from digital marketing services to cat food. The service or products are assumed to be good when the website is good. This works the other way as well.

Keep your website engaging, a good text-to-image balance and above all, it must be user-friendly.
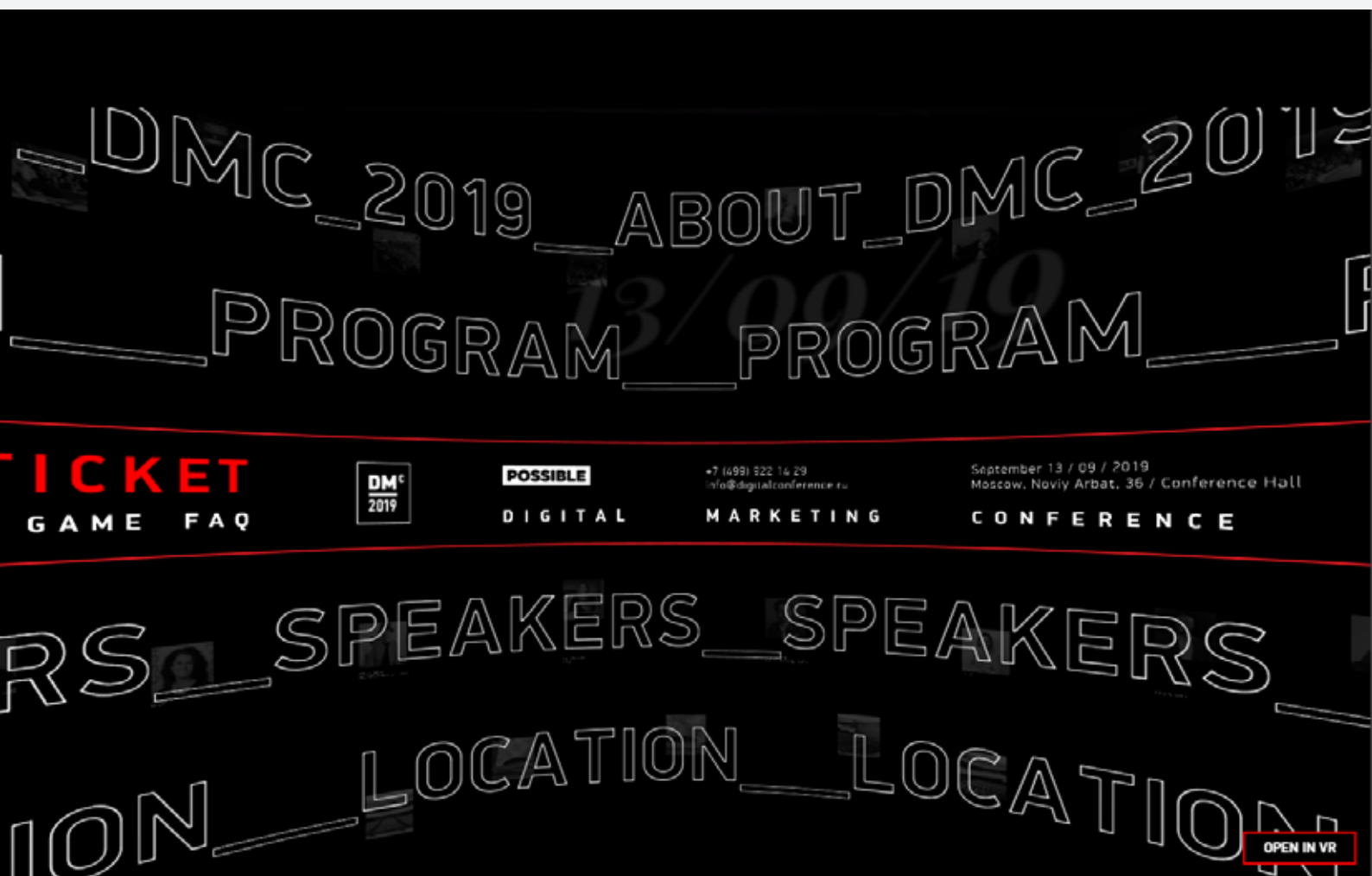
4

Website Metrics You Should Not Miss Out On!

" Metrics are essential to keep track of everything that happens on digital platforms. Website metrics make sure your visitors are engaged, converting them into loyal customers. "

Everyone is on the digital space right now. And not just as users. A couple of clicks here and there and you can easily build your own website. But what happens after you create a website? Are your viewers interacting with the page? And if they are, how do you know?

That's where metrics step in. Metrics govern the digital platform. They give you information on your website's performance, so you know where to spend and where not to.

There are all sorts of metrics — ones to keep track of your spending, your SEOs, your videos, and even your viewer's enthusiasm.

In this chapter, we're going to tell you about a few basic metrics to keep tabs on for your website. This ensures that your resources are well utilized and not wasted.

Traffic

Traffic refers to the number of visitors your website has had. This number gives you an insight as to how well audiences are responding to your website.

There are two types of visitors that you'd get as a website. One is unique visits, the number of visitors who are first-timers. Second is repeat visits, those who have visited your website twice or more.

In an ideal setting, both the visits increase side by side.

But that usually isn't the case. When your unique visits are higher in number, it means that you need to work on engaging your customers enough for them to come back again and again. If your repeat visits are higher, that's great news on your customer loyalty points, but you'll need to work on bringing in new traffic.

You can track your website traffic on CrazyEgg.

Sources

Focusing on your traffic alone doesn't make sense. You must be aware of where your traffic is coming from.

Is it coming organically, or through paid promotions? Keeping track of your traffic sources will help in allocating your funds and

giving you an input on which sources you need to work on, to bring in more traffic from them.

In case where your ads lead to your website, you might want to keep tabs on your **Click Through Rate (CTR)** and **Cost Per Click (CPC)** of the ads. This would help in deciding which ads to focus on, and which ads to drop.

CTR is calculated as the number of ad clicks divided by the total views. (An impression is calculated when a user scrolls past your ad.) The higher the CTR, the better. In the case of CPC, the cost of a click decreases as the number of clicks go higher. For your ad to be categorized as bringing in a good number of visitors, your CTR must be high and your CPC low.

Monetize your traction-gaining sources well and understand why they aren't gaining on others and you can either drop the source or work on it.

Kilpfolio is an online tool that helps track your traffic source.

Bounce Rate

Bounce rate sounds like fun. But it can be a very scary number.

In the digital space, a 'bounce' means the number of people who leave your website after visiting only the landing page/home page with no interaction. Keeping that in mind, bounce rate is the percentage of people who bounce off your website.

Bounce rate is the total number of one-page visits divided by the total number of website entries.

Having a high bounce rate is looked down upon, obviously, since it indicates that your website does not achieve the desired results.

Take a look at all the content, compare it with your competitors, and analyze what prompts people to leave your website without interacting with any other pages.

You can track your bounce rates on Alexa.

Exit Rate

Bounce rate gives the percentage of people who leave after just visiting the landing page/home page. Exit rate is the percentage of people who leave the website from any page within the website.

Exit rate can be calculated by dividing the number of exits from a page by the total number of visits to that page. This means that the exit rate can be calculated for every page within the website while the bounce rate is applicable only to those who leave from the landing page.

Your goal must be to make sure the exit rates are lesser for all pages by analyzing and making the content better and interactive.

You can track your exit rates on Google Analytics.

Pages Per Session

Before we step into what pages per session is, let us take a look at what a session is.

A session is a time frame. All activities done under this time frame are considered part of the session.

Now, pages per session are the number of pages the user goes through in one session. The website administrator must scan the website and take into account the average time a person needs to spend on a page to view all the elements. This gives you an estimate of how many pages a user can go through in one session.

When the pages a user visits in a session are fewer than the estimate, it means they are spending more time on the pages. This is good, it means the user found your website interactive.

On the other hand, when the page per session is higher, it means that the user only skimmed through pages and did not find them interactive.

Clicky is one of the online tools that can be used to monitor a user's engagement with the website.

These are just basic website metrics. There is more to know and learn, and as the digital platform evolves, so shall the ways to gauge online interactions.

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Landing Page Hacks that Boost Your Online Marketing

" A landing page is a marketing tool to keep potential customers focused on the product or service and increase the chance of converting them. "

You have a successful marketing digital campaign. Maybe you are promoting your SaaS product. You have a lot of traffic to your website. However, you do not have a landing page for people to visit. If you have a landing page, prospects need not look at every page in your website trying to learn about your product or service. Which means, landing pages are crucial to your digital marketing effort.

Landing pages are any web page that visitors land on. However, let us talk of a dedicated landing page for your online marketing. Landing pages can be on the same website or a standalone web page dedicated for a particular product.

Landing pages are focused, self-explanatory, usually organized and conversational, and provide value for a specific audience. They usually connect with the audience and convert if making sales is the goal. The purpose of landing pages varies from newsletter signups, petition signature, job application, membership, and product sales.

The more landing pages your website has, the

more the conversion. According to HubSpot, a website with about 5 to 15 landing pages will have up to 55% conversion rate. For those with more than 40 landing pages, conversions will go upwards of 500%.

Designing a Landing Page

Landing pages can be used by portals, blogs, or news websites to provide information on a single, specific topic for users. Landing pages are a good opportunity to showcase products, attract new customers, and also increase sales.

However, landing pages are not a replacement to your online store or product information page. They are built with the sole purpose of turning incoming traffic into leads. Here are some of the best practices to create an effective landing page.

Write clear content with compelling headlines and good typography.

The first impression happens with clear messaging. A landing page must have a clear title with short readable content revealing the

nature of the product. Cheesy lines on the title will give your audience no choice than to click on the exit button. Let the landing page have a short title, a clear description of the product or the service and a call-to-action (CTA) button below.

Considering the example of [Slack Enterprise](#), the heading is clear, and there is a short description of the product along with two CTA buttons, namely, Get Started and Contact Sales.

Notice the text is easy and comfortable to read. Readability depends on the distance between the letters, font characteristics, and paragraph size. The readability of the content is as important as the quality of the content.

> Landing pages are focused, self-explanatory, usually organized and conversational, and provide value for a specific audience.

Have a Clear Structure for Your Content

It is important to have a structure for your landing page. The logical sequence should keep visitors hooked to the message until the CTA button. You may use brightly colored photos of the product to entice visitors. Usually, the logical sequence of the landing page is as follows:

- Catchy headline
- Relevant image with a short description
- CTA button or a contact form
- Features of the product or service
- Case studies, reviews or testimonials
- Social media profiles

The landing page for [Freshdesk](#) includes noticeable CTA, and general information about

the product. If Freshworks did not know why they wanted a landing page and what to have on it, they would not be a well-known company.

Keep Design Simple

WordPress has a simple design and content that appeals to a broader audience. Their landing page is clear to anyone who wants to start blogging whether they are familiar with WordPress's Content Management System (CMS) or not.

Do not overload the landing page with a lot of information, images and CTAs. Make navigation easy for the users. WordPress encourages visitors to sign up, which is the main action and not scare them away.

Improve Loading Speed

All the content and design hacks in the world will not save your marketing campaign if your landing page loads too slow. How slow is too slow? 3 seconds. Images are the top reasons why your landing page loads slowly. Keep graphics to a minimum.

Edit the width and height of the images, then compress them before uploading to the website. There are online tools to check the loading speed of your website. On the coding level, optimize it by removing unused characters, comments, and unused code. This will dramatically increase the speed.

Have a mobile responsive design

Gone are the days where websites were made only for desktops, leaving mobile users with unresponsive websites. A 100% responsive landing page displays correctly on desktops, laptops, mobile devices and tablets.

Design Must be SEO Adaptive

Landing pages must use SEO to attract visitors. Along with a clean design and content, use valid SEO-adaptive content in your HTML codes.

Use Chatbots to Speed up Conversion

Chatbots provide customer satisfaction, retain customers, and cut down on human errors. Integrate chatbots to your website and improve user correspondences with your company.

Professional landing pages will sell your product or service quickly, and they provide a strong motivation for users to click on the Know More button. Stay focused on the content of the landing page to prevent the users from leaving. Keep design minimal and the page light. Moreover, the page should not have unnecessary code that will prevent landing pages from loading quickly. At the end, A/B test your landing page before making it public.

WordPress.com Websites Blogs Features Pricing News Support Log In Get Started

WordPress powers 34% of the internet.

Join the global community.

WordPress.com is the easiest place to get started.
Get a custom domain, tons of features, and 24/7 expert support from ₹250/ mo.

Get Started   See Plans

Self-hosted WordPress options: **Hosts | Jetpack Plugin**

6

What are the Latest Web Design Trends to Adopt?

> No matter how good your product is, you can't market your products effectively without a great website. To create a top-notch website, it is important to have a good understanding about the latest trends.

In the last year, we have seen advancements in web designs with a stronger-than-ever focus on documentation and accessibility guidelines to make the web a more consistent and accessible environment for all. With the trends and tech evolving continuously, we are living in some of the most exciting times in web design.

Designers are not afraid to explore the unknown and are trying the craziest web design ideas today. We have seen many new experiments that pushed the limits of possibilities on the web.

In today's competitive atmosphere, brands are looking to stand out rather than just fit in. But, how are the top designers planning to make it happen? Let's look at the top five design trends that are revolutionizing website designing today.

Videos

Videos have become an integral part of web designs today. Since you are not creating a static experience while designing a website, animation and videos are used widely these days in order to create a richer user experience. If done properly,

it can create a much enhanced, interesting, immersive, and remarkable experience. Today, videos have become bolder and more eye-catching than ever with colors.

Videos are used in different formats based on various uses. Some sites make the most of large video backgrounds, which is considered one of the best ways to portray the vision, mission, and responsibilities of the company. This changes the visual experience in new and creative ways.

Many websites use banner videos today that explains the company story, its background, mission, and vision. It has become too common today that most of the websites have banner videos.

No matter what type of video you post on the website, the key is to keep the right balance so that your video and written copy share equal importance.

Font

Typography is a fundamental part of web design.
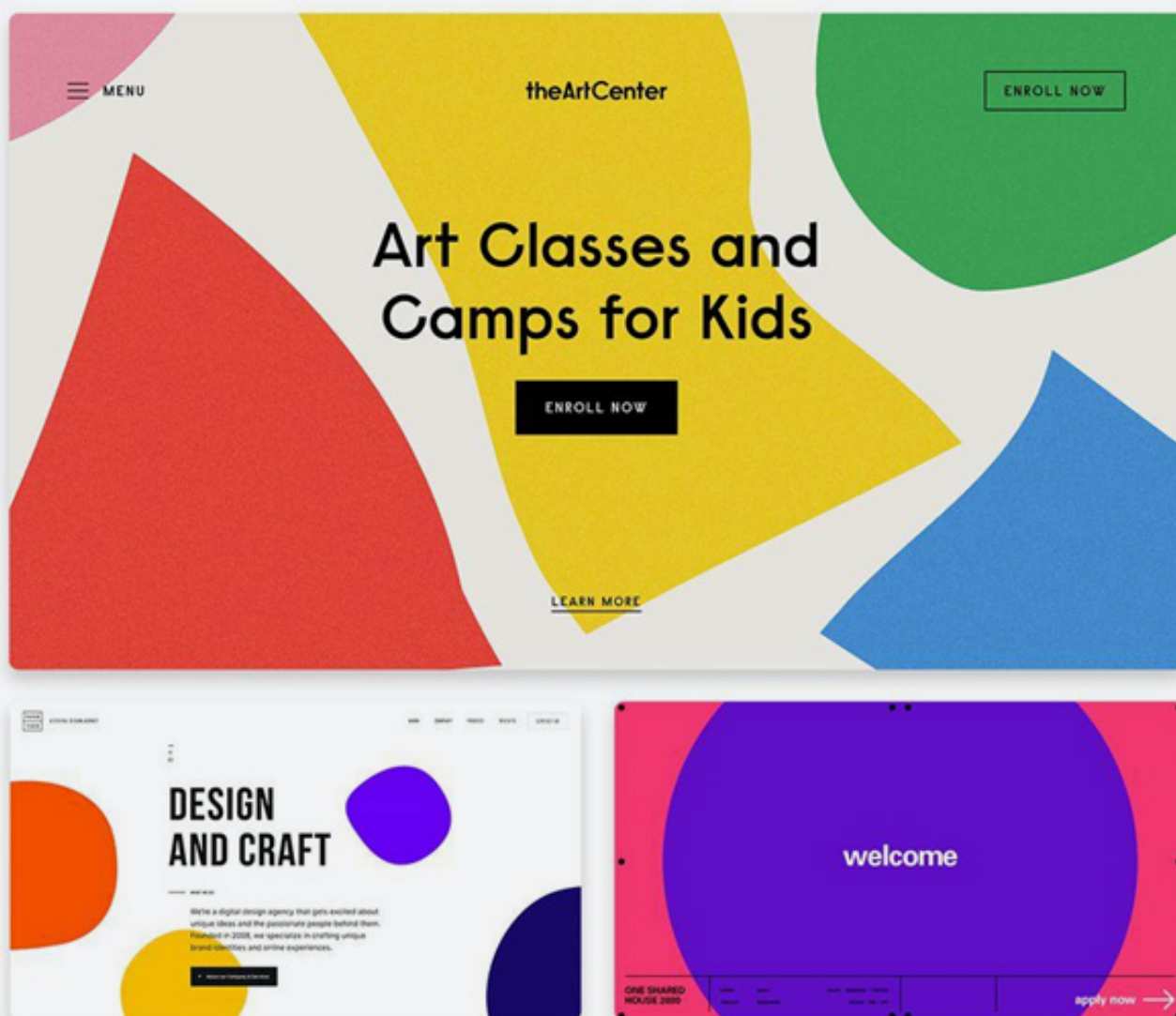
With the right tool and technology, today we have a high level of freedom to express and experiment with typography. It was an opportunity the web designers never had before due to the lack of fonts in the initial days of web design.

New typography tools give designers the opportunity to create more print-like, attractive pages. The big, bold, and experimental typographic layouts are in very much demand today and are making full use of oversized retro fonts in all the styles and weights.

Today, a vast range of fonts are available and all of them come with lots of personality. One such variety is the upcoming Variable fonts, a trend showing the evolution of the OpenType font specification. One font type can contain multiple variations of the typeface.

Fonts have become an integral part of web design today and should be given high priority during web design.
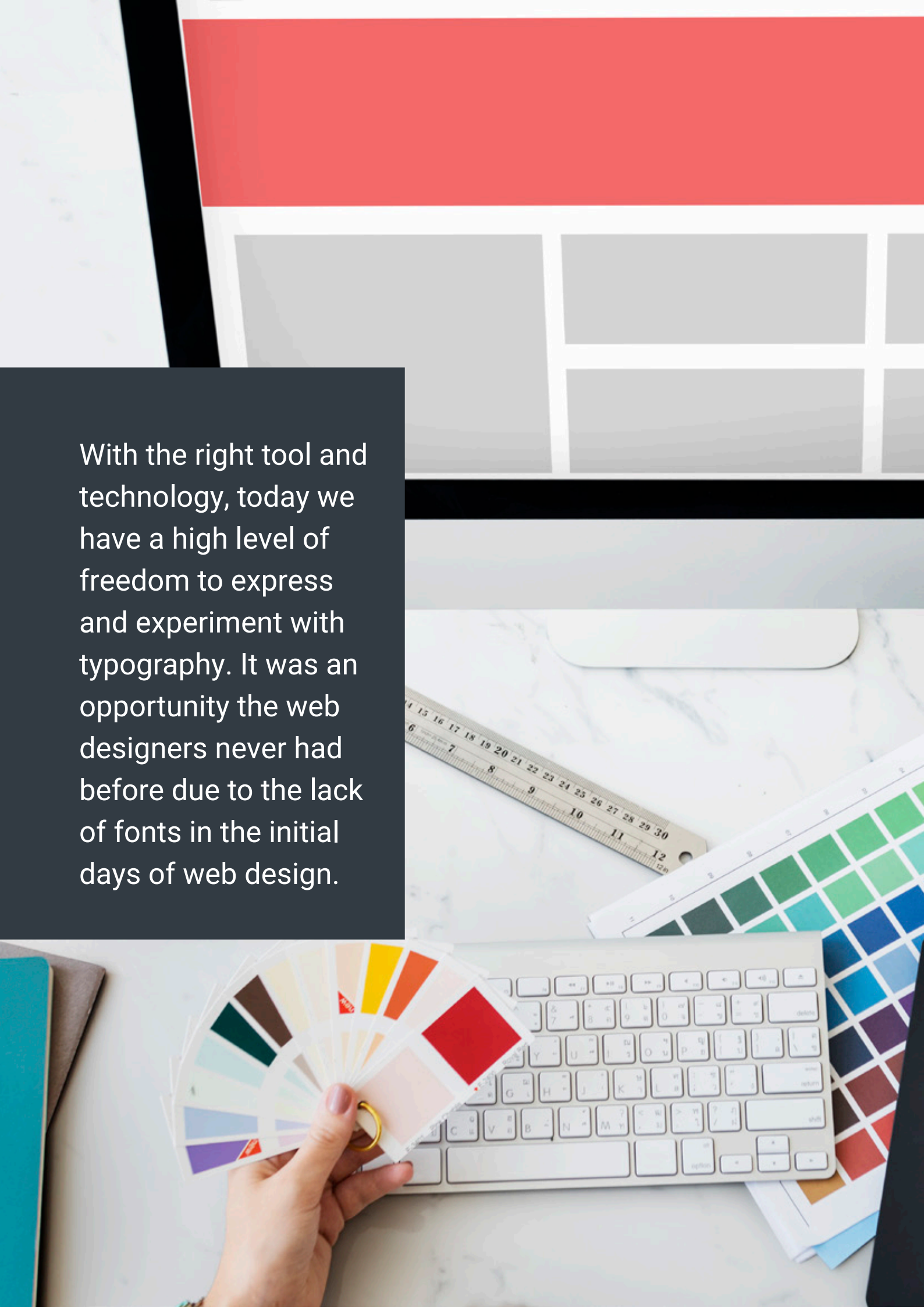
Color

One of the most important aspects of a website is colors as they unify a brand, cultivate a mood, and create visual landmarks. Even though soft tones and monotone had taken over design for a while, the trend is fading quickly.

People are looking for color schemes with a personality to be used in web designs. Users are craving for bright and vibrant colors today, and web designers are busy designing websites that way. We are also seeing patterns with more than two primary colors and several secondary colors. While saturated and pastel colors create high contrast effects when combined, there are many websites that use plain bold colors in the background combined with photography, typography, and illustrations.

Illustrations are being used with bright colors with an intention to humanize technology and the brand.

With the right tool and technology, today we have a high level of freedom to express and experiment with typography. It was an opportunity the web designers never had before due to the lack of fonts in the initial days of web design.

Another trend today is the usage of beautiful color gradients. These color gradients have long been available to designers but were not being used due to the lack of appropriate tools. CSS gradients allow you to design a web page with two or more specific colors or as an overlay, providing an attractive way of fading in photography from one side.

Shapes

Web designers are turning towards different shapes and lines that are natural, simple, and organic. The current trends are more concerned with a feeling of accessibility and comfort even though geometric structures such as squares, rectangles, and triangles with their sharp corners create a sense of stability.

The naturally imperfect and asymmetrical organic shapes can provide depth to a web design that makes page elements stand out. The natural feel and free-drawn elements help web designers to feel human and alive through the illusion of movement.

With the improved and advanced web design tools, it has become easier for designers to step outside and express brand identity. Designers are using these organic and natural shapes, integrated with appropriate colors to draw the user's attention and communicate subtle messages about the brand.

Micro Interactions

Micro interactions play a crucial role in user engagement and usability, according to user experience experts. The very purpose of micro interactions is to surprise the user and create an event that is human and inviting. It is a micro interaction when you take a small action on a website or app and there is a specific response to it.

The little beep sound when you refresh your Twitter account or the red icon displaying the number of your message or notification or friend request is a micro interaction. Micro interactions are used typically on clickable elements like buttons and navigations. But, experienced designers can go far beyond these examples.

According to the current trends, web pages will heavily feature their more interactive incarnations. Altogether, this way you can involve your audience in your website, inform them about their actions and usage, and make web pages feel much smarter.

Finally

New trends will come often. While the lifespan of some will end in a flash, some last for decades. Choose those trends that can make your designs more effective and impactful. Choose the designs that best align with your company values and stay true to the brand that you design for. After all, that is what matters.

7
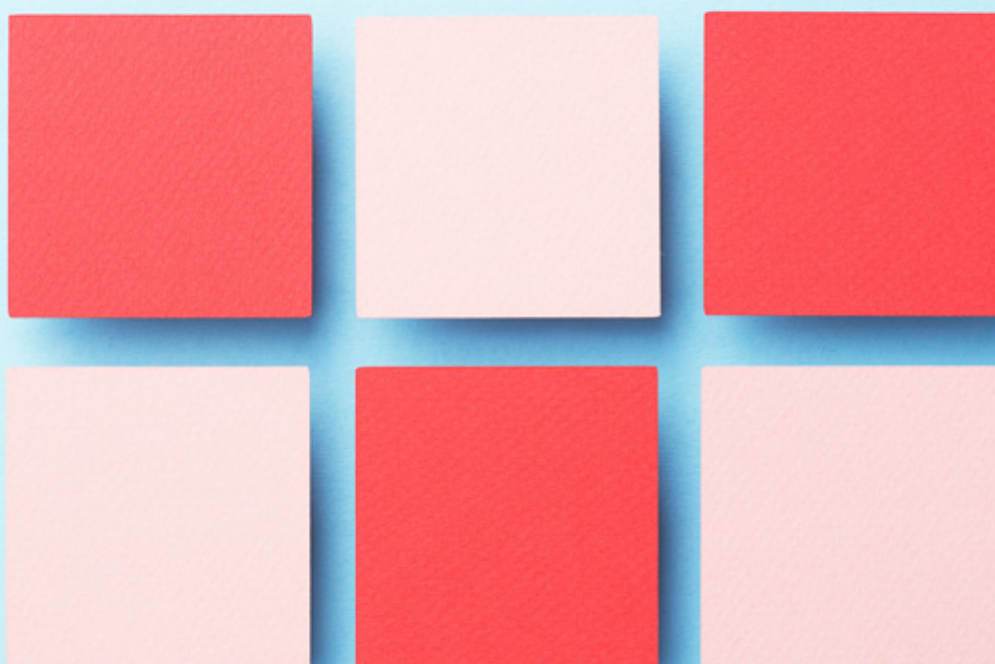
Monetize Your Website Today: Here's How to Get Started

> Now that you have your website up and running, it's time to think of ways to generate revenue from the site.

Building and maintaining a functioning website has become a top priority for most businesses. A website is most likely the first point of contact a potential client will have with your business. Depending on the nature of your business, your website may or may not have engaging content that will make visitors extend their stay. If you don't have any such content, it's time to sit with a content strategist and create some. The easiest way to get started is to build a blog page on your website.

Apart from being able to convey your brand's vision and goal through engaging blog posts, you can also use a blog to comment on the latest industry trends and exhibit thought leadership in your business domain. Once enough engaging content has been generated, you will notice a steady increase in the amount of time that visitors spend on your website. In other words, your bounce rate will go down.

Rent it Out and Bring in Cash

Now that visitors are spending more time on your website, it's time to think about how to use this to your advantage. Assuming you are following the conventional design structure of a blog, you will have some spare real estate on your page. You can use this space to generate revenue by leasing it out to an ad network like Google AdSense.

Once you register as a publisher on AdSense, you will be provided a code that you can place on your website. AdSense will then serve ads on your website and you will be paid depending on the user engagement with the ad. AdSense offers ads of various sizes and pays you either based on the number of impressions the ads get or the number of actual clicks on the ads. Either way, Google AdSense has turned out to the first source of revenue that many website owners look at.

Yahoo!/Bing ads, Ezoic and Bidvertiser have also risen to meet this new demand and have turned out to be good alternatives to AdSense for small publishers.

Users don't mind being served ads as long as they don't hamper the UX or take attention away from the content. Of course, you can run ads on

all the pages of your website. But you're most likely to see results when you run it on a page that has content to keep the user engaged.

Affiliate With a Partner

Affiliate marketing is an arrangement in which an online retailer pays commission to an external website for traffic or sales generated from its referrals. For every sale you make or lead to, you get a commission. If you choose to go this way, it's important to become an affiliate to a product that is not a direct competitor to your own product or business. The ideal strategy would be to promote products that complement your business.

> A website is most likely the first point of contact a potential client will have with your business.

Many successful bloggers have created a steady source of income through affiliate marketing. However, if you're a business, it might not be an ideal strategy to focus too much on this source as affiliate marketing requires putting in a considerable amount of time and effort.

Much like applying for an ad network, affiliate networks also require that you already have good quality content on your website and that it is published on a consistent basis. Some networks also have a minimum traffic threshold that you need to cross before being accepted into the program.

Monetize Your Thought Leadership

eBooks are the best channels to showcase your thought leadership. If you're operating in a niche sector, you might be privy to industry-specific

information. You can write an article on these topics and promote them on social media. Once you publish a certain amount of articles – ideally about 10,000 words worth of articles – collate them into an eBook, design a cover on Canva and put it up for sale on Amazon's Kindle Direct Publishing Platform for example. KDP terms and conditions dictate that you add extra information from what you've already published on the website. If you find the terms of KDP to be too restrictive, you can always give away the eBook on your website in exchange for the visitor's email id.

Alternatives to KDP include Kobo, Barnes & Noble, Apple iBook, and Google Play Books.

If you know the solution to a common pain point that many people in your industry face, then it's time to hit the keyboard and push out a couple of articles. Then, re-purpose them into eBooks and offer them as free downloads. You can also create slides and upload them to slideshare. net. This will drive traffic from SlideShare to your website, which in turn means more eyes on the ads displayed, leading to more sales and commissions. In addition to getting visitors to respecting your brand as a thought leader, you also generate a few leads this way.

Accepting Sponsored Posts

Once you begin receiving a steady stream of traffic and people start to see you as a domain expert, other players that are starting out in your industry will look towards you for support and guidance. They will want to showcase their opinions on industry-relevant topics as well but their website lacks the necessary traffic and visibility to make any significant impact.

If you've consistently followed all the above 3 steps, by now you've established yourself as a domain expert. You can begin accepting sponsored posts on your website. For the sake of complete transparency, you should disclose to your readers that the post is a sponsored one and that you have gained some form of reward from publishing the article. Many established bloggers charge about $50 per hour or more for content creation.

Whatever method you choose to monetize your website, it is very important to maintain complete transparency. In addition to keeping you clear of any legal trouble, users will also appreciate your ethics.

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The Best of the World Wide Web: A Look at Some Award-Winning Websites

> Ever come across a website that has blown your mind with exceptional designs and fluid UX that just leaves you wanting more?

Ever come across a website that has blown your mind? We're not talking about content here. Lots of websites will blow your mind, in a bad way, with the sheer amount of inane content they have. Rather, we're talking about websites with exceptional designs and fluid UX that just leaves you wanting more. If you're a frequent explorer of the world wide web, chances are you've encountered more than a few sites that fit this description.

Some of these websites have even pioneered UX trends that have left web designers wondering "How did they do that?!" Some others have bravely gone where no one else has and decided to create a website that will serve as a model for future designers. In this chapter, we will take a look at some of these creative geniuses and marvel at their creations. That is not to say that the websites mentioned here are the best

in all regards. While some are on this list purely for their visual aesthetics, others are here for showing ingenuity in enabling an interactive user experience.

Websites With Engaging User Experiences

The Interactive UK Energy Consumption Guide https://www.evoenergy.co.uk/uk-energy-guide/

At first glance, the website seems to be too good for its own good. It takes a millisecond longer for a user to figure out what's going on, but once they figure it out, it's smooth sailing from then on. From the mellow color palette to the easy-going font size used, this guide to the UK energy habits created by Evo Energy ticks all the boxes when it comes to crafting an award-winning user experience.

OrangeSprocket

https://www.orangesprocket.com

Orange Sprocket's website is clear on its intention. The tiled layout is pleasing to the eye and aids in segregating sections. They have followed the tiled approach on their portfolio page that has a clean layout with clear messaging. The website also incorporates a seamless UX with a simple user interface.
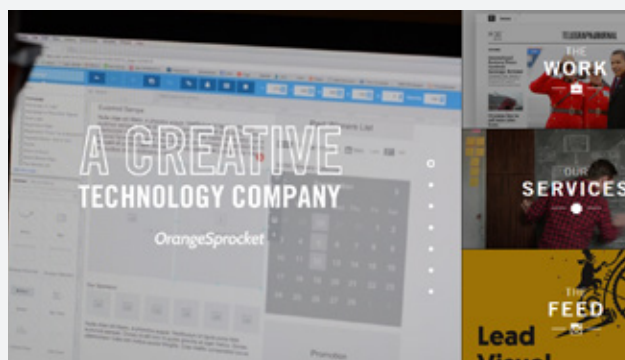
Websites With Reimagined Navigation

Two Chefs Brewing

https://twochefsbrewing.com

Now here's a navigational experience that is truly unique. It might take a second or two for a visitor to figure it out, but that's just the cost of being innovative. The cheesy auto-play music aside, developers should seriously look at this website to learn what creative designing is all about.

Houndstooth

https://www.houndstoothsc.com

No images here. Head over to the Houndstooth website and click on 'menu' on the top-right corner. The sheer imagination required to come up with something like this may leave you feeling inadequate.
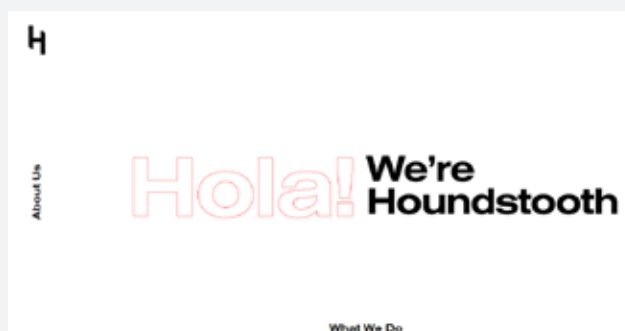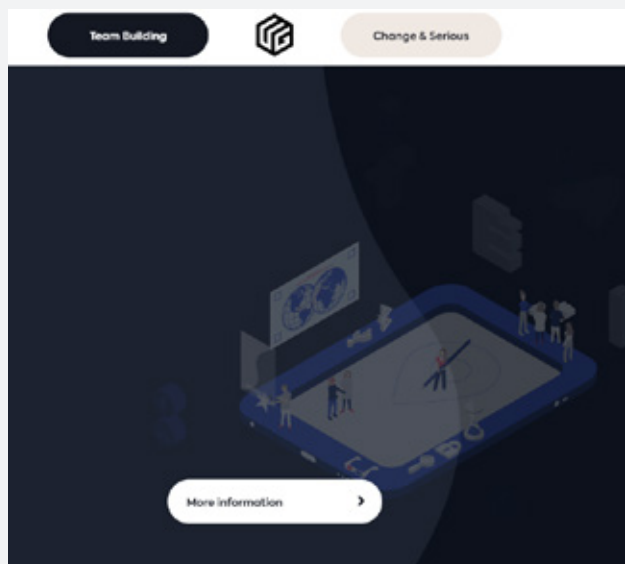

Websites That Like to Play With Color

Cann

https://drinkcann.com

It's really hard to find another website that has made such good use of colors as Cann has. Your delight only increases as you scroll further down. The website makes good use of a color palette that is able to connect with users on a very deep level.

Urban Gaming

https://www.urbangaming.com

Here's another website that combines the use of muted colors with very subtle effects but still managed to deliver an impactful experience.

Websites That Offer a Clean Experience

Wild Wireframe Kit

https://wireframekit.wild.as

This website that offers a downloadable wireframe kit is the perfect example of combining minimalist aesthetics with eye-popping colors. They have put in maximum effort to ensure a minimalist design. This maxim is obvious when you see that they are staunch believers in the Marie Kondo school of thought.

Bamboo Crowd

https://bamboocrowd.com

Despite the text-heavy nature of the website, it still manages to hold true to the minimalist design aesthetic. The font helps in this regard too. Pleasing, fluid and stylish are three words that immediately pop into your mind.

Not every web designer has the creativity to come up with such unique ideas as the ones shown above. Most customers will be more than satisfied if you can design a halfway-decent website. But why settle for less? There are a lot of templates available online which people can download and design around. Make no mistake, these are very well-designed and easy to use.

Which is why, as a web designer, you should be thinking about going that little extra step in every project you undertake.

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Websites of Tomorrow: Where are They Headed?

> " The web world was never static, and changes are taking place even as you read this chapter. The future of websites is not just a website wireframe dressed in color. It is where digital design aesthetic meets technology innovation. "

Change is the only thing that doesn't change. Everything around us is changing and it happens in different momentum. The web world is no different. It was never static, and (big as well as small) changes are taking place even as you read this blog!

Websites are undergoing a massive transformation currently. Today, we have websites that even deploy 3D technology. They are also getting increasingly personalized and customized. The usage of text content has decreased and is being replaced by graphical elements. The number of progressive web apps being created has increased lately while most of the websites are coming with 24/7 chatbots.

Where are we headed with technology and what will be the future of websites? How will websites look like in the future? Let's find it out. One thing is for sure, the future of websites will be fabulous.

AI-Generated Content

You may be aware that chatbots are based on Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning. But, can you imagine a website that engages with the user based on his/her browsing behavior? Well, that is going to happen pretty soon and the backbone of such websites will be AI.

The number of consumers using the AI-powered devices such as Amazon's Alexa and Google's Home is growing. Tech giants such as Facebook, Apple, Microsoft, Google, and Twitter are already investing a huge amount in AI. It means that, soon, web developers will be asked to include features (or functionalities) powered by AI. The web development domain will undergo a radical transformation because of this.

The audience will be using the AI-powered devices instead of their own eyes to read the content of the websites. The content language should be conversational so that the audience

receives the right message and is expected to engage with it.

Conversational Interface

Conversational interfaces are platforms that mimic a conversation with a real person. The user can interact and have a conversation with a machine in the same language as if they are communicating with a human.

A few years ago, Google developed a chatbot that could engage in a conversation on the meaning of life with the users. However, it was not built using code but a Machine Learning algorithm.

Today, Apple, Amazon, and Google are already working on developing smart websites that can handle customer queries with a conversational interface.

Conversational websites are the future because conversational interfaces are better than traditional interfaces as they can reduce friction in communication. For example, more than 80% of shoppers need assistance during online shopping. A conversational website with chatbots can assist them in choosing the best product in the shortest time possible.

Conversational interfaces are growing in popularity and the websites of the future will have various interfaces powered by chatbots and voice assistants to enhance customer experiences drastically.

Developer Tools

Website development used to be slow, expensive and required a lot of skills.

But what if one can build and develop a website by spending more time on customer needs while having a conversation with them and building things they need? Well, the latest developer tools allow the developers to build real-time features into your application.

As most of the people today live their lives online, digital user experience is very important. The growth of every big organization will be based on the digital user experience they provide.

The current explosion in developer tools will help organizations provide a better digital user experience via websites. Developer tools will be integrated into the websites that come with realtime features. The real time features can be developed in the applications which enable them to get updated automatically without the user having to refresh the browser.

Because of these features, web experiences are expected to become cheaper and quicker in the coming years.

VR and AR

Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality are powerful tools that have made their impact across various platforms. These are futuristic technologies that are capable of changing the ways of interaction with websites. While you can offer an exclusive experience of a virtual world

with VR, AR shows a glimpse of a virtual world while enhancing the user experience.

VR and AR are powerful enough to change the very design of websites altogether in the future. There won't be a screen anymore in front of the user, and they will become part of what they view (the virtual world) through smart glasses or smart contact lenses.

For example, when you go to a big airport, rather than look at all the different screens to find your train, your device, that already knows your destination, will take you to the relevant place at the relevant time. Or, these technologies can help you view the exact positions of the seats you are looking for in a conference hall as you go to the website to book the seats.

World leaders such as Google, Microsoft, and Samsung are investing in VR and AR because they believe that these technologies will transform the very idea of websites.

Voice Search

Voice search-enabled digital assistants such as Microsoft's Cortana, Apple's Siri, Amazon's Alexa, and Google's Google Assistant have begun replacing text-based search functionality and are quickly becoming the go-to search mode for consumers everywhere. In fact, it is estimated that 50% of all searches will be voice searches by 2020.

According to several studies, more than 45% of adults and 55% of teens use the voice search facility daily. This shows the popularity of voice search today and confirms that it is here to stay. It has become a major trend that is influencing major search engines worldwide.

Voice search is considered to be a futuristic feature, and as people become more comfortable with it, the world will see a development in voice search optimization.

According to Google's research, more than 20% of mobile searches are based on voice. And, when we talk about the web development domain, the voice search features can enhance the mobile responsiveness of your website. Just like the voice search-integrated search engines, websites will also integrate this facility in the near future.

Web Animation

Animation is a creative skill that is going to be increasingly in demand in the future of websites. Although UI animations have always been around for a number of years, it promises to play a prominent role in shaping the user experience in years to come.

When web animation made its first appearance, it was dubbed annoying and tacky. But its recent comeback has made it a major trend in the website designing industry. Enterprises are aware of this development and are keen to leverage on its effectiveness. Advanced animation frameworks have raised the standard of web animation and have drastically improved user experience.

Websites can grow as your business matures. They help your business be available 24/7 throughout the year. Leverage the power of websites, one of the most cost-effective tools available, now. Don't be left in the dust.

We at Verbinden Communication understand the nuances of creating cutting-edge and modern websites and have created top-notch websites for our clients worldwide. Get in touch with us as we can weave extraordinary websites for you.

Go viral with us!

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