

## Hints & Tips

# On getting the most out of your Website

This Guide will give you a brief understanding of the components in starting and maintaining a business website.

These include:

- Tips for choosing a Domain Name
- Tips for choosing a Website Hosting Plan
- Tips for developing a Website
- Website Basics
- Static or Dynamic Sites
- 'Content Management System' Overview
- Search Engine Optimisation
- Google Adwords
- Google AdSense
- Pre-Website Design Homework
- Website Homepage Content Homework

**Brisbane Hosting & Website Design** specialise in the following services:

Domain Name Registration  
Website Hosting  
Website Design

Custom Website Creation  
Content Management Systems  
E-Commerce  
Intranets  
Online Newsletters & Mailing Lists

Search Engine Optimisation  
Google Adwords  
Google AdSense

YouTube & MySpace

# Tips for choosing a Domain Name

It is important that you secure a domain name that will reflect your business & help in search Engine Rankings. Most people will just use their organisation's name as their domain name, and that's fine. But some things should be considered when choosing, especially if you have the freedom to choose anything you wish.

A website address (domain name) is obviously better if it's easily remembered. That's why the 'hyphen' is sometimes troublesome. Also, if possible, you want the spelling to be obvious (real words) or at least easily guessed at (company and made-up words).

Avoid ambiguity in spelling variations and meaning too.

An example of this could be: C-Shells. When spoken this could be [www.seeshells.com.au](http://www.seeshells.com.au), [www.seashells.com.au](http://www.seashells.com.au) or even [www.cshells.com.au](http://www.cshells.com.au).

Lastly, words in your domain name can influence Search Engines. Our advice would be that if you are a Hotel you should include that word as part of your domain: [www.theritzhotel.com](http://www.theritzhotel.com)

Tips to help you choose your Domain Name:

- If available, use your full Business name as the domain name
- Only use abbreviations if the Business name is too long
- Only use hyphens where necessary, I.E. the .com.au is already taken
- Try to register a .com.au where possible
- Domain Names are not case sensitive, so you can display them how you like
- Say the domain name out loud, as if you are on the phone. If it is too difficult to explain, then perhaps try an alternative.

Most common Domain extensions for Australian Business:

- .com.au** Includes commercial entities, currently registered and trading in Australia, as well as commercial products and services.
- .net.au** Includes commercial entities, currently registered and trading in Australia, as well as commercial products and services. Originally recommended for Information Technology businesses
- .org.au** Includes associations incorporated in any Australian State or Territory, political parties, trade unions, sporting or special interest clubs, charities or non-profit organisations.
- .com** Short for Commercial. Used for commercial organizations, but now unrestricted. It doesn't seem to have any geographical significance these days.
- .net** Short for Internet. Used by both commercial and noncommercial websites. No geographical reference. Originally for network infrastructures, now unrestricted.
- .biz** Short for business. Intended for Commercial / Business. Unrestricted

# Tips for choosing a Website Hosting Plan

A web hosting plan will give you the basic tools to start your website. With a domain name, server disk space, bandwidth you have everything that is needed in launching a website. The next step would advisable be to decide which kind of website you want. Our hosting Packages come standard with all of the following:

- Spam & Virus Filters
- Full FTP Access
- Unlimited Email Aliases
- Unlimited Email Redirects
- Catch All Email Account
- Web Based Email Accounts
- Web Space
- Website Traffic – Generous

Here are a few tips in helping you to choose what size Website Hosting Package you require.

## **Web hosting tip 1:**

Space: What amount of space are you requiring? Are you looking at setting up simple one page websites, or are you wanting to develop your own product with audio downloads?

## **Web hosting tip 2:**

Bandwidth: This is the amount data that you are allowed to broadcast from your website each month. Your needs will differ significantly depending on whether you are running basic websites or a complete multi media experience.

## **Web hosting tip 3:**

Standard Features: Necessary tools such as unlimited FTP uploads, Webmail ( similar to hotmail.com), Web Statistics (view hits and visits), MySQL Databases, PHP & Frontpage Scripting, etc are all vital tools that are included in all of our Hosting Packages. Many other companies charge extra for each item.

## **Web hosting tip 4:**

Extra Features: Our cPanel Hosting Management Package (included in all Hosting Packages) allows users to install and manage extra **FREE** packages such as blogs, discussion boards, image galleries, forums and many more.

# Tips for developing a Website

The first thing you need to decide is.. **Why do you want a website?** It isn't sufficient to think that just because everyone else has one you need one as well!

When you answer the why you also will probably answer, in part.. What will the site do for your business. An example would be. My business wants a website to:

- Attract new clients
- Inform new and existing clients on my products, services and costs.
- Allow new clients to contact my business.
- Provide support for my products and services to reduce the amount of telephone call enquiries we receive.

It is important to have a general idea of what you will eventually do with the site as it can have a big impact on what type of host/design you choose. It is important to realise that your website must have a purpose! So....

## What do you Want from your Website?

Before you begin make sure you ask yourself these questions .

- **Why** do I want a website?
- **Will** I need to update the site frequently?
- **Will** I sell products from the website?
- **Will** I use the website to attract new customers?
- **Will** the website simply be a brochure for the company?
- **What** will my website visitors expect to see?
- **How** much am I prepared to pay?
- **How** can I use the website to streamline current processes?

## Website Basics

There are six main aspects to a website:

- Site Look and feel - This is the web design; it includes the graphics, layout including navigation.
- Web Page Optimization - This requires SEO (search engine optimisation skills) and can often be the most critical part of the site.
- Web Site Promotion- You may need to consider how to promote your site and not just rely on people finding the site via the search engines.
- Site Content- This is usually your responsibility but you may require assistance with the optimization and guidance on how to present it.
- Selling- Commonly know as ecommerce. This may be the sole purpose of your site or may not figure at all.
- Site Maintenance- This include editing pages and adding new ones etc.

It is important that you end up with a site that both looks great, and is functional. If you decide to incorporate a 'Content Management System', you need to feel comfortable in being able to use this yourself. But remember, it is only a phone call away for technical support, and we are more than happy to carry-out regular updates for you where needed.

# Static or Dynamic Sites

Static ones are HTML or more commonly Today HTML/CSS. These sites are very easy to build (There are many templates available) and are simply edited using a web page editor, and are supported on all hosts.

They lack functionality e.g. How do implement a poll, comments etc. How do you change the navigation on all the web pages?

Dynamic Ones use some form of scripting (e.g. PHP,ASP) are very flexible and allow for advanced features. Generally small sites (<5) with limited functionality can use static sites. The larger the site (regardless of extra functionality) then dynamic sites are better.

So you really need to have an idea of

- Roughly How big your site will be
- What functionality will be required

## 'Content Management System' Overview

Website Content Management Systems (CMS) allow you to easily manage and edit website content and website appearance. They do this by separating the actual content from the content layout/structure. This means that it becomes very easy to make changes to the appearance of each web page like colour scheme, navigation etc without having to physically edit each page. They are specifically designed so that a very low level of technical knowledge is required. Meaning you don't need to be a web designer to use them.

### **What Does A Content Management System do?**

The main features provided by content management systems are:

- Non-technical authoring
- Metadata creation
- Multi-user authoring
- Easy Publishing
- Page templates
- Effective navigation
- Valid HTML
- Cross Browser Support

There are two common types of content management systems

- Desktop based
- Web Server based

### **Do You Need One?**

The two main features offered by content management systems are:

- No technical knowledge needed to add content
- Easy to change look and feel (i.e. template)

Although content management systems have typically been used by large websites with experienced webmasters they are becoming more popular with smaller sites due to the flexibility and the wide range of attractive templates.

# Search Engine Optimisation

## Which search engines generate the traffic?

90% of the Internet's search engine traffic is generated by Google - [www.google.com](http://www.google.com), Yahoo - [www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com) and MSN - [www.msn.com](http://www.msn.com)

## Text is 'Terrific'!

Search engines index and rank the visible text on a web page, they cannot see photographs and other graphics. If you want search engines to find the page you are about to create, include your keyword phrase several times in the page's text.

**NB:** However it is most important that you do not neglect your human readers in your quest for that magic "Top 10" search engine ranking. Make sure you stick to the rules of AIDAS we have already explained so that you create **attention**, generate **interest**, foster **desire** and hopefully you'll get the **action** you are seeking from your viewer(s).

## The critical things are:

- focus on one keyword phrase per page for most impact
- begin your page headline with the keyword phrase
- try to include the keyword phrase in your sub-heading
- begin the first paragraph with the keyword phrase
- ensure that it is used 3 – 7 times in the remainder of the body text (\*do not over-use your keyword phrase in the body text or you run the risk of being penalised by the search engines for 'spamming')

## No 'Instant Gratification'

It can take anywhere from 6 weeks, to 6 months to achieve any sort of ranking by the major search engines. Google was the first to introduce a mandatory 'waiting period' of up to 6 months before it will give high rankings to new websites. Now our research indicates that Yahoo, MSN and Ask Jeeves are also 'side-lining new websites for varying periods of time.

## "Content is King"

While there are a number of things we Internet gurus can do to help a website's rankings, the most valuable asset is creating keyword-rich content for each and every page on your website. And that is where you, the copywriter, can help greatly, by ensuring your keywords are liberally sprinkled throughout each page you create text for.

## Google Adwords:

If you are a business owner and want people in need of your products or services to find your website, paying Google for one its advertising services, such as Google AdWords, is a surefire way to increase web traffic. The issue is not whether Google can help, because they have garnered proven results. The question is only how much they can help and at what cost.

The Google AdWords program has more than doubled some of its customers' monthly traffic by placing relevant ads along the right-hand side of its organic search listings. If you have ever used Google's search engine, you have seen AdWords advertisements listed under "Sponsored Links." If you sign up for Google AdWords, your ads will only appear to people who enter keyphrases that are relevant to your company's offerings.

To further increase traffic, Google pays companies for displaying AdWords advertisements on their websites. If, for example, your company specializes in discounted furniture, you would pay Google for advertising space on all searches for "discounted furniture." Google would not only display the AdWords ad on its own site, but also display the ad on informational sites dedicated to discounted furniture of all kinds.

Google AdWords should not, of course, be the entirety of a marketing campaign, but it is often an excellent addition to an overall strategy. Google AdWords is a pay-per-click service, meaning you only pay when the advertising results in traffic. Before you start using Google AdWords, I highly recommend watching the Getting Started With Google Adwords video at which is available after you log into your account. Read all of the Google support guides before you start bidding. You can spend a lot of money if you don't know what you're doing.

## Google AdSense:

Google's AdSense program allows approved websites to dynamically serve Google's pay-per-click Adword results. This has become a popular alternative and an effective revenue sharing program for webmasters. Google's spider parses the adserving website and serves ads that relate to the website's content. While the Google's AdSense program still has some issues, they are making efforts to improve it.

The website maintenance related to AdSense is very easy and requires very little effort. Webmasters need only to insert javascript into the webpage or website template. The javascript calls the ad from Google and will ensure that ads are served each time a visitor goes to the webpage. If the visitor clicks one of the AdSense ads served to the website, the website owner is credited for the referral.

The implementation, while simple, has its drawbacks. Google dictates the format of the ads. Webmasters can select from a handful of preformatted text boxes that lack creativity. A recent improvement allows webmasters to modify the ad boxes to resemble the website's color scheme. Still, a far cry from some of the creative ads webmasters are accustomed to.

# Pre-Website Design Homework:

Compile information on the following points in order to get a headstart on Website Design:

- List a few sites that you like the design of, IE.
- If you prefer 100% width or a centred website
- Colour schemes
- Logos
- List the pages you require
- Start compiling the documentation for each page
- Compiling photos to place on the relevant pages.

# Website Homepage Content Homework:

Your Home page introduces your business and your Web site.

Write a summary, including a brief description of your products or services and your value and commitment to customers. This page sets the tone for your site and tells people what they can expect to find on other pages. Give the basics here and provide greater detail on other pages.

## **Let your customers know why they should explore your site**

A business home page is similar to the front window of a retail business. Highlight your best products or services and any special offers here. Present your products or services value to browsers to get them "through the door" or deeper into your site.

## **Convince customers of your site's value to them**

Consider what you might say to people to keep them coming back. You might mention how long you've been in business and how you show your commitment to customers. Be sure to tell visitors about your approach to business, your values, and your abilities. It's a good idea to also post your contact information on the Home page for people who come to the site to quickly find your phone number or address.

## **Company Name**

Phone number

Fax number

Address

State, ZIP code

E-mail address

If you have any questions, or would like to discuss how Brisbane Hosting & Website Design can advise, build or redevelop your website, please feel free to get in touch.

Thankyou for taking the time to read this guide.

Regards,

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