



Planning your Website with GoGo Graphics

Haste makes waste. Every effective website begins with smart planning.

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Think about:

- Your goals for your site

What are your reasons for wanting a website? Building brand awareness? Generating leads? Customer engagement? Public education? A clear understanding of your goals is crucial to the design process. Write them down.

- Your target audience(s)

An effective website fulfils specific needs of the people it aims to attract. This is the foundational principle behind website design. Websites fail when they fail to deliver the content their intended users need to make wise and well-informed decisions. Thus the expression, "Content is king!"

- The image your website conveys

Research has shown that a significant percentage of web users associate the design of a company's website with the company's credibility and trustworthiness. Before it can begin to communicate your key messages, your website must put to rest some fundamental questions: Is this a brand I can trust? Are they good at what they do? Will they get the job done?

CREATING YOUR SITE DESIGN

One of the keys to effective brand building is consistency. Your website should have a cohesive, compelling look and feel with a strong visual relationship to your other marketing materials.

If your website will be the first significant tool in your marketing arsenal, GoGo Graphics will develop a look and feel that reflects the essence of your brand.

Gather up the materials we will need to construct your site – images, text, videos.... If you require sourcing of stock photography, we can do this for you. Please be specific when you tell us what you are looking for.

SITE NAVIGATION

Once we've determined your site visitors' needs, we need to establish your site's 'information architecture' – the path (or paths) visitors will travel through the information on your website.

These navigational pathways are designed to lead users toward a desired action (register, purchase, pick up the phone, tell a friend, and so on).

To create this plan, we need to:

- Identify the different audiences who'll use your website
- Define what you want each of these groups to do on your website
- Identify the information you'll need to provide (and in what order) for them to achieve this
- Identify potential barriers to achieving these goals...and what it will take to get them over these barriers.

From this, we'll be able to create a list of website pages and determine how they might be structured on your website.

Some users will seek more information than others. Effective websites provide opportunities for such users to 'drill down' to the details they need to satisfy their information needs.

In all cases, web navigation should be easy and intuitive. Wherever users happen to be within the flow of information, they must be able to easily and immediately find their way to any other section of the site...especially the Contact Us page!

THE POLITICS OF 'LINK POP'

Search engines like Google generate results based on a number of parameters. These include keyword relevance, content currency and something called 'link popularity' (the number of quality sites your website links to and the number that link back to yours in return). As such, maintaining links to other sites is an important aspect of Search Engine Optimization.

As you plan your website, develop a list of related links. Are there external sources of information that would enhance the richness of your website experience? Can you link to articles, studies, reviews and so on that would give your users deeper insights or broader perspectives?

Remember that other websites may move their pages around or take them offline altogether. Check external links periodically to ensure they still work.

WRITING FOR THE WEB

Writing for the web is substantially different from writing for the printed page. Many of the rules of good writing still apply, but there are some distinctions you need to heed.

Brevity is the soul of effective web copy. Reading on-screen is more difficult than reading print, so people tend to read more slowly, and they tend to 'scan' or 'skim' rather than read every word.

Keep copy short, and stick to the 'inverted pyramid' format: lead with your key messages and then introduce supporting details. Stay away from long, convoluted sentences. Where it makes sense, use bulleted or numbered lists. Offer facts, not fluff. And build your site content around the keywords and phrases your users are apt to enter into search engines.

If you want to put lengthy text documents online, you may wish to encourage users to download and print them for easier reading. It may also be necessary to provide alternate 'printer-friendly' versions of your web pages.

YOUR DOMAIN NAME(S) (URLS)

We can recommend a domain registration service. If you need advice on choosing a name (or names), we can help you through this process. [E-mail](#) or call us now!

WEB HOSTING

We can help you obtain hosting from reasonably priced, dependable Canadian providers that will cover all your needs. GoGo Graphics will be happy to discuss your needs prior to uploading your website.

[Contact GoGo Graphics Design Services](#)