

Want to see an example of a REALLY bad website? Read this article, then visit <http://www.angelfire.com/super/badwebs/>

Top 10 Changes You Can Make TODAY For A More Effective Website

Have you already established a presence on the web for your anti-crime organization? Congratulations! Here are 10 easy ways to improve your existing site and retain visitors.

- 1. STOP THE MUSIC!** Many of your guests are surfing the web at work, or are doing something else while looking at your site. An uninvited concert is a quick way to send them clicking for the back button or worse yet—the “Close” button. Music and audio should be an option for your guest, not forced on them. This might be the most important change you can make today! Go do it now!
- 2. USE A COMMON NAVIGATION.** Menus that are in a different place throughout your site, in a different order, or don’t include the same links on every page are confusing. Create ONE navigation for your entire site and put it in the same spot on every page.
- 3. FIRST THINGS FIRST.** Your most important information should be placed “above the fold.” That is, above the area of your site which can be read without scrolling (usually the top half of your site). Just like in a newspaper, the information after the fold is less likely to be read.
- 4. GET IN TOUCH.** Be sure to include an “About Us” page which describes your organization and its staff. And don’t forget a “Contact Us” page, which lists your phone number, fax, email and physical address. You can also include on this page any other sites you’re a part of (like Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter). Make sure that if people want to get in touch with you, they can do however they want.
- 5. HALT THE SCROLLING TEXT!** Scrolling text on a computer screen is extremely difficult to read, especially when created in bright, contrasting colors. Not to mention the stars, banners, blinking lights, animated clip art, and so on. Turn them all off.
- 6. CHOOSE YOUR FONTS WISELY.** The fonts which are easiest to read on a computer are Verdana, Tahoma, Arial and Courier. That’s because these are “sans serif” fonts. That simply means they’re pretty straight forward, simple, and don’t have any fancy frills at the end of each letter.

Even Times New Roman (a “serif” font) is more difficult to read on a screen than these. And while you’re changing your font, point size 10-11 is standard on the web. If your target is senior citizens, go ahead and use 14. Otherwise, stay away from anything smaller or larger than 10 for your content. (For a sample of website font sizes, <http://www.alwanza.com/bells/points.html>)

- 7. COLOR INSIDE THE LINES.** Be careful when using extremely contrasting colors like a yellow background and red text. They are hard on the eyes. Contrasts which work well are white and black, grey and black...
- 8. LEAN TOWARDS THE LEFT.** Center justified paragraphs are hard to read on a computer screen. LEFT justify your paragraphs and you’ll make your readers’ eyes happy!
- 9. BREAK OUT OF THE FRAME.** Many older browsers do not support frames. They disrupt the flow of the website and can be difficult to anticipate where a page may appear when a link is clicked.
- 10. SHOW YOUR CREDIBILITY.**

A website which hasn’t been updated in ages (or months) shows your guests that you’re not paying attention to what they’re looking for. Or that you’re simply not paying attention! If you’re having trouble maintaining your site, ask for help.

HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR WEBSITE OR NEED A NEW WEBSITE? WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE BEST PRACTICES OF OTHER ANTI-CRIME ORGANIZATIONS?

VISIT US ON THE WEB AT WWW.YOURCRIMESITE.COM!

