

# Sticky Content as a Promotional Tool

By Cheryl Rickman

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Cheryl Rickman  
info@webcritique.co.uk

WebCritique: Fine tune your website <http://www.webcritique.co.uk>

The mantra of the net, 'Content is King,' will no doubt continue in to the next era of the new economy. Simply because it's true. The only amendment you could make to this saying is to put the word 'sticky' in front of it.

These days having good content also means have content that is sticky. Ie - visitors are stuck to the site with special Net glue so will stay on the site for longer periods of time, return and tell their friends about this site that they are drawn to.

According to web design magazine, Cre@te, "Stickiness is the Holy Grail of Web design - that indefinable quality that makes your sites compulsively addictive for users. Designers strive for it, clients yearn for it, and users? Well, they just can't get tear themselves away from it."

Sticky content can maximise your sites commercial value, as the longer a visitor stays on your site, the more likely they are to buy. Plus content that pulls them in and keeps them there will furthermore retain customer loyalty.

Sites such as <http://www.stickytools.com> and <http://www.hitsnclinks.com> offer free interactive tools and content for your website.

<http://www.Hitsnclinks.com> allows you to select three article topics and then post a simple code on your website. These article feeds are automatically updated every day, to provide your site with fresh daily sticky content.

The site also recognises that a visitors mood is important in helping them to make purchasing decisions, so provides members (or h@ppeneurs) with audio and video streaming content. Hitsnclinks.com has made its own site sticky with a huge knowledge bank and a variety of popular services, downloads and tools, but it's main strength and 'stickiness' comes from it's changing dynamic content. Clicking on the back button in the members area takes you to the same page but

with different content.

<http://www.Stickytools.com> offers its site visitors a variety of interactive tools, including internet radio, a variety of newsfeeds from thousands of sources, plus a selection of financial and nutritional calculators and decision making tools.

Freesticky.com (<http://www.freesticky.com> ) is another site offering an array of sticky content, including cartoons, jokes, competitions, lottery results, newsfeeds, syndicated articles, tips and photographs.

A monitored discussion board or chat area on your website is a good sticky tool. Not only do these beget customer loyalty, they also provide a feeling of community which makes users want to revisit time and time again. (Discussion boards also persuade visitors to stay on your website for longer durations).

Essentially, the key areas to concentrate on when creating a sticky site are: usefulness, content, community, personalisation, pleasure or excitement and originality. To achieve success in these areas, you need to know your audience, keep it simple and keep it viral (use automated forms so people can tell others about your site or sticky tools/content).

According to Media Metrix, [www.pogo.com](http://www.pogo.com) was the stickiest site of 2000, with ebay coming a close second. Results were derived from how long individual visitors spent on the site at any one time. Pogo.com averaged 175.8 minutes of usage per unique visitor per month, 50% longer than those using ebay.com. Here are the top ten sticky sites for the year 2000.

1. pogo.com
2. ebay.com
3. iwon.com
4. hotmail.com
5. netaddress.com
6. webmillion.com
7. yahoo.com
8. msn.com
9. compuserve.com
10. quickstar.com

Make your website sticky, but ensure that you concentrate on your audience and their needs. Combine a balance of stickiness with 'slipperiness', so your users are able to slide through your site until they buy, staying longer and revisiting.

Cheryl Rickman is author of 111 winning ways to promote your website successfully and runs <http://www.webcritique.co.uk> where she offers in-depth website appraisals and personalised web marketing plans, plus a free e-bulletin on web promotion and links to useful resources.

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