

Essential Truths About Web Content

By Chris Falck

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THE ESSENTIAL TRUTHS ABOUT WEB CONTENT.

Find out why web content is at the heart of every good website

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How important is the information contained on a website?

In a study of Internet users performed by UCLA to examine the importance of Television, Radio and the Internet as an Information Resource, the following results were found:

47% of Internet users considered Radio to be an "important" or "very important" resource for information.

53% of Internet users considered Television to be an "important" or "very important" resource for information

While 67% of the Internet users considered the Internet to be an "important" or "very important" resource for information

This effectively proves the First Essential Truth about the Internet, that the Internets primary purpose is for finding information...unfortunately, people simply do not hop on the web thinking to themselves "I feel like spending some money today!" Unfortunate...Yes! But True! Yet Another Essential Truth.

What this means is that any website must be designed to be informative, to provide a service, be a useful resource or give something away for FREE in order for the site to be considered useful...If a site is neither informative or useful I can personally promise you that there will be very few repeat visitors! (Except for the Website owner!!! And he is going to be very lonely)

OK, so how can we help our poor website owner?

Well, let me give you another Essential Truth before we progress...Right now, it's extremely difficult to make money directly from the quality content contained on your website.

The above statement doesn't mean that content on your website lacks value. In fact, content is the foundation around which a website is built! Let me draw an analogy (I think that's the right word?)

On planet Earth, nobody wants to pay for the air that we breathe...Do we? I think we would be pretty annoyed if any government tried levying a tax on air!

The point I am trying to make is...Simply because we would not want to pay for it, doesn't mean that the human race doesn't think air is a valuable resource.

The way people think about a website's content, is similar to that. Without quality content our website owners site will simply wither and die...

Ok, earlier I asked the question, how can we help our poor website owner?

Obviously, I would recommend that he consult with a professional Internet Design & Marketing company such as eCom-RDS (But then I suppose I would say that wouldn't I)

If he did take a consultation, I would try to get our website owner to think of his website as an additional sales stream for his business. That said, it is vital the site promotes the image of his company and accounts for any corporate branding etc. What this means is that when somebody visits, they are presented with a site that is synonymous with the business it represents and provides content that is consistent and complementary with all the other corporate marketing or advertising materials.

Another piece of advice would be to keep the design as simple as possible. So I would actively discourage cluttering the site with graphics, advertising and the like.

If the site has to carry advertising I would ensure that the content-to-clutter is no more than 1:1, If its greater than 1:1 I would assure the website owner that any visitors will probably go elsewhere to find a quicker more user friendly site.

A website needs to be regularly updated. This gives people a reason to return. I would say that a content update every quarter is essential, in some circumstances I would recommend changing the site every day!!!

Of course I'm not suggesting that you add any old content. On the contrary, I would ensure that the website owner provides valuable

new content for your visitors pleasure, such as a sale information, special offers, product updates, helpful tips or noteworthy news articles.

I would also encourage the website owner to Test the usability of his site to determine whether his web site is accomplishing what the website owner envisaged and whether it appeals to his target audience.

Measuring visitor traffic, page views and return visits is crucial for determining the health of your site. Examine what percentage of potential customers come to your site, view the first page, and leave immediately!!!

The simple rule here is that a visitor makes up their mind about staying on a site within 10 seconds of it loading!!!

Another thing to consider is the length of time a visitor stays on the home page...if someone hangs around for a minute and rushes quickly away, then it would suggest that the content is simply unappealing!

Also important is to identify exactly where a sites visitors are coming from and from which page they are eventually leaving the site. For example, for a form page that has been designed to capture information from your visitor, it is vital to weigh the importance of the information you capture against the loss of potential customers.

Simple eh?

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