

Five Checks for Web Pages

By Dianne Reuby

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There are a few essential checks that you must make before uploading your pages.

Check the basics - spelling, grammar, terminology. I've seen a lot of arguments for and against using only US spelling on web sites - I think this is a personal choice, but having made your decision, be consistent! Terminology - don't use words or phrases that aren't common around the world. I read a software review recently - sadly, I didn't understand the phrase used to describe the program, so I don't know if the reviewer was recommending it or condemning it!

Check your coding. It's easy for little mistakes to creep into your HTML - especially when your tags are nested, or when you copy and paste from another page of your site. There are several free programs available - I use CSE Lite from <http://www.htmlvalidator.com> which also has a paid professional version.

Check your links. Again, it's easy to make a slight mistake in typing a URL, or getting confused between relative and absolute references, leading to the well-known ****404 page not found**** message! Use a link check program to find all these little errors before you launch your page on the world. I use Xenu's Link Check which I downloaded from <http://www.completelyfreesoftware.com/> - you'll find many other freeware link checkers.

Check your files. It's easy to upload a new HTML page, and forget to upload any additional graphics, leaving the visitor with a blank square. I find this especially easy when I'm just using an icon such as ****New!**** or ****Free**** - so I keep these in a directory on my site called ****Common_Images**** - that way, I know where they are, and don't need to upload them for every page I add.

Check in more than one browser. You probably have a favourite browser for surfing the web - but we're all different, and all round the world people will be dismissing your choice as ****terrible!**** So check on your hit counter stats - which browsers are your visitors using? If you don't have room on your hard drive for more than one browser, use one of the webmaster forums to ask for a check from different browser users. <http://webmaster-forums.com> , <http://siteownersforums.com> , and <http://sitepointforums.com> all have a forum for this. You're expected to review other members sites in return.

Use these five checks every time you update your site, and you'll have less chance of losing your visitors through simple mistakes.

Dianne Reuby is co-author of the e-book "First Website Builder", <http://newbieclub.com/builder/?pramclub>
Dianne created and runs the Free Site Builder web site and ezine, dedicated to helping newbies create web sites with free tools, services and resources.
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