

# How to Avoid the 12 Common Web Design Mistakes

By Herman Drost

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Are people visiting your web site but not buying? This may be a sign and the time to do some redesign of your web site. Often you are so close to what you have created, that you can't see obvious design mistakes. I often do the same when writing an article - everything looks fine when I have finished, yet when I review it the next day and I'm amazed at how many mistakes I have made.

Let's look at some of the most common Web Design mistakes:

1.Sloppy Web Site Copy - your heading and first paragraph should clearly indicate the purpose of your web site. "Content is King" on the Net, so make sure there is plenty of focused information for your visitors. The content should draw the visitor through the site to take action in the end. Include contact information on every page in case people have questions.

2.Bad Color Coordination - avoid using dark text on a dark background. Use dark text on a light background, such as black on white. Use colors that blend well together - observe nature or look at paintings to get some idea of good color combinations.

3.Pages Load Too Slowly - using too many images or inserting large images on a web page, slow down the loading time of your web page. Optimize your images (reduce their size) before you insert them on your site, otherwise your visitors will leave before your site is loaded.

4.Poor Navigation - this means visitors can't easily find the information. They experience broken links, error pages or discover too many moving objects (animations, flash, scrolling text, marquees) - all these will annoy the visitor and cause him

to click elsewhere. Keep your navigation simple by creating clear links on all web pages.

5.Orphan Pages - these are pages other than your homepage, where the visitor has no idea how it fits in with the overall structure of your web site. You should always have a link to the homepage, so visitors know where they are on your web site.

6.Long Scrolling - the visitor has to scroll horizontally, or many pages vertically to view the whole web page. Create the width of your web page to fit on one screen, to avoid horizontal scrolling and have a maximum of 3 pages to be scrolled vertically.

7.Meta Tags Missing - without optimizing your web page with a description or keywords, people can't find you on the search engines. Research key words or phrases relevant to your site content. Include them in your title, description and Web Site copy.

8.Lack of Marketing Strategy - a beautiful lawn without sun or water will soon die. A Web Site without visitors will soon die also. They are the life blood for your website. Create numerous marketing strategies to attract visitors to your web site - you never know which one will be the most effective.

9.Poor Layout and Design - create an aesthetically pleasing design to keep the visitors on your site. Create enough white space between your text and images by using margins. Don't overlap text and images and avoid capitalizing all text - it gives the impression you are shouting at your visitors. Use font type such as Arial or Verdana to make it easier to read on your computer screen.

10.Avoid Using Frames - frames don't allow you to bookmark the page or return to it and sometimes the URLS stop working.

11.No Cross Browser Compatibility - you may be losing many customers if your Web Site is not compatible to the browsers most people are using. Internet Explorer (IE 4, 5, 6) is currently the dominant browser, and most users are displaying 800x600 pixels or more, with a color depth of at least 65K colors. ([http://www.w3schools.com/browsers/browsers\\_stats.asp](http://www.w3schools.com/browsers/browsers_stats.asp)) . Therefore check your design with these statistics in mind.

12.Outdated Information - your web site is like a garden. If you allow weeds to block out the sun and take over your garden, it will be destroyed. Attracting and keeping web site visitors, means continually adding new information (i.e. latest news), deleting irrelevant, outdated information and removing broken links.

Continuous maintenance of your web site is crucial to

attracting and retaining visitors. If you don't have time to do it yourself, hire a Web Gardener (Web Designer), to keep your site looking fresh, clean and fast loading.

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