

Graphics: To Add Or Not To Add

By MaryJo Scamurra

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When deciding whether or not to add graphics to your website there are a few things to consider. Firstly, ask yourself if this site you are creating will be a personal site or a business site. For the purposes of this article, it will be assumed you are designing a business website.

LOCATING SUITABLE GRAPHICS

When searching for graphics, there are plenty of places to look on the Internet. My favorite sources are:

<http://www.bizart.com>

<http://www.arttoday.com>

<http://www.coolarchive.com/clipart.cfm>

When taking graphics from any website, be sure to read and follow the terms of service posted. It is always wise to save the images to your hard drive instead of linking to them, which is considered bandwidth stealing.

ANIMATIONS

Before choosing an animated image for your page, ask yourself if it is a necessity to have it there. Chances

are the answer is no. View some highly visited, popular websites and count how many dancing email boxes you see. My guess is there won't be many.

You will want to keep animations to a minimum to avoid appearing unprofessional. Remember that your site is promoting your business, not a Disney cartoon. The image that comes across to visitors will ultimately determine whether or not they do business with you.

LOAD TIME

Graphics will slow up the amount of time your page takes to load. The more graphics used, the longer potential customers will have to wait. I am not saying you should not include pictures of your product line, that is very important for selling. What I am suggesting is that by keeping the graphic files as small as possible you will be seeing to a much quicker load time.

To optimize the file size of an image, for free, visit:

<http://www.mjswebularworld.com/cruncher.htm>

Your visitors may not send you a thank you note, but they WILL be thankful you didn't keep them waiting!

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