

## 6 WEBSITE MISTAKES TO AVOID

All businesses depend upon their customers and constantly look for new prospects. In today's world, the tool that has the broadest reach is the business's website. Judgments are made about your professionalism, creativity, size, credibility, and services all by just looking at your web pages. If you work for a company, you may not be responsible for the website, but you can suggest improvements. If you own your own business, then you either created the site yourself or you are paying someone to design and maintain it. It is a wonderful opportunity to reach people anywhere, anytime, so make the most of it by keeping in mind the following tips:

### 1. Think small, look small

Even if you run a small business out of your home, the website should look professional. Constantly evaluate your company website versus competitors. With the web tools and design services available today, any business can look big.

### 2. Failure to have a professional design

There are reasonably priced web designers or web service companies who offer do-it-yourself or customized services to give your website a professional look and feel at an affordable price. The Sarasota/Bradenton area has an abundance of website design companies. And Register.com, Yahoo.com, GoDaddy.com all have do-it-yourself website templates, website designers, web hosting, and domain name services.

### 3. Nothing new

To increase your rankings in search engines and to give people a reason to come back to your site, you need to keep the content fresh and relevant. Update frequently with company events/training sessions/press releases, write a blog – anything to add fresh content to your site that search engines can pick up and people can get new information. However, be aware of the trap mistake #4 can pose; so before you start something be sure you can maintain it.

### 4. Regularly scheduled information feeds

Daily/weekly blogs or weekly/monthly newsletters sound like good ways to keep your company in front of people. But if you skip a week, then two weeks, then it becomes irregular, that will confuse and then lose your readers and prospects. Try writing a blog (2 weeks) or newsletter (several issues) but don't send it out. See if it fits into your schedule and you have enough things to write about. If the last posting on a website is old – say 3 months ago on a daily blog or August when it is now March on a monthly newsletter - it makes the rest of the site's information look out-of-date and suggests the owner is not keeping up with business.

### 5. Old Design

On the Web, design elements constantly change and mature, so make sure the website that was launched a year or more ago still looks current. Evaluate the site design elements at least once a year and update if needed. It could be a new information tab, video, or links that others in your industry are now offering, or a different format that better suits your growth or evolving services.

### 6. ThatSuperLongDomainName.com

The best domain name reflects your business name, is short, and easy to remember. While it may seem like a challenge when checking for available domain names, spend the time to figure out a short and catchy domain name that people can easily associate with your business. (Since the cost is nominal to reserve a domain name, you might want to buy ones very similar to your own so no one else can own them and perhaps capture customers who were looking for you.)