

Resources



8 websites worth a look:

<http://www.exploreallopposibilities.com/web-award-criteria.html>

Toastmaster Susan Niven's website – jam-packed with interesting information and observations

<http://www.webpagecontent.com>

New Zealand writer and trainer Rachel McAlpine's website on web page writing and design elements

<http://www.useit.com>

Jakob Nielsen's website on website usability and accessibility

<http://www.toastmasters.org> Info for Members, District websites (spend some time looking around other District websites for ideas)

<http://www.toastmasters-d58.org/resource/present/bldsite.htm>

“Building a club website” tutorial

<http://www.tmdistrict65.org/resources> “Resources for Building a web page”

<http://www.toastmastersdistrict61.org/eng/resources/web.htm>

Short article on the reasons for building a club website

<http://www.homestead.com/toastmasterDan/files/> A personal article on how to “Create a Super Club Website for free”

3 Books you must read:



Web Word Wizardry, by Rachel McAlpine, published by Ten Speed Press, Berkeley, 2001

Website Design Goodies, by Joe Burns, published by Que, 2001

Home Page Usability, by Jakob Nielsen and Marie Tahir, published by New Riders, 2001

9 elements for a successful website

(from www.learnthat.com)

1 – Visual Impact of home page

The home page is your billboard – it creates an immediate impression on visitors to your site, so it's got to create the right impression. It should look

- Clean
- Uncluttered
- Professional
- Attractive

2 – Purpose of the website

You have to give people a reason to stay on your site by answering the question “what's in it for me?”

This could be

- Information and resources
- Entertainment
- Advice
- Help with a problem
- Links to useful sites

3 – Loading Time

The home page must load as quickly as possible. It must be simple to grab the attention of your web visitor in the first 5-10 seconds. Avoid large graphics, flashing images, garish colours, and other annoying stuff.

4 – Colour, layout and graphics

The graphics and layout of the home page contribute to that first impression. Page size should be around 30KB. Images should be optimised for web viewing and be between 6-8 KB in size. Each additional 2KB adds approximately one second to loading time. Consider the effect you wish to create and choose text and page background colours that are appropriate. When placing images of people, faces should ‘look’ to the centre of the page.

5 – Readability

This refers to the way the words look on the page. Words need to stand out on the page, surrounded with plenty of white space, short lines and plain screen-friendly fonts. Use left paragraph alignment, correct sentence case, and spell check your work. Use standard web link conventions for colour and style.

6 – Segmenting and signposting

Break up pages into small chunks, dividing horizontally with use of headings and subheadings, using a consistent font type and size. You need to make it easy for your visitors to glance at the page and take in all the key points within 10 seconds, so that if they see anything of interest to them, they'll stay and keep reading. Make it easy for visitors to decide what to do next.

7 – Navigation

Your main navigation bar should run down the left side of the page because we're accustomed to reading from left to right and from top to bottom, and we're accustomed to finding navigation bars on the left of web pages.

- Group items in the navigation area so that similar items are next to each other.
- Don't provide multiple navigation routes for the same type of links.
- Don't include an active link TO the home page ON the home page.

8 – Privacy policies

Ensure that visitors feel confident dealing with you by telling them exactly what you're doing to safeguard their privacy. Detail your privacy policy on a separate page, especially towards email addresses which you may request if your visitor fills in a form. Write your privacy policy in Plain English!

9 – Content is King!

Effective content writing is one of the most critical aspects of all web design. Most visitors scan online content rather than carefully reading it, so you must optimise content for scannability and craft it to convey maximum information in as few words as possible. Rule of thumb: reduce anything from printed format to a web page by 50% using the "inverted pyramid" structure.

Think Web – know your readers – use plain English – offer something for free!

Suggested content for your club website

This list was compiled from a study of international district and club websites, and New Zealand club websites.

- Features and benefits of Toastmasters membership
- Membership promotion ideas
- Club calendar and forward programme
- Club newsletter
- Member information
- Educational topics and articles
- Explanation of Toastmasters programme
- Post-a-speech
- Online Toastmaster non-copyright forms
- Club member photo gallery
- Links to Speech Resources
- Links to Toastmaster Resources
- Personal quotes and endorsements Free offers
- Upcoming events
- Speech contest information
- Map and directions to meeting venue
- Toastmaster FAQ
- Member Goal Book
- Member progress cards
- History of Toastmasters and Club
- Club brochures and pamphlets
- List of club resources/library
- Member recognition /achievements
- Quotes of the day/week/month
- Club meeting reports
- Club committee meeting minutes
- Sample meeting agendas Ask a Toastmaster (email a toastmaster for help or to ask a question)
- Links to other club websites in area
- Information Request Form
- A Toastmasters Glossary
- Various Toastmaster logos
- Guest book – visitor sign-in
- Handy tips on speaking
- Archive section



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