



GreenTree Software

“Excellence in Everything we do...”

Starting the Process of Building An Excellent Website

Purpose: What would you like the website to do for you?

- 1.) Provide Customers with a positive interaction with your company, where they could learn more about your company and your services, and hopefully gain the confidence to do business with you. **PROMOTIONAL** (Le Chateau)
- 2.) Provide Visitors with the information they need on an issue or a subject. **INFORMATIVE** (BC Government website)
- 3.) Allow Customers to place an order, or make a purchase, including the ability to collect payment online via credit card transactions **TRANSACTIONAL** (Amazon.com)
- 4.) Provide a service to people online where people would come to your site for this **SERVICE** (a currency converter site)

Your site will likely be a combination of these, but it's helpful to think about its purpose.

Character or Style: What kind of site will your market appreciate.

- If you were an art company then having a non-traditional site and unusual navigation might win you points with your audience.
- If you were trying to reach children bright colours and happy characters would gain ground for your message. (Veggietales)
- If you were a professional organization you would normally have a very consistent serious website (IBM)
- If you were reaching youth and young adults you would likely have a very active animated interactive website (to hold their attention www.youthunlimited.com)

Consider the kind of Style that would suit your organization, and help it reach its target audience.

Scope:

How large your website is will depend on the goals you have for it. Generally websites are organized under consistent categories that visitors to the site will expect to find. Core pages hold the most predictable information.

Core pages: Generally speaking every website needs pages that explain about the organization and how to contact it. “About”, “Contact” every wise organization will also have a page with terms of use “Legal” and a privacy policy related to visitor information “Privacy”. Most organizations will have a page that explains their services or products so “Services” has become a fairly standard web page.



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Optional pages:

- If your organization is facing current issues, or spends much of it's time answering questions and getting a message out, a “**FAQ**” Frequently Asked Questions page is useful. Not having a FAQ page or similar facility, runs the risk that visitors simply “won't bother” to make contact, and you may lose the opportunity to address a customer's concerns.
- “**News!**” A must read, whether on it's own page, or in a sidebar. An essential indicator of the health of a website (and possibly the company) Allows the organization to demonstrate to visitors that it is vibrant and strong with it's many accomplishments and events.
- If there is information you would like your customers to download and read, (For example a registration form, a map they can print, or a petition they can fill out.) then you may want a “**Download**” page which allows a visitor to access all the downloadable materials your organization wishes to offers via the website.
- If you are making an impression, and would like to present a brief graphic and statement (animated or static) then you may want to greet visitors to your site with a “**Splash**” page. It cannot be overemphasized that you should provide an obvious way for people to exit the splash page and continue with their visit to your site. (<http://canada.gc.ca/>)
- “**Informational**” pages. Often we can help the visitors to our sites by helping to complete their understanding or perspective of an issue or subject matter. The free information you provide, if useful, will enhance your relationship with the visitor because you've helped them.

Other possibilities include:

- Mailing Lists. Manage people and the e-mailings they receive.
- Special Promotion pages. Your latest specials, or upcoming events
- Online Signup / donation / purchase pages. (E-commerce)
- Online customer management / tracking (database driven web-applications)
- Listing of Vendors who sell your product (good marketing tool)
- Thank you pages (after a visitor sends you comments, or places an order)
- History pages For people who want to learn your organizations history
- Staff Show the brilliant people& the credentials which give your company it's edge
- Positions available Allow those interested in your organization the first opportunity to learn about vacancies or positions available in your organization.

If you have any questions or ideas, I'd love to answer them for you, or work with you to develop your ideas into effective business solutions for your company.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gary McInnes". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.