

Consistency

The How and Why of Creating a Consistent Web Site

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Why should you have consistency within your web site?

- To ensure that people know they are on your site, no matter what section they are in
 - Keep your color scheme/design the same or similar throughout the web site.
 - Consistent banner images
 - Make sure your name appears at the top of every page
- To make navigation of your site easy for the end user
 - Keep buttons consistent throughout your site
 - Make buttons easy to find
 - Top of the page
 - Top left of the page
 - Top right of the page
- To make sure your web site works as intended across various browsers
 - Some browsers are more forgiving of coding errors than others
 - Popular browsers to check your site in
 - Netscape (4.7 or better)
 - 4.7 download site - <http://wp.netscape.com/download/archive.html>
 - 7.1 download site - <http://channels.netscape.com/ns/browsers/download.jsp>
 - Internet Explorer (5.0 or better)
 - 6.0 download site - <http://www.microsoft.com/windows/ie/default.asp>
 - Opera (6.0 or better)
 - 7.21 download site - <http://www.opera.com/download/>
 - Mozilla (1.0 or better)
 - 1.5 download site - <http://www.mozilla.org/>

Methods for making consistent web sites

- Software Created Templating
 - Available with most web site development software
 - Allows you to create your web site content and then apply the template to that page
 - Allows multiple templates for a single site
 - Main page templates
 - Sub page templates
 - Division templates

- Software Examples:
 - Dreamweaver - <http://www.macromedia.com/>
 - Frontpage - <http://www.microsoft.com/frontpage/>

- CSS (cascading style sheets)
 - CSS is the most common form of templating
 - Allows the creator to apply style sheets to standard HTML tags
 - Changes to one style sheet apply everywhere that style sheet is referenced throughout the web site
 - Can create multiple style sheets for main, sub and division pages
 - CSS side bar help - <http://devedge.netscape.com/toolbox/sidebars/>

- Frames
 - Keeps a static design (banner, buttons, footer) separate from the content of the page
 - One of the oldest forms of templating
 - Button/banner/footer changes are applied throughout the site in one step, since the design is static
 - An introduction to Frames - http://wp.netscape.com/assist/net_sites/frames.html

- Content Management Software
 - Simple to use for the non-technical web master
 - Similar to frames, content management software separates the images from the content
 - Graphical changes are applied throughout the web site with a single change
 - There are several products out there, some for a fee some for not.

Common Questions

- What if I do not want the same design on every page?
 - As long as you keep your color scheme/design similar, your pages do not have to be exactly the same in design
- Is using these methods easy for the non-technical web master?
 - Content Management Software is the simplest of the methods for creating consistent web sites. The software packages are designed with non-technical people in mind

Please feel free to contact me with any questions you have regarding this presentation or these topics.

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