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TEN TIPS TO ELEVATE YOUR WEBSITE TODAY

It's that time of year when our minds begin to wander...

and we start focussing on new ways to revamp our websites, become more creative with our branding choices, and see how we can take things to the next level. When the shooting stops, the creative side in us craves something that we can sink our teeth into and help portray our businesses.

It's easy to go down the rabbit hole when it comes to website design and development. Whether you're on the verge of a rebrand or you're just looking to spruce things up, this guide has been broken up in to simple tips that you can get started with today.



No.1

Font Size

There's a fine line between font size that is too small and delicate, and font size that is just too big and bulky for the page. Adjusting your font size can be one of the quickest things to update when you're looking at your website.

One of the best things to do is to use a font that is easy to read, has distinctive features and will allow you to communicate your message clearly. Get someone to look over your choice and see if they can read it... parents can be great for this!

Some fonts work at 13px whilst others might need to go up to 16px - find your sweet spot between the two.



No.2

Your About Page

There are some things that I have come to identify when looking at an About Page, and some of the best websites out there all manage to incorporate these elements.

You absolutely need an image of yourself.
You need a short paragraph about your education or history.
You should always include something about what you offer.
Along with a sentence or two on your values.

Think of this like a dating profile for prospective clients.
They need to know that they like the same things as you do
and what makes up the important parts of your life, and what
makes you unique.



No.3

Branding Images

You've heard it before, but I'll say it again, people buy from people; not businesses.

I have found it so valuable to set aside time to plan my own branding shoot which demonstrates the key elements of my workflow. These are unique to my process and the way that I shoot, but it can help fill in a lot of the blanks when it comes to visually telling your story.

Remember to get a combination of crops, both vertical and horizontal images, along with colour and black and white. Seek out other photographers like you who will be able to match your style and provide you with gorgeous images for your website.

Be prepared to pay for this service as photography is a unique talent and requires a great deal of creativity and time on their part.



No.4

Contact Me

One of the biggest things that I tend to see is the alternatives for a “Contact” page. We’ve been programmed to search for this key word more than any other synonym, so if you’re currently using something like “Say Hello”, or “Enquire” or “Let’s Chat!” then I’d recommend changing this to “Contact”.

It’s simple, effective and makes every bit the difference when people are looking for your contact page.

Studies have also shown that the most effective placement for the “Contact” tab is the far right, or last option on your menu navigation. If your menu sits entered to the page, then have “Contact” as the last option.



No.5

Video Marketing

Video marketing is certainly an effective way to up-level your client experience. If you're selling a service (such as photography, floristry, planning and so on) then a beautiful video of you doing what you love can be incredibly effective when it comes to communicating your brand message.

Normally, videographers will provide you with a few options; one will be a minute long or less which is perfect for social media. The other option should be around 3 minutes at most which can be embedded into your website using coding.

I currently have a Vimeo login which I have added my own video to which was lovingly created by the amazing Arrow and Knot Productions.

Be prepared to pay for this service as videography is a talent and requires a great deal of creativity and time on their part.



No.6

Touch Points

I once heard that it takes a client 7 times to see your work in the world before they then finally book you. It used to be only three, but as our markets become more and more competitive, you should be looking to make your website your first “touch-point” and therefore, frequent subtle calls to action should be added to almost every page (where relevant!) to ensure there is a clear pathway to your Contact Page.

Speaking of touch points. A touchpoint is any point of interaction with a customer or potential customer at any stage of the customer journey, which include your website, adverts, search engine results, social media, and moreover; these are easily controlled.

Your website is your own digital property, and that’s why it’s one of the most important parts of your marketing strategy. Obviously, your website contains numerous potential touchpoints: from product pages to blog posts, so it’s vital to keep these up to date.



No.7

SEO

SEO or Search Engine Optimization is almost a completely different topic altogether but it's one I thought I would lightly address in here because it does play an important part in getting your website up to scratch.

Blogging regularly and paying attention to your Keywords and your Alt Tags (image descriptions that index your image files in Google) are some of the easiest things to get up to date quickly with.

By spending only thirty minutes a day on your Alt Tags, you can make sure that your website is being found and when someone searches for your images online, they can be attributed to you as the creator.



No.8

User Experience

User Experience is a term that is banded around a lot of online experiences, but it essentially refers to the individual viewing your website and their ability to navigate around your website with ease.

By making sure you have clear pathways such as links to other pages on your site, buttons that send someone to a related topic or links to websites where your work is featured such as blogs or associated vendors, it will mean your “user” doesn’t get lost whilst they peruse your website.

Making a pathway on paper can be helpful. Start with your main navigation bar and work down from there.



No.9

Faster Loading

It's not an easy task, but one that you should look into. Surveys have stated that if your website takes long than 3 seconds to load, the user or visitor will drop off and go elsewhere. In an era of "Amazon Prime" as I like to call it, people want things fast and they want them now.

That might mean looking at your image sizes and making sure that they're as small as they can be without being pixelated. It might mean that the carousel you've been working on should be a static image for now until you've been able to downsize things.

Homepage loading times are absolutely something that can be addressed and should be tackled with fervour to ensure you're not leaving anyone hanging...



No.10

Avoid the Trends

This one maybe speaks for itself but look at five of your competitors.

Does their website look like yours? Chances are, they might all use the same terminology, or the same font. Be as uniquely creative as you are and carve out your own space in the internet for an authentic representation of your brand.

There are also certain things that tend to be very “on trend” right now. Take a moment to think if your choice will stand up to the test of time or if you’ll be back to square one in a few years.

with thanks

Alyssa Joy Photography for her beautiful captures of me with
my boys!

