

10 Worst Home Page Mistakes

Your web site is the centerpiece of your marketing and your home page is often your first and only chance to make a good impression. Visitors decide in 5-8 seconds if they will stay or go. Here's a few lessons from those that failed in keeping our attention.

1 No hooks to entice the visitor to dig deeper.

People go to your web site because they hope you'll solve a problem, provide an insight, or entertain them. Offer your customers a "hook" or "bait" relating to why they came to your site. This link should connect them to relevant content.

2 You don't truly know your customer's needs.

If you don't know what your customer really wants, even a clever "hook" will fail. Have you ever actually asked them? Understand the top three reasons why they go to your site and make these easy to find.

3 You welcome your visitor.

Your intentions are good but you may delay your visitors from learning about your company. You have 5-8 seconds. Explain what you do and how they will benefit from working with you. Some call this a "Value Proposition".

4 No gift so you loose your interested customer.

When a visitor arrives, don't loose out on someone who's interested by not offering them something. It may be a "free guide" or "ebook" (similar to what you're reading now). This will help you generate leads while building credibility.

5 Title isn't descriptive or Search Engine Optimized.

"Index" in the title (top of browser) is like calling your company "Name". Most people put their company name up top. Titles offer an easy free way to improve SEO. Include keywords that describe your business, a tagline, key services and your city. Nielsen/NetRatings claim 24.4 percent of searches include the city. HTML code:
<TITLE>Put your descriptive title here.</TITLE>

6 No free resources.

Free resources are a very pervasive marketing strategy. Do you offer your clients scores of juicy resources and value-packed content? People are always looking for free stuff. To give is to receive.

7 No Blog

Besides building your "expert" reputation, blogs are excellent for SEO. If you blog 3-5 times a week, pat yourself on the back. Rarely or don't blog? Think again. The payback is opportunities and leads. No time? Outsource it or publish a few lines or even a picture. It doesn't always have to be an in-depth article. New content keeps 'em comin'.

8 Mystery Navigation and Flash Introductions

If people have to guess what to do next (or something is tricky click on) they will leave. It may seem impressive, but instead it will delay, frustrate and confuse. Just because things move, doesn't make them good. Content must be relevant and delivered efficiently. Aim for predictable instead.

9 Your design isn't distinctive.

Stand out from the crowd and be different. Communicate your brand's message. Tip: avoid offering too many products or services. It's diluting and confusing. Aim to specialize instead.

10 Not telling people what your services are.

Learn what your clients need to motivate them to make a commitment. Do you have a services page? You're on the right track. If it's loaded with answers to questions they often ask you, enjoy a gold star! A bulleted list is helpful but can leave people wanting more. Give them insight into the process of working with you. Include packages.

BONUS You speak in your words, not your clients.

Mirror your client's style. Speak in their words. Your messages will be understood and have an impact. Write to connect, not to impress.

Learn how to develop a much better web site that generates scores of leads, builds customer relationships and creates massive profit at this link: www.joanneprobyn.com

**Cheers,
Joanne Probyn**