Top Ten Reasons Why Websites Fail

Your organisation may have a website but are you confident it is effectively delivering an improved level of service?

Over 70% of households^, 92% of small businesses and 99% of medium size business are currently connected to the Internet* and the growth in Internet usage has resulted in an increased demand for a better level of service. Now, it is more important than ever that emphasis is placed on delivering websites which satisfy consumer expectations, as well as achieving organisational objectives.

AdditionalView, a Tasmanian leader in website strategy and marketing, is much more than a website development company, emphasising the use of the Internet as a key channel for the achievement of the organisation service strategy. AdditionalView are frequently asked to “fix” websites that just don’t achieve the intended objectives and, in doing so, have identified the following top 10 reasons why websites fail:

1. The website isn’t search engine optimised
   Search engines work in a highly specific fashion and many poorly designed websites are ‘invisible’ to search engines and to customers. This can dramatically affect your search engine listing when users search for your organisation or products and services.

2. Flash animation is misused, making your website distracting and frustrating
   This can distract the user preventing them from reading important information about the organisation, its products and services. It can also frustrate users due to increased download times.

3. The website has been designed for style not strategy
   Many inexperienced website developers jump straight into design without considering key organisational objectives, or the intended target audience. The website may look fantastic but does it achieve its intended purpose? Is it easy to use? Does the design distract the user from reading the core information on the website?

4. Contact details are hard to find
   The Internet is all about speed and efficiency - online customers have very little tolerance for organisations that make them search for a phone number.

5. The website is not advertised offline
   Many organisations forget to include their website address on stationery, vehicles, on buildings and in advertising.

6. Website addresses are not obvious
   Long, unusual website addresses with dashes or punctuation make it difficult for customers to guess or remember. Customers like simple, easy to remember web addresses.

7. Many websites forget to ask visitors to act
   Important calls to action to join, register, contact or submit are not placed in an obvious location. Don’t make customers search the page for instructions. Place calls to action in an obvious place on the pages and don’t be afraid to repeat them more than once where relevant.

8. Website content is out of date
   This makes an organisation look unorganised and sloppy, causing a negative perception of the organisation and may result in a customer failing to return to the website.

9. Website content is longwinded
   Customers read less on screen than on paper, scanning text and looking for keywords and headings. Regurgitating offline content such as brochures bombards the user with too much information and moves large amounts of copy out of the page scroll area. You run the risk of users ignoring the excess copy and missing the key information on the page.

10. The website does not comply with W3C accessibility standards
    Customers with vision impairment or low literacy levels are seriously disadvantaged with websites that don’t comply with these standards. ▼

For more information about how you can make your website work more effectively, contact AdditionalView on 6223 3046 or visit www.additionalview.com.au.

References
^ Internet World Stats 2007
* Sensis eBusiness Report 2007
Sorell Council Gets their Records Straight

In mid 2007, Sorell Council was one of the first councils in Australia to implement infoXpert by InfoVision Technology, a new electronic document management system (EDMS).

At the start of 2007, Sorell Council had identified a number of objectives that it would like to achieve associated with records management. These objectives included:

- Being able to assist staff with information and records enquiries more efficiently and effectively;
- Providing better security to records by reducing the risk inherent with physical documents;
- Providing an opportunity to reduce the physical space requirements needed for corporate records;
- Capturing corporate information more effectively; and to
- Meet Council’s legislative obligations associated with records management.

Sorell Council sought tenders from a number of vendors and decided upon infoXpert, which was an upgrade from the previous implementation at Council, InfoVision. The basis of this decision included functionality, ease of use, and price. The project was led by Heather McKillop, Information Management Coordinator, and the implementation was largely done by internal staff with some assistance from InfoVision Technology during the first week of implementation.

Change management was a significant factor during the implementation, as most employees of Sorell Council had never experienced an EDMS before. One-on-one training was provided to all staff, regular workshops and communications were conducted, and even a competition to name the system was performed in order to increase staff’s awareness of the proposed benefits that were being introduced.

In January 2008, a post-implementation review was performed and it was determined that the project had successfully achieved its objectives. Council staff were pleased about the implementation process and recognised that Council had to move to an electronic system in order to keep up with best practice, to ensure that Council managed the risks for its corporate records, and to ensure that legal obligations were met.

Even though the project is now finished, continual improvement is being performed with the system. Council staff are working closely with InfoVision Technology to request enhancements to the system as new ways to use the EDMS are being identified. Sorell Council is now endeavouring to facilitate integration between the EDMS and other systems such as property and rating, and its geographic information system, as the EDMS is now an integral part of how Council does its business.

To find out more about infoXpert, log on to www.infovision.com.au/.

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Broadband Appointment Timely for Tasmania

The recent appointment of Mark Carrington to the Tasmanian Electronic Commerce Centre (TECC) as Project Officer under the Federal Government’s Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy (DBCDE) Clever Networks program, is timely for Tasmania noted TECC CEO John McCann.

“Mark’s role will be to focus on regional broadband projects and help support Local Government and communities, to increase their understanding and access to broadband infrastructure and network rollout opportunities, as well as identifying and documenting priority areas for new and / or improved broadband services,” he said.

Mark will be travelling to priority regional areas around Tasmania to hold consultations with Local Government, community members and businesses to assist in the development of new and /or improved broadband services, and community members are encouraged to actively participate in this exciting infrastructure program.

Under the Clever Networks Broadband Development Network program managed by DBCDE, the TECC in conjunction with the Department of Economic Development, will collaborate closely in ensuring that the state’s broadband priorities are progressed at the regional and community level.

Given the commitment of the State Government to commercialise its optic fibre through the appointment of Aurora as its strategic partner and the role of OPEL in bringing broadband connectivity, the TECC supports Treasurer Michael Aird’s comments about the potential offered to “deliver high and very high capacity broadband services which are currently not available in Tasmania”. This will open up tremendous opportunities for small and large local businesses as well as pulling in new Internet, telephony and computing services providers.

To find out more, contact Mark Carrington at the TECC on 6211 0401, or email mcarrington@tecc.com.au. Information about the Clever Networks Broadband Development Network program can be found at www.dbcde.gov.au/.

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