



7 Ways to Kill a Website

Browsing various websites and navigating the web can often be a daunting and sometimes frustrating task as you sift through the mounds of garbage to find what you're looking for. There are some excellent websites out there to be sure, but there are also a lot of dreadful ones too.

The web continues to grow in importance for consumers and businesses alike; therefore, the quality of sites needs to keep pace. Creating and maintaining high-quality websites is more important today than ever. Higher quality equals more revenue.

A bad website neglects to consider the site visitor's experience in some fundamental ways. The following are my pet peeves when a website misses the boat.

Too Much Scrolling

Once I scroll down a full screen's worth, my eyes start to blur, my head spins and my interest wanes. Computer monitors really aren't the best medium for reading. If a page requires two full screens of scrolling or more, simply split it up into multiple pages.

Long, Text-Heavy and Blocky Paragraphs of Unbroken Text

I really have to be into a topic or desperately need to learn the information to trudge through big chunks of unbroken text. If I'm just shopping around for a product or service, you've lost me. It is harder to read text on the web than in other mediums such as books. Additionally, web users are notoriously impatient, so make your content easy to read and non-intimidating. Use titles, sub-titles, small paragraphs, bullets and numbering.

Unchanging or Out-Dated Content

If I start reading content on a site and soon discover that the content was written two years ago, I'm gone. My reasoning is that there's got to be comparable information online that's more current. If you keep your content fresh your site will attract repeat visitors. And repeat visitors are more likely to turn into customers.

Long Page Downloads

It's amazing that this is still a problem with cable and DSL. I'm a little impatient, but again, I know there are other sites out there with the same information that will download more quickly, so why wait? I'm gone.

"Me, me, me!" instead of "You, you, you"

Sorry to tell you, but, no one cares about you, your company or your thoughts. What they do care about is what *you* can do for them. Sites that show pictures of the company building or tout their deep philosophy on the way business should be conducted really don't bode well for keeping the interest of site visitors. On the other hand, sites that speak directly to potential customers about how they can solve their problems, make their lives easier, safer, richer or more comfortable, have a much better chance of keeping their audience.



Inconsistent Navigation

Imagine sitting down at a restaurant and the waiter comes over to you and hands you five different menus, one for the appetizers, one for the soups and salads, one for the entrees, one for the desserts, and one for the drinks. Then imagine if each menu had a different format, layout and method for listing the items. I really don't want to work that hard at picking out my dinner, I'm hungry and I just want a meal. Don't make your visitors work hard by expecting them to re-learn your navigation system each time they enter another section of your site. They too are hungry; for useful information and they're even more impatient.

Inconsistent Look & Feel

When the look & feel completely changes from one page to another in a website, I think I am visiting another site, another company, a partner or subsidiary. This screams poor planning and often results from tacking on new sections later after the original site was built. It may be tempting to stray from the original design if adding pages; you may currently have a better design. But wait till you do a complete next-generation re-design of the entire site before introducing a new look & feel. If not, lots of visitors will be scratching their heads with one hand and possibly clicking away with the other.

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