

Pimp Your Website

If you feel that your web site hasn't changed in a long time perhaps some of these ideas will help. You could re-design the whole site or instead just add a few interactive things to make it more interesting. Maybe all you need to do is inject a little life into your website.



Making significant changes on your website is also newsworthy. Email your contacts and let them know that you have installed a new feature or an entirely new website. It is a great way to say "Hey! I am still here!"

Consider adding a feature to your home page that changes on a consistent basis so that visitors are encouraged to check back to see what's new. This could be for example industry updates, a survey poll or a contest.

Here are some varied ideas to consider for your website. It is important not to get too carried away with animation and gadgets. I would suggest that you limit one **chotchkey** per page and don't bombard your visitors with noise and chaos all on one.

Gif Animation

Some of you must be wondering what a Gif is? This is an image format like JPG (pronounced Jay-Peg) only it contain a sequence of frames but it is limited to certain amount of colors. GIF (Graphics Interchange Format) file is limited to 256 colors including one transparent. Gifs are used mostly for menu buttons and blinky advertising banners. They are very optimal and download quickly. Here is a cool place to check out some small animated cartoons that you can download and add to your site: The [Animation Factory](#).

Flash Animation

This is an interactive format that has pretty much no limits. Full color, layers of animation, interactivity and video all packed in what we call a SWF (pronounced swift) file. Games can be made in this medium as well as entire ecommerce websites. There are many Flash artists and Flash programmers on the web, but they represent a minority within the design industry because of the complicated nature of the SWF medium.

I like to use Flash animation in website headers to give life to web pages. It is a great way to express the main selling points of your business. Pictures can fade in and out with text. The more simple your Flash animation is the less expensive

it will be to produce. Here is an example of one we produced not too long ago for [HUNT](#).

Many web sites have what is called a Splash Page where you are given a little logo animation or introduction prior to entering the site. I always warn clients that this fad is getting old and it doesn't help you get indexed very well. I know it is neato, but you can reserve "neato" for on your home page amongst meaningful html text that it better for your search engine optimization. Also, remember that you don't want to frustrate users who are looking for information about your products and services.

Gizmos and Gadgets



These are the most fun and many are free or inexpensive to procure. These cover the gambit, almost anything you can think of. Photo slide shows, news tickers, games and even an aquarium (a must have!). Many can be found at [Google Gadgets](#). Here are some other places; [Widget Box](#), [Yahoo Widgets](#) and [Glitter Tools](#).

If you do not have the capabilities of cutting and pasting content into your website yourself, you will need a web technician to do it for you. Fortunately this is a simple task and would not cost too much to implement.

Here are some useful widget ideas; [Poll Daddy](#) - conduct surveys on your web site, [Weather Forecast](#) is a nice widget to put on your vacation rental website to remind snowbirds how nice it is in Arizona, [Google Slideshow](#) gadget might be used for rotating ads or showing features of a product.

Video & Audio

Probably the most popular way to pimp your website these days is with video and audio. Lets face it, our web patrons are lazy and would gladly click to see and hear information over reading it. This is called "podcasting". I never agreed with this term because for years nobody knew what it meant. However, these days if you are adding webcam videos to your website you are vlogging on your vlog, or video-casting if you prefer.



Got a video camera? Go get some video testimonials or demonstrate how great your products are. It takes a bit a time to edit nice videos, but there are plenty of videographers who would love to help you. Ask [Site Mechanix](#) how you can video a part of your website.

The Possibilities

Many websites are static and have no movement. This is easily remedied with blinky Gifs or stunning Flash presentations. Add some spice to your site! It's fun. It is also easy to be cheesy!

Simply changing the content on your home page is a good start. The home page should be a place to bring stuff from the depths of your website up to the surface. Also, you should be adding fresh content to your site as much as possible. Archive this stuff on your site. Your website hosting becomes digital storage. Content is King right?

Having a web technician to help you will make all this even easier. Knowing what to ask for is half the battle. Many of these ideas presented are easy to implement.

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