How To Design The Website Of Your Dreams
By Jessica Brown

A website can help you to accomplish so much. Not only can websites be used as a sales tool, they can also be a way for you to express yourself. A lot of folks want to have a personal website but have no idea how to build one. Continue reading and learn how you can create your dream website.

Don't neglect cascading style sheets. Using a style sheet makes it easy to give all pages of your site the same look and feel. It also reduces the file size of your pages, as the CSS file can be accessed once on the server and then from the user's local cache thereafter.

Avoid trying to add every new gadget to your website. It can be tempting to make your site look cutting edge by including every new web design option out there but it can end up turning people off. Simple will generally get the job done even better than a flashy layout.

Web design is a subject that you always want to stay informed on. With this in mind, if you have any friends that are also into web design then you will want to keep in contact with them. You can exchange any new information you learn so that you're both on top of your game when it comes to web design.

A successful website needs to work for visitors using any browser, so it is important to test your web pages to make sure they display properly in different browsers. A site that works on Internet Explorer might not display right in Firefox, Google Chrome, or Safari. Test how your pages display with all major browsers prior to launch.

Always mark files that must be opened in an external program with an icon. Many sites host PDF files, and less commonly, DOC files, that must be opened in Foxit Reader and Microsoft Word/OpenOffice, respectively. These files should be marked with an icon representing the file type, and a link to download the appropriate viewer if the user does not have it.

Give your visitors the ability to search your site so that they can more easily find what they are looking for. If someone cannot find what they are looking for right away, their next thought will be to look for a search field. Put this somewhere obvious and include a search button.

Use a descriptive title. Many site owners forget to name their pages, or name them something generic, such as "Welcome Page." Search engines do use title descriptions in their rankings, so make sure you are as descriptive as possible, without going overboard. Make sure it is usable for your viewers and the search engines.

Use a tracking service, rather than displaying your visitor counter for all to read. Many websites still display their counters, yet they do not serve any real purpose. There are many high quality tracking services available, and some are even free. Use these instead of showing off how many people visit you.

Test your website in the most popular browsers and platforms to make sure that it displays correctly. Sometimes scripts that work in one browser may not produce the same results in another browser. So you may need take extra measures, like adding a function for browser detection, in order to ensure that your website will display properly under most conditions.

If you believe your site may be accessed via mobile devices, you will want to keep your designs simple. The use of flash, excessive images, and complicated menus will not translate well to a mobile platform. Keep your page clean and simple, or create a specific mobile site for your users.

For your image tags, always try to include a brief description in the ALT attribute. Not only is this good for search engine optimization, but it is also beneficial to the sight-impaired users who rely on screen readers to describe image tag contents. Make your description short and as descriptive as possible.

Refrain from forcing readers to click on any specific links, but rather let them come to that decision on their own. Do not make a visitor complete a survey in order to receive more information. Also, avoid using popup offers. Forcing viewers to complete surveys or follow links will almost always ruins your website's reputation.

Keep the reading level of your potential visitors in mind when writing website content. They have not all graduated from college or even high school, for example. If you wish to expand your audience, you must first produce content that they can comprehend.

If you're going to choose a software program to aid in the design of your website, you can save some serious cash by choosing a free, open source program. Open source programs are great not only because they're free for public use, but also because they're constantly updated and improved by users with a lot of web know-how.

Learn as you go, adding new skills and techniques for web design. Once you master one facet of web design, move on to the next. This could lengthen the time it takes to build your initial site, but you'll learn how to expertly crank them out by the time you're done.

Focus on how you plan to handle interaction as you're designing a site. Do you have a shout box on the site? Maybe you have a forum or some type of chat room. At the very least, however, you need to have some method by which a visitor can contact you. You cannot remain shut-off from communication.

Don't overuse graphics. Pictures and other interesting graphics can be fun and visually pleasing, but keep in mind that those things take a long time to load on a site visitor's computer. Opinions are also different, so what you think is a great visual touch might be unattractive to someone else. Keep graphics simple and site visitors will better concentrate on your products, services, and content.

As you already know, website can be a vital part of doing business or having a presence on the web. Websites are great for sharing information and making sales. If you are one of the people who wants their own website, then you can easily build on

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