

## TOP TIPS FOR WINNING WEBSITES

If your association's website is due for an overhaul think carefully about how you are going to create an attractive site that will attract new members and increase revenue.

It needs to be a one-stop-shop information source. When new visitors click onto your website you only have about three seconds in which to capture their attention. So taking the right approach to development is crucial.



## TOP TIPS FOR PLANNING WEBSITE REDESIGN AND RELAUNCH PROJECTS

1

### Create a winning strategy

Increase revenue through event bookings, selling training materials and publications. Increase membership with a fast renewals process and lower admin costs.

2

### Understand the market

What do your members want? Conduct member surveys and workshops and monitor member enquiries and comments. Study web analytics to understand how the site is currently being used and whether there's a requirement for mobile access.

3

### Focus on the user

Your goals to increase revenue and membership should drive the design and the way information is displayed on the website. Users should be able to find relevant content quickly and easily. Consider mobile access for convenience.

4

### Design to cross-sell

The way people navigate on websites is changing. Users select links and stories to gain information on areas of interest. Tag all content to category or topic lists relevant to all audiences in order to cross sell events, training materials and publications.

5

### Integrate your website and membership database

All membership data should be stored in one place to provide members with a personalised, comprehensive service whether they are on the website or using email.

6

### Personalise pages

Use category or topic lists to create specialist interest groups and web pages relevant to individual roles and areas of interest.

7

### My Association

This interactive members' area should deliver personalised content to specific members and promote a sense of belonging. It's a hub for advice, ideas, news and profiles and should include a members' search facility, supplier directory and history of member activity and purchases.

8

### Provide a public platform

Encourage interaction from supporters and the general public as well as members. Provide a platform for them to share expertise and experience. Include comment boxes for feedback, forums and group collaboration features.

9

**Put admin and services online** Membership renewals, new member applications, event management and bookings and purchases – get the admin online, integrate it with the member database and save money. Make training courses and CPD (Continuing Professional Development) available online too through podcasts and videos.

10

### Create a social media strategy

Use Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn to raise the profile of your association and its business goals and drive more potential members to your website.

## TOP TIPS FOR CONTINUED SUCCESS

Once your website is live the project has only just started. It's now a 'living' creation that needs investment and good management. Remember to concentrate on revenue generation and giving members what they want.



Drive more traffic to your website through Search Engine Marketing and e-mail campaigns.



Keep web content up to date and improve search engine optimisation. Forums, blog posts and RSS feeds help keep websites updated.



Make sure your web copy is well written. Follow the guidelines of the Plain English Campaign and earn the Internet Crystal Mark accolade.



Review website analytics and document and video download statistics to understand how the new site is being used.



Regularly review your website strategy and budget for site maintenance and improvements. Involve your web developer in discussions on future services and solutions.

## IN OUR EXPERIENCE

According to Business Development Manager, Gavin Thorne from specialist web developer Pixl8, the most common mistakes associations make when developing new websites are:



Not recognising the benefits of a fully integrated website and membership database.



Underestimating the time it takes to create and tag all content prior to go live.



Not dedicating someone with the right skills and experience to manage the website.



Underestimating the cost and resource savings of moving services like renewals online.



Not budgeting for on-going investment to ensure the website evolves with the organisation and changing requirements of its members.

It's also important that associations brief their web development partner fully on their background, philosophy, audiences and aims and business objectives.

*"As web developers we need to know as much about the association as possible," explains Gavin Thorne. "It's this knowledge that enables us to suggest new ideas for site design and functions that not only meet the organisational goals but will deliver the right benefits to members and other users."*

*"In addition to technical expertise and a flare for design and creativity the best web development partners will provide proactive advice and support on your online marketing strategies, search engine optimisation and e-mail campaigns to maximise effectiveness and revenue generation for the business."*

To ensure you provide your web developer with a comprehensive brief get a copy of Pixl8's handy checklist. Email [gavin.thorne@pixl8.co.uk](mailto:gavin.thorne@pixl8.co.uk) For more information on Pixl8's web design and development services see their latest customer case studies at [http://www.pixl8.co.uk/cms/our\\_work/index.cfm/uurl/pcs](http://www.pixl8.co.uk/cms/our_work/index.cfm/uurl/pcs)

For more information or to see a comprehensive demonstration please contact us now.



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