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You Have to Grab Website Browsers in 10 Seconds

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You have to grab website browsers in 10 seconds

Small business owners struggle to identify the role that a website plays in their business.

Your website is a valuable tool that represents your products and services. It should have a distinct purpose and should inspire a desired action in visitors.

No matter if your business sells a product or a service or provides useful content as its main purpose, your website should have clear and attractive content, be well designed and be smartly organized.

Reading on the Web is too much work.

People read Web content 25 percent more slowly than they read print material. So Web content must be clear and attractive. Because Web visitors scan Web pages, you only have 10 seconds — or less — to grab the reader's attention.

According to a study by usability expert Jacob Nielsen, 79 percent of readers on the Web tend to scan or skim text rather than read word for word. Millions of alternative websites are available, and readers will move on quickly if the information they want is not easily found.

If your website is content based, the goal is for you to gain the trust of your visitors with your content.

Provide important and relevant information at the top of the Web page and establish a reputation for providing good content. Bulleted lists and highlighted text help readers get the information they want quickly. Invite visitors to stay in touch by joining your mailing list.

E-commerce sites sell products and services and have a clear purpose.

The site should present the products and services professionally, and the site should have a clear pathway to purchase. The sales process should be as simple as possible and should provide details about shipping, returns and payment options.

Bulleted lists and highlighted text help readers get the information they want quickly.

A well designed website is one that is visually interesting and user-friendly.

The design of the website should be in keeping with the mission and image of the organization. A serious corporation is not going to have cartoons on its site.

4 tips for your site

The following suggestions should help guide you toward a well-designed and smartly organized website:

- **BE CONSISTENT:** Each page in the website should look as if it belongs to the same website.

- **HAVE EASY NAVIGATION:** Navigation bars can be anywhere, but you don't want your visitors to have to hunt for them. Standard positions for navigational buttons are at the top or the left.

- **CONTAIN CLEAR CONTACT INFORMATION:** You want people to find you. Your contact information should be easy to find and on every page.

- **LIMIT THE BELLS AND WHISTLES:** Flash, animated graphics and the like are fun, but one can overload on them. As an example, how many times have you clicked "Skip intro?"

If your website has been put together correctly, it provides value for your business.

If business owners never changed their store presentation, customers would have no interest in coming back to see what is new. A website is no different. You must make your site worth the time of a repeat visit.

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Wendy Woodrum

networking opportunities

American Business Women's Association Meeting

The meeting of the Historic Savannah Chapter of the American Business Women's Association is open to the public. **When:** 6 p.m. Feb. 10 **Where:** Tubby's, Thunderbolt **Cost:** Price of meal **Information:** Call 660-8257.

'Spa Nights' to benefit 2011 Kiss-a-Pig Campaign

The Heavenly Spa by Westin will stay open late three nights to host American Diabetes Association Kiss-a-Pig fundraisers. With a minimum \$50 donation spa-goers receive a full spa treatment. The 19th Annual Kiss-a-Pig Campaign benefits the ADA. Guests have a choice of a 50-minute massage, a 50-minute facial or a manicure and pedicure. **When:** 5-8 p.m. Feb. 10, March 10 and April 14. **Advanced reservations:** Required by calling 912-201-2250.

Coca-Cola marketing exec to speak

Irvin Bishop Jr., director of global interactive marketing for the Coca-Cola Co., will offer a taste of how Coca-Cola approaches interactive marketing during a gathering of

the Technology Association of Georgia. Bishop's appearance is in conjunction with the TAG's Economic Gardening program. **When:** 5:30 p.m. Monday **Where:** ThincSavannah, 35 Barnard St. **Information:** To register or for more information go to GAgrow.com.

Seminar: Is cloud computing right for my business?

Advanced Business Software will offer a seminar to business owners and managers on cloud computing. This seminar will be presented by a team that includes Doug Johnson, vice president of marketing and business development for Acumatica. Topics will include advantages and benefits of cloud computing for small and medium-size businesses. **When:** 11:45 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Feb. 8 **Where:** The Homewood Suites, 5820 White Bluff Road **Information:** Lunch will be served. Seating is limited. Call 912-447-5000 or e-mail Claire@absc-savannah.com.

Live Green workshop series Consumers interested in saving green by going green with practices that reduce energy

consumption are invited to Experience Green's workshop titled "Save Energy... Save Money... Save the Planet." **When:** 6 p.m. Feb. 15 **Where:** Hilton Head Branch Library, 11 Beach City Road, Hilton Head Island, S.C. **Cost:** Free with advanced online registration. **Information:** To register for Experience Green events and learn more, go to experiencegreen.org or call 843-868-1567.

Pooler Chamber's 'Networking and Dessert Social'

The Pooler Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau will host a "Networking and Dessert Social." The gathering is open to the public. **When:** 5:30-7:30 p.m. Feb. 17. **Where:** Holiday Inn & Suites Savannah Airport-Pooler, 103 San Drive **Cost:** \$12 for chamber members and \$15 for non-members. Register and pre-pay by Feb. 11. After Feb. 11 the cost is \$15 for Chamber members and \$18 non-members. Cash bar is available. **Information:** Contact the chamber at 912-748-0110 or poolercrossroads@att.net.

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