

Web Site Design

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E-commerce

Web Development



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The 8 second test

Research shows that you have just 8 seconds to grab your website visitors' interest. They don't call it "web-surfing" for nothing; if you don't grab your visitors' attention and break this pattern of behaviour, then they will hit your site, stay for a few seconds... and then they're gone. Usually forever!

What's the 8 second web test?

1. 8 seconds to impart value to your visitor.
2. 8 seconds to see credibility and stay longer
3. 8 seconds to choose your service

Not a long time. But given the exponential growth of the internet and explosion of information, web users quickly decide if a site has value. What do you do when you go to a site?

So when they do hit your home-page, you need to present them with a clear and pressing reason to stay. And that means a headline. A headline is text, usually black, bold, and big which gives your visitor a big, exciting and compelling promise that if he or she continues reading, you're going to give them some significant reward for doing so. In other words, you're going to have one of the few websites that keeps people for more than 8 seconds.

My guidelines include:

1. Overall look – does the site look credible?
2. Navigation – are the links to information obvious?
3. Design – does it look simple to use or is it cluttered?

Seems like a lot to surmise in about 8 seconds but observe how you research a topic and I think you'll be surprised what you learn.

Carrying out an "eight second test" is one way of seeing if website design is likely to be effective.

That is the view of Google, which has noted that grabbing attention and making things clear are two important elements of website design.

"People are busy and have limited attention spans - you want to keep them from hitting the dreaded back button. Tell them what's in it for them."

Showcasing clear benefits, such as "Save more" and "look better with our product", are advocated as good ideas for website design.

If you are also making use of our [Email Marketing](#) packages, then you have to also make sure the links from it follow the same rules.

Landing pages that pass the eight-second test successfully feature a number of important attributes. Unfortunately, many of the web sites out there failed to grab the attention of customers and prospects, leading them down a clear path to conversion.

- Successful landing pages grab attention quickly by matching the promotional copy in the email's call-to-action that yielded the click. Yet most of the landing pages fail to repeat the email's promotional copy in the headline.
- Catapulting a clicker to a Web site's home page generally fails to deliver on the promise inherent in the email's call-to-action. Yet most email campaigns dumped recipients there.
- Recipients can be taken aback when they click on a link and end up on a landing page without the same look and feel as the email that captured their attention. But at the risk of confusing customers and prospects by sending them to landing page that does not matching the email will yield poor results.
- Asking too many questions can lead prospective customers to become wary and frustrated enough that they abandon the process.
- While the presence of a navigation bar on a landing page can be a distraction that pulls visitors away from the primary conversion goal.
- Professional writers know it's a lot harder to write short copy than long. Scrolling through more than two screens of text is too long for most busy people.

So think of a great headline for your home page, one which really sums up the "big promise" your business makes and encapsulates the overriding reason why people would want to do business with you and not your competitors.

Have a look at your web site visit logs to see how long people stay on your web site for. Your designer should have this information to hand for you.

It can take some time to get this right by using split testing along with measuring your results. We will cover these in another article.

I invite you to post your comments on what you look for in a site. If there is something you like or don't like about our site, don't hesitate to email us. Your feedback is invaluable to better provide value to you. Thank you!

Does this [web page](#) work for you?

Call Develop and Promote on 01522 822520 to get some help.