

Successful websites built on 'good foundations'

Eighty six per cent of UK businesses do not realise building a website should always start with "good foundations".

One of the UK's leading search engine optimisation experts is concerned that only 14% of companies reported that they had thought about how their website would be found on the Internet before they built it.

Head of XSEO, Matt Paines, believes that companies are wasting their money if they do not build websites so they can be found by search engines such as Google, Yahoo and MSN.

"Good foundations underpin the potential success of any website," said Matt. "And it is vital that every website is built so it can be as search engine friendly as possible.

"In the same way a building will fall down if it no has foundations, a website is rendered invisible on the Internet if it is not built in a way that allows it to be easily signposted online.

"Companies still seem to see the appearance, content and functionality of their website as a priority, when in fact arguably the single-most important consideration is having a search engine friendly design."

"If it came down to a simple choice, I'm sure every business would rather have a mediocre looking website which attracts lots of visitors, than one that is stunning but nobody can find it on the Internet."

XSEO conducted the research at February's Technology For Marketing Show (TFM) Search Clinic at Olympia London and Paines, who is one of only two Microsoft Search Engine champs in the UK, was astounded that in this day and age so few companies put SEO on the agenda at the planning stage of a website's construction.

"For many years we, along with other SEO's, and search engines (Google, Yahoo and MSN) have been trying to re-educate web designers to consider search engines and how they navigate websites."

"Building search engine friendly or accessible websites is not complicated, in fact it's relatively easy," he said. "Search engines use simple programs – which are commonly known as robots or spiders - that crawl the Internet looking for websites and their content. If they can access a website they can begin assessing the relevance to any given search.

The search engines use computer programs (often called robots or spiders) that crawl the internet looking for websites and their content. Once this data is collected it is processed and it forms the basis for the search engines to derive the sites relevance to any given search. Being search engine friendly allows them to enter the site and read the content. So conversely having a site that does not give the crawlers access to the readable text will prohibit them from understanding the sites content thereby, destroying any ability of being ranked highly in a search for a product or service.

"It's a shame," he added. "That so many companies waste huge amounts of money on websites, many have bought into the idea that the Internet offers untold riches, but fail to understand that a website is not the end of the story."

He went on to remark that basic marketing principles are often not adhered to. "The results from the TFM Clinic demonstrated that simple planning and consideration regarding target audience and means of attraction are still being disregarded. Given that for media time, the Internet is catching up with that of television, ignoring how they will be found on the Internet and the real measure of its success online will be the nail in the coffin of many companies"

For more information visit www.xseo.com/pitfalls.htm

About the Author

XSEO's MD, Matt Paines, has been involved in the internet since 1995 and has been actively involved in search engine optimisation (SEO) since 1997. He was the only UK SEO invited to participate in the Microsoft Search Engine Champs project, which was first run in 2004. Matt speaks at various local and national seminars on the subject of internet marketing. He also provides services and research an an expert witness in Internet Marketing and Copyright related legal cases. [Good Foundations](#)

