



Intriguing Design Website

Preliminary Findings
Website review

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I like the clean and simple design with a lack of distracting graphics (aside from the animated Intriguing Design text). However, there are a number of deviations from accepted norms that can really hurt your firm.

Usability Problems

First, white copy on a dark background. Studies by Marketing Sherpa and other firms have shown that changing from that set up to dark copy on a white background for the text area can increase conversion rates hugely. People just don't like reading white text on dark backgrounds.

Secondly, you used a serif font, probably Times New Roman. There's a reason everyone uses Arial or Verdana. Sans serif fonts have been proven through usability studies by Jakob Nielsen to be easier to read on a computer screen. Serif fonts are most appropriate for text on paper media.

Marketing Problems

Next, there's no headline to tell people instantly what you have to offer them that's different from hundreds of other web design firms. You can't afford to assume people will actually read your text without a quick and potent headline to intrigue them. You can find several articles on my website about why headlines are so important on web pages and how to write effective ones.

Another problem is the text itself. It's very generic and has no excitement or energy and no sales appeal. I can read the same thing on dozens of other web design firm's Home page. It's not customer oriented and I felt no compunction to contact you. If you're the only web design firm in town, this will work fine. If you have any competitors, it won't.

Lack of Scan-able Text

Lastly, there are no anchored text (text links) in your text, no bullet points, no subheads, and no calls to action within the text or at the end of the text. Also, paragraphs should be brief; no more than three to four sentences.

People on the web don't read. They scan for what they want and then take that in. You can't afford to assume people will read all the text. It must be designed for scanning. And there's no evidence of SEO either, although you offer it.

No Calls to Action

You also assume that people will bother to go to the top of the page and hit the "contact us" button. Your page must have "calls to action" and clickable links within the text for people who don't need to read everything to make their decision.

Another problem I noticed after I left the Home page was that there's no obvious way to get back to the Home page. I finally realized the logo was a link to the Home page. Don't assume everyone who comes to your site will know that the logo is a clickable link to the Home page. That is far from being a web standard feature.

The HTML

```
<head>
<meta http-equiv="pragma" content="no-cache">
<meta http-equiv="Content-Type" content="text/html; charset=iso-8859-1">
<meta name="keywords" content="intriguing designs, intriguing, designs, logo
design, web design, flash, logo, web">
<meta name="description" content="Intriguing Designs is a logo and web design
company that puts the customer first. We work with you from the start of your
project until it is polished to ensure that you are completely satisfied.">
<title>Intriguing Designs - Home</TITLE>
```

Search and SEO Problems

The first problem I see is that the title is the last thing in the head. It must be the first. That is what all search engine spiders expect and they will knock you down for not doing it that way. Also, you have no keywords in your title except for the name of your company. How many people on the web are searching for Intriguing Designs? Or Home? Very few, I'm afraid.

Search engines look at the Title first to determine whether the site has valuable content related to a client's search.

The next problem I see is the keywords. Unless you're a huge web design firm with vast marketing resources, you can't afford to go head-to-head with national firms. But since you have no regional keywords, the search engines will lump you in with national firms that can afford to use generic search terms and no one will find you.

You need to use regional keywords such as Waukesha. Then firms or people in your area who will most likely search for a firm in their area, will find you because you will pop up under a search for Waukesha web design or Waukesha logo design. If there are any other localities nearby where people might search for a local design firm, I'd optimize for them too.

Generic Description

Your description has no sales appeal at all.

Intriguing Designs is a logo and web design company that puts the customer first. We work with you from the start of your project until it is polished to ensure that you are completely satisfied.

First of all, 'published' is misspelled. That doesn't engender a lot of confidence in your firm. Second, people **expect** you to put them first and they **expect** you to work with them until they're completely satisfied. There is nothing in that statement that sets you apart, gives you any wow factor, or gets me excited about clicking on your site.

Conclusion

Pretty much everything I said for the Home page applies to the rest of the site. I hope you don't feel I was being harsh but I believe in being honest with business people. If you'd like to discuss your site or look at making some improvements, don't hesitate to call me at 612-226-7667 or email me at bob@wordsmithbob.com.

At either rate, I highly recommend you visit my site and read some of the articles. There are also links in my portfolio to sites I've written that might give you some ideas. You'll also find some very useful hints, tips and tricks in the articles for improving your site from a usability, SEO and conversion standpoint. Good luck!

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