

Tips To Make Your Website Load Faster

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Sample of Content:

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Content:

Your web pages have great content, a nice design. So why are people not clicking through to other parts of the site? In many cases, the problem is the load time. People are abandoning your site for the simple reason that it just takes too long for the thing to load! How Fast Does It Need to Be? Fast load times are extremely important: usability studies say users rate them as one of the most important things about a website. Users would much rather use a quick-loading site of average quality than a great site that loads slowly. You have no doubt done this yourself at some point. What is the limit? Ten seconds according to certain studies. These studies say that over a third of users will leave a website that does not load within that time. You are probably thinking that in the age of broadband, download speeds do not matter. But remember that in the US, over half of all Internet users are still using slow dial-up connections (if you are, you

have my sympathy). Other countries do not have quite as many dial-up connections left, but broadband is certainly nowhere near universal. So, you need to pay attention to the size and download speed of your site. Those 10 seconds on a 56k dial-up connection correspond to about 70KB in page size. That means that your HTML and graphics should add up to 70KB as an absolute limit. That is quite a stringent requirement, and makes every byte count. Reduce Graphics. The first thing you need to do is keep the number of graphics to a minimum. Do not have graphics for things where text or CSS would do, or where they do not enhance your information or design significantly. You should consider the web to be a text medium, and justify every graphic. Compress Your Graphics. Once you have removed the unnecessary graphics, you might consider compressing the ones that remain. Try turning up the JPEG compression higher, or reducing the number of colors. You might try using a GIF, if your graphics do not have very many different colors. If you cannot compress the graphics any smaller, you could always resize your graphics to make them smaller! Clean Up Your HTML. You would be surprised just how bloated HTML code can get with unnecessary tags, especially if you use a WYSIWYG editor, or design your site using tables. Design your site using CSS as much as you can, and use HTML Tidy (or another HTML cleaning program) to clean up your HTML. Do not ignore the extra bandwidth taken by CSS, though, and try to keep that as small as possible too. In many cases, a simple cleaning-up process can reduce the download size by as much as half - it is especially effective for pages that contain long articles because of the number of unnecessary tags many editors insert at the start of new paragraphs. Switch Web Hosts. Sometimes, despite all your efforts, your site still loads slowly. In these cases, your web host may be to blame. Test from a few different connections and computers to make sure. Try testing the speeds by putting up a completely different page. If it is consistently bad, then it may be time to move hosts. First email your host about the problem and give them a week or so to fix it, as they may just be having short-term problems. When you are switching hosts for speed, look around at sites that are already fast. Find out who they are hosted by and do a search for hosted by [hosts name](with the quote marks).Then, you can check out several sites hosted by that particular host to check out speed.

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