

The Lion Pages

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Finding a Website Designer That Fits Your Needs

In today's competitive business world a website is no longer an optional perk; it is a must have. The creation, design, and upkeep of a website can be a daunting task, especially for small business owners. To alleviate some of the burden, many business owners turn to a professional website designer. So how does one go about hiring a designer to create their website? What should someone look for in a designer?

Before approaching a designer to take on your project decide exactly what your project entails. Clearly define your goals and the purpose of your site. Prepare a list of uses you envision for your site to provide your designer with a concrete idea of what you need.

When it is time to se-

lect a designer, be sure to talk to at least three prospects and view their past work. It is important to find a designer that understands your style and with whom you are comfortable. A good way to find designers is by word of mouth. Ask fellow business owners who they employed to create their website. Often times a referral from another business can lead you exactly where you need to go.

When looking for a designer, try to find someone who is:

-familiar with the industry

-knowledgeable in cutting edge design trends

-respectful of your budget, time frame, and objectives

If hiring any designer is outside of your budget, but you

are hesitant to create a site on your own, contact a local university or high school and propose your project as a class assignment. Many universities offer web design classes that may take on the opportunity to create an actual website for a business.

A good designer will answer all your questions about maintaining your website and how to make it work for you. Having a website is becoming more and more important: each day a business is without one is a missed opportunity. In today's volatile market, businesses have to seize every chance possible to stay ahead. Creating a website is one chance you do not want to let pass you by.

U CITY ACQUIRES COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES ON OLIVE

Many exciting activities have been occurring along Olive Boulevard to further the corridor's physical and economic rejuvenation. In addition to developing the award winning Olive Boulevard Design Standards and making significant streetscape improvements, the City has begun actively purchasing properties along Olive Boulevard.

To date, five properties at the northeast intersection of the Olive Boulevard and North and South Road have been acquired by the City, through its Land Clearance Redevelopment Authority (LCRA) and Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District. The City plans to facilitate and support the private redevelopment of this area, with an overall goal of providing a

new mixed-use development for the community.

More properties along the Olive Boulevard corridor may be purchased by the City in the near future.

For more information about the Olive Boulevard acquisitions, contact Lehman Walker, Director of Community Development at (314) 505-8502.

Nixon's 6 Step Plan to get Missouri Back to Work

New Missouri governor Jay Nixon is taking a proactive approach to getting through these tough economic times. He has announced the first steps of the Show Me JOBS initiative, which is a bi-partisan plan to get Missourians back to work and support small-business growth. Nixon introduced the plan by first saying, "During these tough economic times, we must come together, across party lines, to get Missourians working."

"In the Senate, we are committed to working early on with the Governor-elect to pursue responsible, job-creating legislation. We share the common goal of putting more Missourians to work at better-paying jobs with good health care benefits."

*-Senate Majority Leader
Charlie Shields*

The proposed steps to jump start state employment are:

1. Provide low-interest loans specifically for small businesses
2. Expand the Missouri Quality Jobs Program
3. Create incentives for worker training and retraining
4. Coordinate all state actions with federal efforts
5. Establish an Automotive Manufacturing Task Force
6. Foster expansion of Missouri businesses

For more information go to www.govelect.mo.gov



Love in the Loop



February 14th

CHECK OUT THE DELMAR LOOP'S NEW WEBSITE

The newly designed website was unveiled in late 2008 and includes eye-catching photos and helpful links to Loop businesses and activities.

Speaking of Loop activities, do not forget about Love in the Loop on February 14th!

<http://visittheloop.com/>

10 TIPS FOR BUILDING YOUR BUSINESS'S WEBSITE

With the internet becoming such an active part of today's market, many business owners develop a website to promote their enterprise. If you are considering a website for your business, keep in mind the following tips:

Lay out your objectives. Decide if you want to sell, inform, entertain, educate, be a portal etc.

Know your audience. Attract those who will already be looking for you but don't alienate those who may have not heard of you yet. In other words, even though your business may be cutting edge, be wary of appearing too trendy.

Decide how to present your information. Take your brand and company personality into account. Your website format should help, not hinder users from perusing your site.

Structure your information.

Draft on paper how users will move around the site, and test the structure. This step will dissolve any underlying structural problems and clarify important areas to highlight.

Choose a style. Base it off your brand identity. There are many excellent pre-designed templates to choose from on the internet if you do not feel the need to start from scratch.

Build a site map. Make sure your site has a reference point that your visitors can return to in order to find the information they need.

Have a privacy policy. If your site asks for any information from the visitor this is a must.

Test and retest. Have others use the website with you so you can discover any problems you may have missed.

Get feedback. Install Google

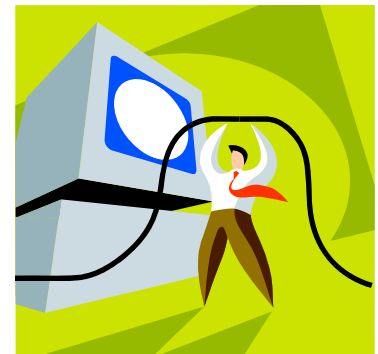
Analytics or a similar program to gain information and feedback about your visitors.

Tweak it. Web statistics can help you find positive ways to update your site.

Sources:

www.mindspringdesign.com

www.webdesign.org



The Lion's 100 Year Birthday Bash



Did you know that the lions statues on Delmar Boulevard will be 100years old this year? To celebrate this occasion, the 100 Year Birthday of our Lions, Birthday Bash Committee is actively seeking businesses and organizations to purchase a fiberglass life-sized Lion (like

the Chicago Cows) to be decorated and put on display around the city from June to September in celebration of the Lion's Birthday. The price of each lion in \$3,000, which includes the cost of the lion, the artist stipend, marketing materials and maps. If your neighborhood, business, or other organizations would

like to purchase a lion or just want to make a donation for the other activities in the celebration, please contact Ed Nickels at 726-6168 or ed.whitedog@sbcglobal.net or Petree Eastman at 725-7632 or petreeeastman@gmail.com.



DID YOU KNOW?

The Department of Community Development maintains information that may be helpful to your existing or expanding business. This information includes brochures, a booklet of local and state economic development programs and services, population and employment statistics and more. Contact the Department at (314) 505-8516 for more information.

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We're on the web!
www.ucitymo.org

New Business District Forms in U City

In May of 2008, an energetic group of business owners and community leaders in the Delmar Boulevard and I-170 area met to discuss how to collectively promote their businesses. The group decided to create a recognized, legitimate forum for exchanging ideas and addressing the business needs of the area. Over the next few months, a formal "merchant's association" was formed. The association, aptly named

Delmar@170 Business District, includes all commercial properties on the north and south of Delmar Boulevard, Lepere Street to the west and Old Bonhomme Road to the east. Over 150 business fall within these boundaries. Membership is voluntary and funds are generated through dues.

The focus of Delmar@170 is to create an identity for the area, market businesses, and represent members at various forums. In the

few short months since its inception, the district created a strategic plan and is currently working on implementing projects. The first major project to be undertaken is the creation of a professionally designed website.

For more information about the Delmar@170 Business District, contact Brendan Bradley, President, at (314) 432-2905 or Dave Rosenboom, Vice President at (314) 997-2308.

