



WICKED CLEVER DESIGNS

Optimize your Website!

(for search engines and humans)

1. Discover your mission.

So I guess you have a business. What is it that you do? Why do you like doing it? What makes you different from other people who do things like that? Are you more hard-working? Is your technology better? Is your business the friendliest in town? Or the smartest? Or the most honest?

Why do I want it to be YOUR company crawling around under my kitchen sink? Or training my dog? Or giving me relationship advice?

Answer these questions clearly and with passion – write down the answers. This is your first step in building a genius web presence.

2. Go undercover.

The next step is to take on the identity of your dream customer.

Lucking you can do this legally and privately, in the comfort of your own office.

Imagine that you are someone who needs the services that you provide. Go ahead and Google it. What do you automatically type into the little box when you imagine that you are looking for YOU?

Try typing in five-or-so phrases you might use to look for your business.

Then take a deep breath. Go ahead and click on the links that pop up.

Do they make you jealous? That's ok. Take another deep breathe. Maybe have a sip of coffee, or a nibble of chocolate, or take a little walk...

Now sit back down and take a close look at your competitors. Especially the ones who are really

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convincing. Take some notes. Write down everything that they have, that you wish YOU had.

And by the way... you know those search terms you typed in? Make sure the wording of your site uses those phrases!

3. Take a vision quest.

Now it's time to imagine your own fantasy website. Close your eyes and see if you can picture it. Colors, logo, layout content, everything. Sketch a picture, or write a description if you are so inclined.

4. Simplify.

Here is your opportunity to make your website BETTER than your vision.

Research shows that the average web-surfer reads no more than 28% of the content of a web page. And pages with more text get read less. That means you need to have your message right out there, front and center, and not in fine print. The shorter and sweeter you can make it, the better. Can you explain to someone why your business is great in ten words or less? Perfect! Your own front page is where to do just that. In a large, bold font.

Further research shows that people become anxious and even depressed when presented with more than six or seven options. That means that if your site includes a ten item top-menu and a fifteen item sub-menu, some people will be too overwhelmed to make a decision about where to go next.

The might be so overwhelmed that they leave your page for a simpler one.

The upshot? Think long and hard about organizing your content so people can get the information they need quickly and calmly.

5. Give it away.

Don't forget, people go to the internet to find information. If your site contains the information people want, they will find you! So go ahead and give away your secret sauce. At least a taste of it. That lets people know that you know your business.

You might also try giving away your REAL secrets to those who sign up for your mailing list. :)

6. Socialize!

Even if you yourself would never be caught dead "tweeting" your business can and should have its own social life. Nowadays many people are hooked in to Facebook and Twitter 24/7 via their mobile devices. If your business has a new product, a new promotion, a new award, or a newly completed project, go ahead and shout it out. You'd be amazed at who's listening.

As long as you're at it, put those awesome videos of up there on Youtube, and set up a Yelp account too! A few great videos or great reviews can drive plenty of traffic to your site. And yes, you need all those tiny Facebook/Twitter/YouTube buttons on your site.