

WEBSITE DESIGN CHECKLIST



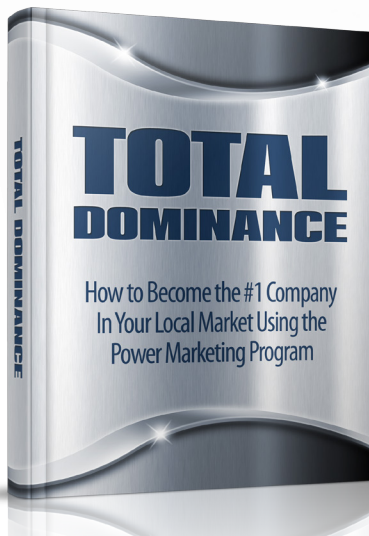
ROCKET
SOCIAL MARKETING

Use this guide before you begin building your website to ensure that your website maximizes its potential for your company.

3 THING YOU SHOULD NEVER SAY ON YOUR WEBSITE

(That I guarantee you're already saying)

Yes, it's true—there are 3 forbidden phrases that you should never use on your website (or any marketing piece) because they will make your results dismal. And yes, I can guarantee you are already using these phrases right now.



You can read about the problem with platitudes in this book. Give us a call and we'll loan you a copy!

The 3 forbidden phrases that you should never use on your website are phrases that include **platitudes**. A platitude is defined as *“words or phrases that are dull, obvious, or predictable that lack power to create interest because they are overused, that are still commonly used as though they were unique or distinctive.”*

These are words and phrases like: highest quality, biggest selection, largest inventory, best service, been in business since 1776 BC, family owned, gets the job done right the first time, fast, residential and commercial, free estimates, locally owned and operated, #1 in satisfaction, we're better, why pay more, lowest prices, we care, conveniently located, professional, experienced, affordable, board certified, we're different, advanced techniques, call today, dependable, etc.

I'm not saying that you shouldn't actually be these kinds of things, but I am saying that they are all platitudes. Every one of these statements and phrases are dreadfully commonplace and predictable, they lack power to evoke interest through overuse or repetition, and they were nevertheless stated as though they were original or significant. In modern day advertising (and especially in videos), platitudes rule the roost. Take a look at your website right now—I guarantee it's loaded with platitudes. If you don't think your website has platitudes, then put

your website through these 3 evaluations and see for yourself:

PLATITUDE EVALUATION 1 – Well, I Would Hope So!

I want you to take a look at any statement on your website and ask yourself if a customer or prospect could or would automatically respond with the statement, “Well, I would hope so.” Here's a perfect example—how about a website for a personal injury attorney that says, “We help you when you've been injured.” Well, I would hope so—you're a personal injury attorney, right? What else would you do? Or, how about this web video for a CPA where his clients give testimonials that say, “We really like our CPA.” Well, I would hope so! What are they going to say, “Our CPA stinks, and he never calls us back or has our stuff ready on time!” Everybody is going to say great things about themselves if they can get away with it. Examples like these are infinite, but I think you get the point by now.

PLATITUDE EVALUATION #2 – Who Else Can Say That?

Pay close attention to this one because the question is not who else can do what you do, but who else can say what you say. The answer is usually anyone and everyone.

Here's a headline from a local bank who says that they make you “a member of the family.” Who else can say that? How about every single bank on the planet—that's who! What about this other bank who says that they “care.” Really, you care? Who else can say these things? Anybody can! See, these statements are dreadfully commonplace and predictable, and they lack power to evoke interest. And you know what, they

were nevertheless stated as though they were original or significant. Take a careful look at your website. Read any claim that you've made and then ask yourself this, "who else can say that?" If any competitor can say it, then your website failed the evaluation.

PLATITUDE EVALUATION #3 – The Cross Out / Write-in Test

For this evaluation, I'm going to have you cross out the name of your company on your website and then write in the name of your competitor. Now tell me this, is the website still valid? If so, you've just failed the test. Another way to illustrate this is to do it in reverse. Cross out your competitor's name on their website and then replace it with your company's name. Now tell me, is the website still valid? I mean really. I don't care if you absolutely know that you have higher quality than your competitor because your competitor can still say that they have higher quality than you even if it's not true.

I can give you a million examples like this on websites, but go ahead and check for yourself. Here's the deal—if you will eliminate platitudes from your website immediately, you will start to see better results—sometimes **exponentially** better!

THE NUMBER ONE PROBLEM WITH MOST WEBSITES

Most business owners think about design when it comes to having a new website developed, but virtually nobody spends any effort considering the content. This is the biggest problem with most websites and most web design companies—they always focus on design or appearance and not *content*.

I can show you case after case where "ugly designs" completely trump beautiful designs simply because the content was developed in such a way to cause visitors to take action, or to otherwise facilitate the decision making process. Black text on a white background can easily convert visitors into paying customers if the message is right. Likewise, beautiful award winning designs can win you compliments, but who cares about compliments if they don't turn into paying customers, right?

If your web design company asks you questions like, "what colors do you like?" or "what do you want your website to say?" or "when can you get the content of your website to me?" then you should probably look elsewhere. This shows that they have no focus on effective content.

At Rocket Social Marketing, we are different because we include strategic marketing consulting with all of our web design packages. We use our proprietary **Power Marketing Program™** to create strategic marketing content for your website before we even begin the actual design process.

HOW TO TEST YOUR WEBSITE TO SEE IF IT'S ACTIVELY ENGAGING YOUR PROSPECTS

This test is probably not what you were expecting. But here's what you need to do—think back to the time when you had your website created for your company. Now here's the question—how much did you pay to have the content of that advertisement strategically created and formulated to ensure maximum results? If you're like most businesses, you probably paid nothing, right? 99.9% of the time, you only paid to have the website *designed*. The content was usually just thrown together by the designer or the



salesperson! But most of the time, the designers ask you to provide them with the content, right?

Think about it—the most important part of your website—that is, the content and message—was either ignored by the designer or put together for free by the designer (who usually doesn't have any idea how to create good messaging anyway). And have you ever heard the saying, "you get what you pay for?" Well, I hate to tell you this, but if you never paid anybody to create the actual message or content for your website, then you got what you paid for.

Another way to test this out is to simply look at your existing website analytics and see how long people are spending on your website on average. If they're not spending 2 to 3 minutes or more, then you're probably not engaging them.



4 REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD NOT USE YOUTUBE TO HOST YOUR VIDEOS

When posting videos online, 9 out of 10 businesses use YouTube as their video hosting provider. This is a bad idea. You really should not use YouTube as a video hosting provider (i.e. to embed your videos on your own website) for the following 4 reasons:

1. If you use YouTube as a video host, then it means that your website visitors are just one click away from YouTube. This could cause your visitors to actually use your website as a portal to YouTube—and within minutes, they're watching funny cat videos, and they forgot all about you! At Rocket Social Marketing, we can show you how to use YouTube to send traffic to your website, instead of sending traffic from your website to YouTube.
2. Mobile Users who are using an iPad, iPhone, or other mobile device will often be forced to the YouTube app on their mobile device when they click to play your video. Again, this drives your customers and prospects away from you. This is even worse on a mobile device because they've actually left their mobile web browser and opened up another app (the YouTube app). So, they can't just push the "back" button to go back to your website—they have to close the YouTube app and go back to the web browser app.
3. Unless you manually disable the feature (and most people don't), once your video is done playing, YouTube will display multiple thumbnails of other videos to entice viewers to watch something else. Oftentimes, the videos on display could actually be your competitors since they would likely be using similar keywords. In other words, using YouTube to embed videos on your website can actually drive your visitors to your competition (seriously, it happens).
4. Believe it or not, the most important element of your video, in terms of getting people to actually click "play" is the thumbnail (aka posterframe). This is the still image that is displayed on the video before someone presses play. YouTube simply does not allow you to create a customized thumbnail. More often than not, you have to choose between 3 thumbnails that look ridiculous (especially if the thumbnail is a freeze-frame of you in the middle of speaking). Your thumbnail needs to contain a headline that captures the prospect's attention and makes them want to press play. YouTube simply doesn't allow this. Take a look at this example. The image on the left is an actual thumbnail of one of our videos on YouTube, and the one



The YouTube App on your mobile device often activates when users visit your website from their mobile device and watch a YouTube embedded video.

on the right is the same video with a customized thumbnail on our website. Which one would you be more inclined to click and watch?



This is the actual thumbnail for one of our videos on YouTube (the thumbnail is generated by YouTube).



This is the EXACT SAME video hosted on our website with a customized thumbnail. (Yes, it has rounded corners on the video.)

At Rocket Social Marketing, we host our client's videos for them and triple encode all of our videos for our clients so that they play back seamlessly in HD (high definition), SD (standard definition), and on mobile devices without forcing visitors to leave the page. And yes, they work perfectly on iPads and iPhones, everytime—even when streaming over cellular networks. Additionally, we always custom create a video thumbnail so that visitors to your website will want to push play and actually watch your video.

CONSIDER YOUR WEBSITE'S POSITION WITHIN A SALES CYCLE

This is the very first and most important step in building a website, and it is most commonly overlooked. In short, you need to consider why people would be coming to your website in the first place and then properly manage your website content to take advantage of the sales cycle.

For example, imagine a long line from 1 to 100. The number 1 represents the moment at which people begin to think about buying whatever it is that you sell. The number 100 represents the moment at which they make the actual purchase. Let's call this line from 1 to 100 the "Sales Cycle." A lot goes on during this sales cycle, and you need to think about where your prospects and customers are on this cycle when they come to your website. If they are low on the cycle—from 1 to 30—then your website should serve to immediately push them into an educational sales system to further facilitate the decision making process.

If they are high on the sales cycle—say from 70 to 99—then your website should serve to immediately close the deal by facilitating the purchasing process.

Checklist:

Write down the top 3 reasons why someone would be visiting your website:

- *(example 1) They are researching companies in my industry to determine from whom they want to buy.*
- *(example 2) They have heard about our company, and they are researching our company specifically.*
- *(example 3) They are following up on a marketing piece or advertisement that listed our website address.*

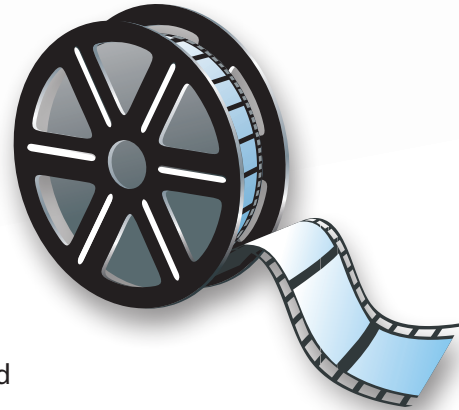


Questions:

- Does your website immediately answer the question that the majority of your customers have in mind when visiting your website?
- Are the links to the top 3 answers immediately available and recognizable within about 3 seconds when a visitor scans your website's main landing page?
- Does your website facilitate the visitor's decision making process?

USE OF VIDEO

Video is an incredibly powerful tool that should be appropriately used on your website. However, it is important to ensure proper use of video so that your customers do not have a frustrating experience.



Questions:

- Does your website include a homepage video?
- Does your main video have a customized thumbnail with a powerful headline that gives visitors an obvious and immediate reason to click play?
- Is your main video scripted so that it offers real value to the visitor (in terms of satisfying their need for specific information)?
- Is the video properly encoded so that it plays back properly on mobile devices?
- Are you using YouTube as a host? (You really should not use YouTube as a host for your videos on your own website.)

If you are using YouTube as a video hosting provider, make sure you have turned off the suggested videos feature and set up a third party player so you can customize your video thumbnail.

CALL TO ACTION

Your website should have a call to action on the landing page (or pages). The call to action should ask the visitor to take the next step in the buying process. It could be an opt-in form, a phone call, a download, etc.

- Does your website have a clearly visible call to action?
- Does the call to action offer legitimate value to the visitor?



SOCIAL MEDIA INTEGRATION

Now more than ever, it is very important to integrate social media with your website. Google, in particular, is using "social media signals" as a stronger factor in their algorithm for search engine results.



Facebook:

- Do you have a Facebook Business Page?
- Have you customized your Facebook Fanpage timeline header?
- Do you have a customized offer with an opt-in strategy on your Facebook page?
- Are you regularly posting content to your Facebook page?
- Are you posting photos and videos on your Facebook page?
- Are you gaining relevant followers and likes?
- Do you have a specified Facebook strategy (what to post, when to post, and how to grow your followers)?



Twitter:

- Does your business have a Twitter account?
- Have you customized your Twitter page with your branded image?
- Are you posting regular tweets to your account?
- Are you utilizing relevant keywords in your tweets and account info?
- Do you have relevant followers?
- Do you have a specified Twitter engagement strategy?



YouTube:

- Do you have a YouTube channel?
- Is your YouTube channel customized with your company's branded image?
- Are you regularly posting new videos to your channel?
- Are you utilizing relevant keywords in your videos?
- Are you using YouTube to generate new leads?
- Do you have a specified YouTube strategy?



MOBILE COMPATIBILITY

It's critically important for your website to work properly with mobile devices (like iPads, iPhones, and Android devices). This means you must make sure that your website does not use Flash®. Additionally, you want to be sure that your website is using the most recent standardized code like HTML5 and CSS3.

The best option is to create a separate mobile website that is designed specifically for the screen sizes of mobile devices. A mobile website should usually be small (about 5 pages or so) and should prominently feature your contact information so that your business can immediately be called from the user's mobile device.



SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

Search Engine Optimization is critically important to ensure that your prospects can actually find your website online. Unfortunately, SEO companies are famous for taking your money and providing no results. You can protect yourself from this frustration by doing the following:

- Only work with an SEO company that offers complete transparency in their SEO processes. They should tell you everything that they are actually doing on a daily/weekly/monthly basis so you know exactly what you are paying for.
- Only work with a company who is willing to meet with you face-to-face. It's preferable to work with a local company, but if there are no professionals in your city, then you should at least find a company willing to have online video meetings with your team. Face-to-face interaction is critical to openness, honesty, and clarity in expectations.
- Only work with an SEO company that offers some sort of guarantee or method of accountability for their services. If you don't get results, you shouldn't have to pay.
- Never pay for SEO services upfront. You should not pay for "setup" fees. SEO service is a monthly service fee and you should not have to incur any additional "one-time" costs.

To ensure that you know everything you need to know about Search Engine Optimization for your business, call us right now at (256) 585-6780 to request our FREE Report, ***"Search Engine Optimization—What in the World Am I Actually Paying For?"***

Call NOW to Schedule Your FREE "Website Leverage Analysis"

If you're sick and tired of "Free Consultations" that turn out to just be sales calls, then you're going to love our FREE *Website Leverage Analysis*. During this 35 minute analysis, an Account Executive from Rocket Social Marketing will review your existing website, marketing strategies, and marketing goals. This information will go back to our main office where one of our Marketing Consultants will analyze all the gaps and missed opportunities in your current website (and overall marketing program). You will also be shown where opportunities with "Marketing Leverage" exist and how you can take advantage of them—specifically on your website.

**We Can Only Work with ONE Company In Your Industry So
Don't Let Your Competitors Beat You To It—CALL NOW!**



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