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Web Site Best Practices

... for a more effective site

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own your site

- make sure you have records for all pertinent information for your site:

  - domain name
  - hosting
  - email accounts

- all this material should be in the name of your company so future updates and ownership are controlled by you

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keep it current

- update, update, update

- make sure you have a schedule for updates and know who will do them

TIP: change out something on your home page

i.e. place for current news, fun facts, monthly announcement

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is your site working?

- checkout your site on at least 4 different browsers
  - Internet Explorer 6&7/8
  - Firefox
  - Safari
  - Opera

- check in periodically

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keep your home page clean

- have 4 things very prominent and easy to find:
  1) logo/company name
  2) message

     who are you? what are you trying to do? (can be said with images)
  3) site navigation

     keep it minimal and easy – perhaps divide into two parts
  4) something important they need to know

- use your home page to either:
  1) direct the user to a specific part of your site
  2) get them quickly to the information the majority of your visitors use

read your stats

- find out the stats for your website and check periodically
  - through your host
  - something like Google Analytics

- craft you site, and particularly the home page, to serve those stats

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optimize your site for search engines

- make your site easy for web crawlers to index
  - write text with pertinent information -- “located in Charleston, SC”

- give as much info as you can
  - use “titles” and “meta” tags like “keywords” and “description”
  - use text, not images, for the body of the page
  - use “alt” for images to add more information

- add your URL to Google, Bing and Yahoo
  - create a Web Developers account

- “become an expert”

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up the traffic

- put your URL on everything
- get a link and your URL on other sites
- use social media outlets
- pay for search engine placement

TIP: give people a reason to visit and use the site

i.e. changing info, contest

Questions?