

## Warthog Web Design

### Warthog Philosophy

#### Keep it Simple Stupid

Websites vary enormously in appearance, content and functionality. Our job is to design a website that works, which means it must attract traffic both to and through the site and persuade a portion of that traffic to do business with the site owner.

We do not go in for huge graphics, Flash animation (or animation of any sort).

Instead, the emphasis on all our sites is on usability. At every stage we decide whether what we are doing to a site is making it better or worse. We know that a usable site is one that will please visitors and pleased visitors are more likely to do business than irritated visitors.

#### Content is King

The *raison d'être* of any website is the content. If there was no content, what would be the purpose of the site? And yet, it is the content that is usually only attended to last.

The content has to be:

- Clear and concise
- Free of excessive adjectives and claims
- Free of acronyms and jargon
- Easy to read by those for whom English is not native
- Written in plain English
- Persuasive
- Informative
- Knowledgeable
- Focussed on a particular topic per page

#### The Home Page

The first thing both human visitors and search robots see of your site.

Humans

If the site is slow – more than 30 seconds will lose you half your visitors.

If the site is 'in your face' with vivid colours, it intimidates visitors and makes it difficult for them to see what is of value to them.

If the site looks a mess – ditto.

#### Search Robots

These pieces of software need to know what your site is about if they are to display it in search results when a human types in keywords to Google.

If the content is full of adjectives, jargon, abbreviations, tortured English, typos poor grammar etc., it will confuse search engines. Any additional, non relevant text will serve only to dilute the message that you want to get over.

The Home page in particular has to have a high 'keyword density' which means that there should be multiple references both as words and phrases to whatever it is you do.

Do not make the Home page too long – 300 words or so is sufficient. Making it long does not reinforce your message; it simply dilutes and confuses both humans and search robots. Search engines will not read more than the first three paragraphs anyway.

Although there is more flexibility on the other pages of the site, the same principles should be followed.

### **Paragraphs**

Keep them very short

### **Listed Items**

Use bulleted lists for efficient information transfer – no more than 7 items per list (people will forget long lists)

### **Colours**

Keep them muted which is easy on the eye and enables bright colours to be used to pick out areas of interest.

Use no more than three colours. Different shades of the same colour is fine,