

Stickiness: Attract & Keep Website Traffic!

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Design, navigation, content, visual appeal are all important aspects of a well done website. The reasons for having a website are multiple - people create them for a variety of purposes. The main goal of any website is more or less common for virtually every website - to attract and reattract visitors - in other words, to build traffic.



You can have an amazing design, but if there is no traffic coming regularly to your site, no one gets to enjoy it except you. There are several activities you can incorporate into your web design to attract traffic. These combined strategies comprise a certain characteristic common to highly visited sites - this is the quality of stickiness.

Making your site sticky isn't just about getting people to come to check out your site. It also means encouraging them to spend some time there - make them not want to leave. You also want them to come back. Hopefully, they will come back over and over again. This obviously means you need to offer something worth looking at, worth reading. In other words - you need invaluable and appealing content.

Content that Mesmerizes

The easiest way to keep them coming back is to offer well written, interesting and relevant content within a well designed, aesthetic site environment. Not all of us feel confident writing web content. It is a skill that improves with practice and perhaps a brushing up on your literary knowledge. Make your content rich, accurate and valuable. This is the way to develop die-hard loyal traffic. They keep coming back for the updates. They engage in the generous content you present to them on a regular basis. It's not good enough though to offer wonderful articles and so on if your setting is slow loading, drab or littered with flashing images and dysfunctional frames or java script. You need to house your gems of wisdom in an attractive and fully functional layout. This is key to building a loyal following.

Bells and Whistles

Many designers use entertaining interactive web components to keep people coming to their sites. This can be a very smart move - but do it judiciously. Nothing looks worse than a site slowed down by slow loading games, quizzes that don't work or conflicting gaudy gadgets. If you are going to use add-ons like free email, free webpages, games, auctions, chatrooms, message boards, quizzes and so on, make sure you choose the best ones. Or better yet, develop them yourself.

In either case, make sure you can customize the layouts to match the rest of your site. And ensure any java or database code used works! All additional components need to function well, every time. Nothing drives people away faster than code that freezes up their monitor or activities that bombard them with pop up ads, ugly layouts or tinny midi music. Make sure that you use "extras" that actually complement your content - the theme of your site. If you have a health site, use quizzes or activities that focus on health, and so on. Create a warm community feel to your site - a sure-fire way to increase your site's stickiness.

Keep It Sticky, Not Stuck

You want people to spend time on your site, but not because it takes so long to figure out how to navigate the various activities. You want every part of your site to function like a well-oiled superbly made machine. If you are selling goods or services, facilitate their passage through the process. Make it clear, step by step what they need to do to successfully purchase



your wares. If you offer interactive features that require plug-ins, provide access to these add-ons, right from your site - on the same page. If you offer photo or art galleries, compress the images and arrange everything to download quickly and completely. Make the journey through a site a magical and enjoyable one - so much so, that they want to tell all their friends and colleagues about it.

Make It Worth Their While

In the long run, the best way to build a readership or attract repeat customers is to make their visit to your site meaningful. People are habitual. They frequent sites that give them value, that foster interest, that fulfill a need. Give them what they came for. Make everything on your site meaningful, purposeful, accurate and useful. Your content may only appeal to a select sector of the cyber community. That's fine. But make it truly valuable to your intended audience. If you want them to keep coming back, you HAVE to make it worth their while!

Web Resources

The article [**Stickiness in an Etailing Environment**](#) presents a useful model based on Content, Usability and Personalization to create Stickiness.

[**Free Sticky.com**](#) is a source of FREE and low cost content that anyone can use to increase the appeal, usefulness, traffic and eventually the stickiness of their website.

[**Coming Back for More**](#) is an article by Charles Tyler who offers insight into the process of creating stickiness on a website.

[**Drivers of Stickiness**](#) is an excellent academic overview of the process, enhanced with illustrations.

[**Make Your Site Sticky**](#) is another great article, from Gwalior World about how to keep them coming back.