

# TRAVEL WEB DESIGN - NOT A PIECE OF CAKE



Internet has become one of the most powerful marketing tools in many industries. To gain new customers companies pay huge sums of money to their web designers. This is also true for tourism businesses. The question is how should an ideal web site look like?

There are two major opinions. The first says a web site should be eye-catching and well graphically designed. The second prefers simplicity over showy design. According to a research among travellers from over 40 countries conducted by the search engine optimization company Oban Multilingual, international travelers prefer eye-catching design over simplicity. Nevertheless, two thirds of the very same people use Google, which is regarded as an axiom of simplicity. The truth is probably somewhere in the middle.

It is also important to optimize the web site according to the target market. Cultural background is very important here. For example, Chinese internet users prefer busy, flashy websites. Other cultures prefer different features. Also, different businesses have different needs. For a hotel it is important not only to be easy to find by the search engines. The hotel also needs to lure customers. It means not only the number of visitors is important but also the number of bookings. A good hotel web page thus needs to attract customers, not only visitors who go through it and leave it.

Travel sites are usually considered to be among the best in terms of design. However, customers also demand pages to be user friendly. A complex and lengthy registration process often puts off possible clients. Web designers therefore need to create a site that is easy to find, looks interesting, and is also user friendly.

According to a recent consumer report of a digital consultancy Rawnnet, 20 per cent of surveyed British consumers responded that spectacular and creative sites are difficult to use. More than 70 per cent of the surveyed, answered they preferred companies that provided all the relevant information they were looking for on a single page. The problem is that 50 per cent of consumers claim they find the information they were looking for only occasionally.

Today there are numerous web design companies on the market but not all of them provide the best and most effective services. Every business thus first needs to think thoroughly about its priorities and focus groups and then to cooperate intensively with the designers.

Date: 2008-09-23

Article link: <http://www.tourism-review.com/travel-web-design-not-a-piece-of-cake-news1108>