

# FIVE TIPS FOR GETTING MORE OUT OF YOUR SITE THIS YEAR

By Mike McKenna

## 1. Analyze Traffic.

What is the web saying about your site? How many potential clients or partners visited your site today? What pages did they visit? Where on your site were they when they left? What search terms are being used to find you?

All of these questions, and many, many more can easily be answered by using a good website analytics program. A couple of our favorites are Mint (haveamint.com) and Google Analytics. There are advantages and disadvantages to each--for starters, Google is free and relatively simple to start up; Mint is flexible and simple to understand.

## 2. Start Email Marketing.

A monthly or bi-monthly email message to your clients, customers, and prospects holds an incredible amount of valuable information--for you and your audience.

Email marketing is cost effective (delivery will cost just pennies per recipient), immediate, and completely measurable. Unlike other marketing techniques, you'll be able to see exactly who opened your email, what links

they clicked, if they forwarded it to a friend, and much more.

## 3. Get A Blog Going

Blogging isn't as difficult or tedious as it might seem at first. There are plenty of easy-to-use tools that you can use to literally get up and running in minutes; you can easily integrate the look of your site and blog; and most importantly, you'll be publishing fresh, relevant content to the web with every entry. And the best part: search engines eat it up.

A few great resources to get started with blogging for business: blogger.com, typepad.com, and wordpress.com.

## 4. Improve/Rework Your Markup.

It's probably the last thing you want to think about, but the markup (typically HTML) behind your site could possibly benefit from an overhaul.

Recent improvements in the way that websites are coded can make a big improvement in a number of areas. Making sure your site is coded according to modern standards will make your site more indexable for search engines; it will make it easier for people using alternative devices (PDAs, mobile phones,

screen readers, etc.); and it will ensure that your site is compatible with devices that are not even on the market yet (Apple's iPhone, for example).

## 5. Clean Up Your Design.

Finally, take a look at your site. Does it properly reflect the message you want to get across to your audience? Does it cast your company in the best possible light? Just like with anything visual, styles change. And with the web, which happens to be the fastest medium your business has ever known, a site with an old design will appear old and behind the times to its readership.

Take a look at some of the featured sites at design showcases like cssdrive.com and cssvault.com. How does your site stand up visually against these sites? Many of these award-winning sites were developed for less than you might think. Your site just might be ready for a makeover too.

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