

Five 'must haves' for a successful website

Look at your agency's website. Does it include the following? Maybe it's time to consider a redesign.

- 1. Professional design.** You must put your best foot forward to attract clients and to inspire confidence and trust. For many, Web design is a re-allocation of marketing dollars, and the money spent on your website will likely result in a better return on investment than any other type of advertising or communication strategy.
- 2. 'About us' page with executive headshots.** Don't be afraid to use at least 500 words on your "About us" page to convey something personal about you and your agency. How did you get started? What is your specialty? Not having an about us page is a sure-fire way to lose a potential client.
- 3. Display trust signals.** Utilizing trust-seal graphics serve as a risk reliever that can increase conversions by up to 10 percent. In fact, surveys of online shoppers show that one of the most stated reasons for leaving a website is the absence of trust seals (e.g., PIA, Better Business Bureau, a Secure Sockets Layer certificate, a malware scan seal or a Chamber of Commerce membership).
- 4. Testimonials and reviews.** Customers and prospects want to know you're competent—allow your current or past customers and business partners to represent you. The methods to procure feedback from customers are endless, but I've found that the best way is to call them. Make it easy on your clients and have them give you a testimonial over the phone. Take notes and have your customers sign off on what you have transcribed. Then send them a follow-up note indicating their approval that you can keep on file.
- 5. Contact information.** It's astounding how many professionals build a website and then neglect to put a physical address on it. Even worse, some sites do not provide an email

address. Instead, the only way to contact the agent is through a contact form. Remember, the whole point of your business site is to have people contact you.

Tips provided by Brian Greenberg, a founder and executive of multiple online businesses. He may be reached online at TrueBlueLifeInsurance.com.

PIA can answer your tech questions

Through Technology Info Central, PIA provides members with a one-stop shop for technology news, real-time initiatives, vendors and consumer information for their websites and more. PIA members can access real-time implementation options; keep current with the latest technology news; and obtain materials to assist in creating and updating their agency websites.

PIA also offers its PIA Technology Hotline

This hotline service puts members in touch with two nationally recognized technology experts. Steve Anderson, editor of the *TAAR Report*, and Jason Hoepfner, CIC, a consultant with B.H. Burke & Co. Inc., brings PIA members the advantage of more than 20 years' experience in agency-company technology. PIA members get up to 30 minutes of free consultant time when requested through PIA's Industry Resource Center, call (800) 424-4244 or email resourcecenter@pia.org. See Anderson's article on e-signatures on page 9 of this issue of *PIA magazine*.

To access PIA's Technology Info Central, PIA members can logon to the PIA website and click "Technology Info Central" under "Tools and Resources." 

