



10 REASONS YOUR WEBSITE SUCKS

AUTHORS NOTE (jeffalytics.com): These observations have been assembled based on 18 years as a web developer, Internet marketer, web analyst and project manager. All examples are fictional and meant to be intentionally humorous. The reality is that it's freaking hard to launch a meaningful website. It takes time, money and patience to get things done the right way. While this article points out particular faults that are made during the process, my hope is that you can use it as a checklist for "what not to do" on your next website launch. This is one of those posts that has been in my drafts folder for some time and while it probably should to stay there, I am publishing it anyway!

1 YOUR WEBSITE SUCKS BECAUSE YOU DON'T KNOW THE ANSWER TO THE QUESTION "WHY ARE WE MAKING THIS WEBSITE IN THE FIRST PLACE?"

The year was 1995. Coolio's Gangsta's Paradise was on the air and after reading about the Internet in a magazine, your company CEO demands that a website is up and running. You get a CTO, a CIO, a C-whatever-O and go to work.

- You started in the middle.
- You started without a purpose.
- You started without a strategy.
- And your website has sucked ever since.



2 YOUR WEBSITE SUCKS BECAUSE YOU LET YOUR DEVELOPERS FOCUS ON EFFICIENCY, NOT CRAWLABILITY



You bang your head against a wall until something works, creating the simplest solution possible for your problem. Then you move on to solve the next problem. After all, the shortest distance between two points is a straight line.

3 YOUR WEBSITE SUCKS BECAUSE YOU WILLINGLY MADE SACRIFICES TO DELIVER THE SITE ON TIME, BUT YOU NEVER REVISITED THOSE COMPROMISES AFTER LAUNCH

Launching your website was hard, wasn't it? You decided to implement less functionality, worked long hours and even pulled an all-nighter to meet a deadline... and the launch was still 2 weeks behind.

Then you launched the site and celebrated by taking a vacation.

Now you are on to another project and completely forgot about the functionality that you sacrificed in order to get the site launched.



4 YOUR WEBSITE SUCKS BECAUSE YOU LET YOUR DESIGNER'S EGO GET IN THE WAY

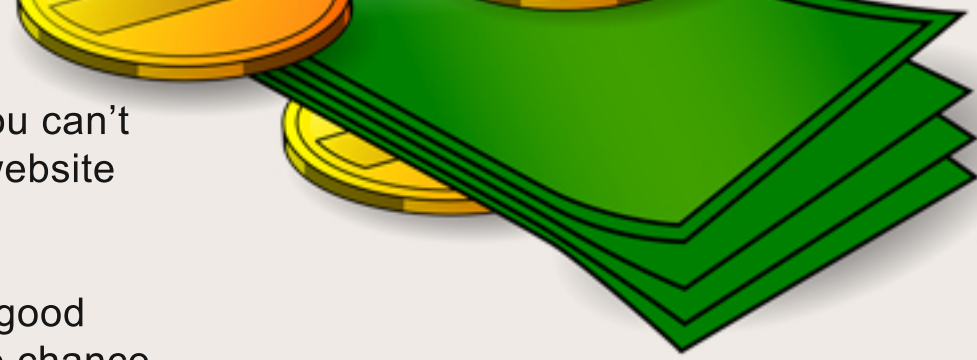


Great design is hard to ignore and a cornerstone of a great website. But you put too much faith in the designer. You let them dictate where everything goes and enforce their will on the entire project. You hired a brilliant designer, but you let the tail wag the dog in the process.

5 YOUR WEBSITE SUCKS BECAUSE YOU USED A \$10 DESIGNER AND A 10 CENT COPYWRITER

You broke the budget on your designer and now you can't afford to put content into your brilliantly designed website shell.

More than any other factor, content is the key to a good website. If you do not have any content, there is no chance of ANYONE seeing the beautiful design that your designer worked so hard to create.



6 YOUR WEBSITE SUCKS BECAUSE YOU FAIL TO EMBRACE TECHNICAL DEBT AND NOW IT LOOKS LIKE A NASCAR



When you keep on adding images, ads, badges and other trinkets to your website without taking anything off it starts to look like a NASCAR. This can not only affect the aesthetics of your website, but it can also cause some real problems behind the scenes through technical debt.

For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. The same should go for your website.

For everything you add, make sure that you take something off!

7 YOUR WEBSITE SUCKS BECAUSE YOU NEED TO KEEP YOUR FLASH DEVELOPERS EMPLOYED

Those pretty pictures fooled you again. You were drawn in by the hypnotic movement and smooth jazz playing in the background. Who cares if it doesn't properly load on mobile devices, my cursor animates when I hover over things!

Flash is like the fats, oils and sweets of the internet development food guide pyramid. It may be tasty and irresistible, but it's still something to use sparingly.



8 YOUR WEBSITE SUCKS BECAUSE YOUR COMING SOON SECTION STILL HAS AN ANIMATED UNDER CONSTRUCTION GRAPHIC



If this exists on your website, fix it. Spend one hour a day writing content for your empty pages and you will fill all of your content gaps within a few weeks.

9 YOUR WEBSITE SUCKS BECAUSE YOUR SITE NAVIGATION MIMICS YOUR CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN

Your users get lost more than people using Apple maps. They are more likely to die in a Siri fueled accident than clicking on the prominent navigational links on your site.

Nobody clicks on any of your links because they don't care! If your navigation system is one big pat on your corporate back, that's just another reason why your website sucks.



10 YOUR WEBSITE SUCKS BECAUSE CHILDREN ARE CONCEIVED AND BORN FASTER THAN YOUR WEB RELEASE SCHEDULE



Remember that website improvement you suggested in 2012? There are children who were conceived, born, moved to solid foods and started walking since your brilliant idea.

If the cycle of life moves faster than your web development cycle, then it's a pretty good sign that your website sucks.