What to keep in mind when designing websites for start-ups

So, this is it! You've spent a lot of time, money, and energy on getting your start-up company up and running. Doesn't make any difference if you're offering a dog walking service, or manufacturing components for a nuclear generator. This is yours and you want to show it to the world in its best possible light! And how do you do that? By making sure your website is designed to turn browsers into buyers.

That's what it's all about. So you and your [SEO agency](#) need to sit down and get this thing up and running, and here are a few tips to help you along:
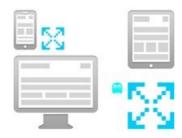
- **Do your homework**. Check out your competitors' websites. See what's good, and what's bad about them. See what competitive advantages you might have, then incorporate them into your website. You want to be different, you want to stand out. Your digital agency will make this happen, but it's up to you to make sure they have this vital information.

- **Set the tone**. If you're selling a happy/fun product or service, use copy that's colloquial and engaging. Make the browser smile. Keep it light, but make sure the reader has all the facts to make a decision. On the other hand, if you're selling stealth bombers, you'll want to take a totally different approach! The point? Make the tone fit the product/service message. Your digital agency has copywriters that specialise in those areas. Give them a profile of your typical customer and they'll take it from there.

- **Be totally up-front**. The biggest problem many websites have is that they're simply not credible. They promise the moon, but then they can't deliver. And when that happens, they have many unhappy customers. This is not a good thing, because those unhappy customers will go viral and tell everybody in the universe (and the internet!) what a lousy company they bought from. What you need to do is make sure that your website tells it as it is! Honesty is the best policy, especially when it comes to the internet.

- **Easy to navigation**. Your digital agency should be well experienced in this area. The format of your site should be clean and clear - as well as attractive. It should make it easy for the browser to zero in on the product or service he/she is interested in. Remember, the browser is doing you a favor by even coming to your website. Oh, and never ever include

pop-ups on your site. Why? Numerous studies have shown that they really aggravate browsers. This is something you do not want to do! However, an easy to navigate website will keep them coming back time after time.

- **Keep your website current**. As any good agency will tell you, the kiss of death for any website is to become obsolete. Outdated product or service information is one area. Or if you have your company blog on the website and the last one is dated February 2009, this presents a very negative image. Ditto personnel announcements that go back years. You should always be looking for ways to update the site to keep it fresh and appealing. Don't let it get shop worn!

- **Review, review, and review** . You and your digital agency should set up a monthly schedule to meet and review how your website is doing. How many hits are you getting? How many orders are coming in, and for what products or services? What's not working on your site, and taking up valuable space? And, what new products/services are you offering that need to be included, or any specials that might be coming up? Reviewing all these areas will tell you what's working, and what isn't, so that you can make the proper adjustments for maximum site efficiency and impact.

If you and your agency work together and heed these simple tips (and assuming you have a product/service that is top notch), there's no reason why your website won't work hard and bring in customers by the droves. If you're selling something that has value, browsers will sit up and take notice - and buy - which is really the whole point to begin with!

Shout Agency believes that SEO is essential to every businesses success.