

Net Results
Helping your business succeed online.
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Welcome

Fall is definitely here. Over the weekend, I had the pleasure of going for a beautiful hike, on a carpet of golden leaves, at nearby Seal Bay. You just can't beat that. While it's nice and sunny here on Vancouver Island right now, that autumn chill is in the air. Time to put on the woollies!

It's also Halloween, which, admittedly, isn't my favourite holiday. I'm not overly in favour of stuffing kids with sugar and I'd rather see all of those pumpkins that will be thrown out tomorrow being used to make soup or pie to feed the needy. But I'm a realist. Although, these days, sadly, no parent would accept an apple in their children's treat bag, perhaps you might think about giving out fair trade chocolates, natural organic (but still yummy) treats, or a small, environmentally sustainable or recycled toy this year instead of the usual commercial candies. It might cost you a bit more, but these are the kinds of steps we really need to start making in order to help heal those same kids' planet.

Net Results Survey

A big thanks to all of you who took the time to fill out our survey. The feedback was very valuable in letting me know what sort of content you want to see in future issues of this newsletter as well as the frequency you'd like to see it published. While the results are

still being analyzed (my cats are working on them), it's safe to say the demand is there for a more frequent publishing schedule. More on that in the New Year.

Featured Article: Focussing on Your Target Audience

When putting together content and thinking about design for your web site you really need to think about who you're "selling" to, whether that's in the literal or figurative sense. Many new business people, when starting out, will say, "I want to appeal to everyone so that I can get as much business as possible." Of course you want to get lots of business, but you'll be much better off targeting a specific group of people, and doing it better than everyone else, than trying to please everyone to only a small degree. Although your audience will be smaller in size, it'll be a more receptive one and you'll get better results.

In determining your target market, consider your service or product and who it will most appeal to. Think about geographic region, gender, age, and possibly even socio-economic status, education level, profession, race, religion, etc. An example group is male college students in the Pacific Northwest. Another is retired North American female teachers.

Once you've narrowed down exactly who your target audience is, it should be a lot more clear how to go about marketing your business on your web site and in general. For business web sites, a well-defined and specific target market, will not only make it easier for you to market your product or service, it will also make it easier for customers and clients to find you via search engines (e.g., Google).

Your target audience will affect the content included in your site as well as how that content is presented. Different groups respond to various methods of communication differently, so it's important to know what will work best with the group you're trying to get your message across to.

Obviously, writing for children will be much different than writing for adults. Writing for members of a specific profession may allow you the freedom to use certain terminology without needing to explain it. Whoever your target audience is, write as if you were speaking directly to that group of people.

The design of your web site should be directly related to your target audience as well. For example, a site geared towards kids would certainly need to look much different than one intended for business people. The former would be more fun, perhaps incorporating some animation and/or music, a rainbow of colours, and "kid-friendly" fonts (e.g., Comic Sans, Jokerman, etc.); the latter would have more of a corporate, serious tone, utilizing more conservative colours (e.g., black and white, navy blue, forest green, etc.) and fonts (Times New Roman, Arial, etc.).

Font size might also be an issue. While many younger surfers have no problem reading small type on-screen, a lot of more senior or visually impaired people have difficulty making out anything smaller than size 12, 14, or even larger font.

Also, consider how many graphics and "bells and whistles" you'll want. If your audience is not very computer literate and generally includes people with slow Internet connections, it doesn't make sense to include large, slow-loading graphics, animations, and video clips. You want your site to be user friendly and don't want your visitors leaving because they've become frustrated with the navigation or because your web site loads too slowly. Conversely, if your audience is the younger generation, including flashy graphics and other "fun" elements might be more appropriate and even necessary to grab their attention.

Once you've taken the time to really define who your target audience is, writing the copy for your web site and coming up with a suitable design will be much simpler. Use common sense, test your site out on a sample of your target audience, listen to their feedback, and your web site should soon give you the results you're looking for.

About nrichmedia

nrichmedia creates innovative and unique web sites and other multimedia for ethical and socially responsible businesses and organizations. We also offer green web hosting, web site maintenance, CD-ROM production, and more.

nrichmedia was founded by Nathaniel Richman in 2000. Nathaniel graduated from the Vancouver Film School with a Certificate of Recommendation in Multimedia Studies in 1997 and has been working in the web design and new media industry ever since. He previously received a Bachelor of Mathematics degree (Honours Actuarial Science) from the University of Waterloo and worked in the pension consulting industry.

Nathaniel works with other designers and programmers, according to the needs of the project, to provide the client with the most professionally designed web site and other marketing material as possible.

"Nathaniel is amazing. He was able to transform my random thoughts into a website that surpassed all my expectations. Working with him was straightforward and fun, and I feel lucky to have had the opportunity."

- Jan Peavoy, Owner, Dark Side Chocolates (www.darksidechocolates.com)

To learn more about nrichmedia's services, view our online portfolio, and read glowing testimonials from many satisfied clients, please visit <http://www.nrichmedia.com>.

Green Web Hosting

nrichmedia is pleased to be offering green web hosting services. Our standard package includes 200MB of disk space (usually more than most small to medium sized businesses require), email and webmail accounts, web statistics, and more.

What makes our web hosting green?

1. Our hosting is shared on powerful, energy efficient servers so the amount of electricity we use is minimized. We maintain our own dedicated environment within these servers and have full control over performance and security.
2. The electricity used by the servers comes from hydropower, which, although not ideal, is one of the more environmentally friendly means of power generation.
3. We've purchased wind power certificates to offset the amount of electricity that we do use. Wind power is, of course, a natural, clean, and abundant energy source with little or no negative impact on the environment.

To sign up for or switch to nrichmedia's green web hosting, please email sales@nrichmedia.com for information on pricing and getting started.

New at nrichmedia.com: Green Articles

Check out the new Articles section on nrichmedia's web site, at <http://www.nrichmedia.com/articles.htm>. We hope you find the postings to be a valuable resource on environmental issues and social responsibility.

Recent articles include:

[10 Simple Steps to Green Your Office](http://www.nrichmedia.com/article-green_office-16102007.htm) (co-authored with Melanie Pazdzierski)
(http://www.nrichmedia.com/article-green_office-16102007.htm)

[Organic Organizing](http://www.nrichmedia.com/article-organic_organizing-10082007.htm) (by Arran Kerrigan)
(http://www.nrichmedia.com/article-organic_organizing-10082007.htm)

Web Site Design and Promotion Blog

For plenty of tips and tricks on designing, marketing, and promoting your web site, have a look at <http://www.websitedesignandpromotion.com>, a blog co-authored by nrichmedia and Juliet Austin. Feel free to place a comment on any of the posts there. It's an easy way

to get a link to your site, which can increase your exposure and help your site's search engine rankings.

Charitable Causes

nrichmedia donates 5% of proceeds on all projects of \$500 and above to charitable organizations. We are pleased to have supported and continue to support several worthy causes. To see a list of the organizations we support, please visit <http://www.nrichmedia.com/causes.htm>.

The Not-to-be Missed Link: greenmaven.com

Green Maven (<http://www.greenmaven.com>) is a search engine that "focuses on green, conscious, and sustainable websites." Some of its "hot searches" include: earth day, social justice, fuel cell vehicles, raw food diet, green building, and making biodiesel. There are plenty of good posts about environmental issues, green products, and green building.

Archives

To view previous editions of Net Results, visit <http://www.nrichmedia.com/archives.htm>.

Pass it on and Enjoy

Please feel free to pass this newsletter on to anyone who might find it useful.

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