

Volume 4, Issue 2 – March 2008

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Welcome

Could it really be spring? Almost, anyway. It's always a great time of year out here on Vancouver Island. The sun is out, everything is turning green, the flowers are starting to bloom. In a few weeks there will be a rainbow of colours to see.

What a perfect segue into this issue's topic: How to use colours on your web site. Maybe seeing all the greens and other colours of spring, you'll be inspired to create or re-design your web site.

Featured Article: Effective Use of Colour on Your Web Site

As with all of your promotional material, the colours you choose for your web site say a lot about you and your business. They can give your site's visitors an instant impression about what you do, how professional you are, and even your values. People's attention spans are extremely short on the Web so it's vital to make a good impression right off the bat.

Think really hard about the image you want to convey to your audience. What's the best way to present that image to them? Using the right colours can go a long way in this regard.

For instance, if you are promoting educational programs to children then, you'll likely want to utilize bright, lively colours, and lots of them. Pretty much the full spectrum would probably work in this case.

Or, say your target audience is teen girls. You'd probably want to use soft tones, like pinks. For teen boys you'd likely need to use more of the "cool and hip" colours like black with red, for example.

If you are a healing professional, you obviously want to show that you are qualified and that you offer a caring, and perhaps, soothing environment. You'll likely want to use soft, earth tones.

If your business is selling natural products, the colours you use should match your products or general theme. You usually can't go too far wrong using some shade(s) of green, but try not to be too cliché!

For a more corporate look, dark colours – navy blue, forest green, dark brown, etc. – generally work well with a fairly extensive use of black and white.

If your business has a logo (or specific image/photo that you like to use), naturally, the colours on your web site shouldn't clash with it. You can usually find colours that match your logo and give the overall impression you're going for. In fact you probably chose your logo with the idea of what sort of impression its colours would portray.

Another important factor to consider when choosing colours is which combinations work and which don't. Although there might be occasion to purposefully mismatch colours to make a certain statement, on the whole you want to create a sense of harmony with the colours you choose for your site. Without getting too much into the depths of colour theory, let's just touch on two main ideas.

First is the concept of analogous colours. Essentially, these are colours that are close to each other in the spectrum. If you were to imagine a circle of all the colours of the rainbow, analogous colours are the ones that would be next to each other. A simple example would be purple – its analogous colours are red and blue.

The second concept is complementary colours. These are basically opposite each other on the colour circle. Examples are red and green; purple and yellow; blue and orange. While some people might think these combinations would clash, as long as you use the right shades, they actually complement each other. The contrast is certainly there, but the combination also creates a sense of stability.

One last thing to keep in mind: colours can look different on different monitors. So, while you may think you've found the "perfect" green for a certain effect, on someone else's screen it may not look the same as it does on yours. Don't sweat it too much, though. Short of calibrating everyone's monitors, there's not much you can do about it. Be satisfied that your green (and other colours) will be close enough!

Following is a list of colours and what sort of effect they have on people (with possible negative connotations, in parentheses):

Red: stimulating, passion, love (danger)
Orange: warmth, playfulness
Yellow: hope, happiness, activity (cowardice)
Green: healing, nature, freshness, money
Blue: peace, power, truth (sadness)
Purple: royalty, intelligence, spirituality
Brown: earthiness, reliability, dependability
Black: sophistication, elegance, strength (evil)
White: purity, cleanliness, lightness

If all of this seems like a bit much to think about, you can always keep it simple. Remember that everything goes with black and white, so you could just pick one suitable colour and combine it with good ol' B&W and you'll be fine. Or hire a professional designer to help make the right choice(s) for you.

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About nrichmedia
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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.

"My experience with Nathaniel has been nothing short of fantastic. Not only was he able to accommodate my tight schedule, but the finished product far surpassed my expectations with an attention to detail that's second to none. For me, it's a no-brainer. Nathaniel is my 'go-to' guy for my website and design needs."

- Kyle Thom, Marketing Consultant, Dobie Properties Ltd.
(<http://www.dobiepropertiesltd.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.

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>.

Archives

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

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