

The Top Seven Website Mistakes Clinics Make

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The majority of acupuncture clinics finally have a website for their business. Having a website is crucial for being found online through Google, Facebook and review sites like Yelp. Your website should truly be a reflection of you and your business and it's important to remember that your website is often the first point of contact you have with a patient. Therefore, ensuring it's up to date (in terms of both content and design) is important to make a great first impression.

In my personal experience consulting for small clinics, I have found seven common mistakes that are made on clinic websites – mistakes that will give a potential new patient a bad first impression. So, in an effort to help you improve your website, I've listed the top seven things to avoid.

Too Much Information

Make the essentials of your website easy to navigate and properly organized. Most patients are going to want to see your office hours, location, contact information and a brief description of the services you offer.

Make those sections the core of your website and leave the detailed treatment related information for your blog, allowing patients to easily browse headlines to decide what they are interested in reading.

When writing up your short bio, feel free to have some fun with it and add in some personal details to help your personality shine.

Ugly or Hard To Read Fonts

Believe it or not, you are being judged by the fonts that you use on your website. Many clinics like to add some flare to their websites, and there are places to do that, but not with fonts. You should avoid using cursive fonts because they can be hard to read and also avoid unprofessional fonts like Comic Sans MS. Arial, Helvetica or Verdana are always safe bets, but there are some new web-friendly fonts that have a more modern feel, while being professional and easy to read.

An "Enter" Page

An "Enter" page usually has a picture, tagline and a link the says "Click here to enter." This page serves no purpose and you should not have one on your website. It's frustrating for your patient to have to wait for an extra page to load and have to click to enter your website. If the patient is trying to get to your website, of course they want to enter it – be respectful of their time and remove the "Enter" page.

Additionally, an "Enter" page usually has very little content, so it's going to be very hard for Google to know what your homepage is about and rank it accordingly – which means that you lose out on the opportunity to be found in the Google search results.

Playing Music

In 1995, music may have made your website stand out because it was new and people hadn't seen it before, but now it may be the number one most annoying feature. While I could write an entire article on why not to have music on your website, consider these five points:

1. Musical taste is subjective – your patients may not like it.
2. Even if they do like it, it cuts off when they click around.
3. It makes your website slower.
4. Many people are already listening to music when on their computer, so your music interrupts theirs.
5. Not all browsers will support your media content.

Reverse Type

Having a black background with white text on your website is going to give your reader a headache. Although it will work in some cases, it's a very uncomfortable read which puts strain on the eyes – not something you want for your patients.

Use reverse type sparingly – the bulk of your content should be dark text on a light background.

Low Quality Images

It's a really nice touch to have photos of the office on your website, but make sure the images are high quality (not blurry or pixelated). As we discussed earlier, your website is often the first point of contact with a patient – so you want to make a great first impression with quality photos.

You likely have a photographer in your network of friends – ask them to come into the office one day to take some professional photos that you can use on your website (and in your brochures/flyers).

Not Booking Appointments Online

Most of your patients use the Internet and email. It has made their life more convenient in almost every way – they book hotels, flights, haircuts and more online. Make your website more functional by including online appointment scheduling. Your patients will love the convenience, you will love the time saved by avoiding telephone tag and you will love the increased business.

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