

What does your home page say about you or your company? Chances are, if it's like many Web sites out there, very little. Many companies realize that Web sites are a prime marketing channel for their business, but they forget that other people, including potential customers don't eat, drink, breathe and sleep their products. This means that their Web site front page ends up being a showcase for whatever company project has the focus at the moment.

### **Some of the more common elements of a company home page are:**

- Products for sale
- News and Press Releases
- Events and Announcements
- Navigation
- Search

What's missing from many home pages is a clear and concise description of the company. If your customers can't figure out what you're trying to sell or do for them right away they might just give up and leave immediately.

### **What About Existing Customers?**

You might be asking, "But our existing customers already know who we are and what we do." While that is probably true, your Web site should be a ready resource for attracting new customers as well as retaining existing ones. But if the new customers aren't really sure what you offer, they might leave for a firm that is more clear.

What you should aim for is a balance between providing the tools returning customers crave with the information that new customers need to make the decision to go with your company. This can be just a sentence or two, with links to more if they need or want it. Leaving this out may satisfy one department's need for one more sentence about their product, but risks alienating new customers before they've even gotten to that product.

### **Real World Examples**

I took a look at three company home pages. Chances are you've heard of at least one of them. None of the three have names that would really tell you what the companies do, so hopefully the home pages are a help. Let's find out...

Symantec

McAfee

Google

**I'll be looking for:**

- A summary of what the purpose of the site is.
- This might be textual (preferably) or it might simply be obvious from the entire layout of the site.
- Products or services displayed prominently and clearly.
- This allows new customers (and returning) to visualize what they will be getting.
- Clearly defined links to other pages with more information.
- Links like "About Us" or "Company Information" are good.
- The above information should be "above the fold". This means, on a lower resolution browser, the prominent information should be visible without the customer needing to scroll.

{!jomcomment}