

[Genesis Goodies](#)

Where your excitement about your business builds.

Have you ever visited a website that's jammed with text, ads, and blinking graphics and thought, "Wow! This looks interesting. Bet there's plenty of good information here."

I'm guessing you haven't.

What I am guessing is that you know how important a professional-looking website is and how appearance can determine a visitor's next move.

A cluttered, poorly designed site with loads of pop-ups and blinking graphics: visitor scrambles to click the back button.

An attractive, well-designed site that's easy to read and navigate: visitor looks around to learn more—and maybe subscribe or buy.

See how that works?

Good design = greater chance of success.

Good Website Design Has Universal Appeal

While it's true that beauty is often in the eye of the beholder—your site's visitors may have different tastes—certain aspects of web design are effective because they have universal appeal.

That means any visitor will find the site easy on the eyes and easy to navigate.

After all, visitors judge every aspect of your site—without even thinking about it— from content and typography to your "buy" buttons and newsletter sign-up form.

[Web design choices](#) like typography, colors, mobile responsiveness, easy navigation, and an appealing layout are just a few design decisions that can put some "oompf" into your website.

But just as you have "right choices" to make, you also have "wrong choices" that can make your site look like it belongs on the World Wide Web circa 1995.

Why Typography Is So Important

Small details like typography—the fonts you choose—can make a big difference.

An easy-to-read font, good line spacing, and complimentary subheadings can make visitors feel welcome, excited, and eager to read or buy.

Poorly chosen typography, on the other hand, can actually put your readers in a bad mood.

Who wants to read a site all done up in fun-loving “Chalkduster” or “Comic Sans?”

And big, bold “Impact” sure can make an, er, impact, but reading more than a few lines of it can give anyone a headache.

Studies have shown that reader emotions are directly affected by typography, and any good designer knows that font affects mood. The font used on a children’s site, for example, will be much different from that used for an upscale investment site.

And I don’t know about you, but scrolling through a long page of white text on a black background just doesn’t cut it.

By spending a little time choosing the right typography for your site, visitors will be more likely to absorb your message, appreciate your value, and take action. And if your message is “sign up for my newsletter” or “buy my product,” you can expect subscriptions and sales to go up on an existing site with the right typography choices.

Mobile Visitors Need a Mobile Responsive Site

Since so many potential customers are reading on the go these days, you want to be sure your site looks good not only on a desktop PC but also on smaller mobile devices. That means it has to be mobile responsive.

There’s no doubt about it. According to InternetRetailer.com, “In March 2013, 52% of time spent with online retail was on a desktop, 34% a smartphone and 14% a tablet.”

A site that’s mobile responsive looks great and is easy to navigate on any device: small laptops, smartphones, tablets, ereaders, and so on.

Imagine accessing your site on a smartphone only to squint your eyes and swipe at the screen until you get frustrated and give up. Not what you want, right?

Instead, why not offer a website that looks great no matter what it’s viewed on? This is especially important since responsive design can result in as much as [400% conversion increases](#).

Your Website’s Main Goal

Every part of your business website should have one main goal: **to convert visitors into leads and leads into sales.**

Fortunately, there are some very basic steps you can take to improve your website conversions. And they’re simpler than you might think.

1. **Make your site easy for visitors to use.** Little things can make a big difference. If you have a newsletter subscription box, for example, be sure it’s in an obvious location—top right sidebar is popular—with clear instructions like “Enter your email” and “Click here.”

Make a point to include text that assures email address privacy. Keeping your site organized with consistent design elements also helps. And if you have a blog, providing a list of “Most Popular Articles,” a “Start Here” section, and “Archives” can create a fan—and a customer—out of a new visitor.

2. **Do a site housecleaning regularly.** Keep your website free of error pages and dead links (links that aren’t working) so readers don’t get frustrated or think you don’t care about their experience on your site. You can use special software, free online dead link checkers, or plugins (more on that shortly). Has your email address changed? Update that information and anything else that has changed in every location on your website. Test your contact form (if you have one) to be sure it’s working. What about your phone number, address, shopping cart, or shipping instructions? Update as necessary.
3. **Offer a video. Embedding a video on your site lets visitors get to know you and your company better.** A short, simple video in which you welcome visitors to your site or describe your company’s products makes everything more personal. It tells potential customers that you’re upright, honest, and willing to show your face, your product, your office, even your bowling trophy or pretty red stapler.
4. **Use Open Space and Color to Your Advantage.** You don’t have to fill every open spot on your site. Make sure each item, graphic, photo, and text element has an important purpose. Open white space has a calming effect on visitors, and it can direct their focus to site elements that matter most. Color can make a difference, too. Keep in mind that your favorite colors might not be the best choice when it comes to someone clicking on a buy button or not. Red creates excitement, but blue can foster feelings of trust and safety. Shades of green have also been successful in sales, but it depends on your demographic, products, and branding. Here’s some information [on color that affects sales](#) that can get you started.
5. **If in doubt, play it safe.** Not sure whether that cool, 60s-style graffiti font will thrill your clientele? What about that grunge-style red and black background and neon green headlines? What if you’re just not sure? Simple and understated—classy—will always work. Unless you’ve done your homework, and you’re absolutely sure of your potential customers’ tastes—or you’re working with an experienced designer who is willing to explain the rationale—don’t get risky with your design. Sure, you want to make it personal. But unless the walls of your brick and mortar place of business (or a comparable business if you’re setting up something new) are red, black, and green—and it works—play it safe.

If Content Is King, Design Is His Castle

You know how important quality content is and how it can boost your brand’s image and attract more visitors to your site.

But what role does [great web design](#) play in all of this?

Frankly, content isn’t just about the writing, it’s also about the reading experience.

A blog post on small business challenges might be fascinating, but if the website is confusing and difficult to navigate, you might hesitate to read it much less share that link with your customers, friends, or acquaintances.

On the other hand, if a website's design is professional and visually appealing, people are more likely to read it and share it because it seems like a legitimate site and, therefore, a credible source.

Remember, good design improves conversion.

People are more likely to sign up for your newsletter and buy your products or services if your site removes all the barriers that could prevent them from doing so.

Get Started Making Improvements

A site that's polished and professional generates more sales than one that isn't.

Plus, solid website design can only lead to more readers, more subscriptions, and more sales.

After all, if your website's appearance increases your visitors' trust in your brand, then your sales will reflect that.

And you don't have to be a web designer to decide on or improve your website's design. Why not get started right now?

Here are some great resources that might not turn you into a designer, but they will help you get familiar with options and even make some changes yourself.

Resources

[Color Scheme](#)

- [Color Palettes](#)
- [Color Scheme Designer](#)

[Typography](#)

- [TypeSpiration](#)
- [Golden Rule Typography Generator](#)
- [Free Typography Inspiration](#)

Graphics & Patterns

- [Free Graphic Resources](#)
- [Free Repeatable Patterns](#)
- [More Free Graphics](#)
- [Icons](#)

Part 3 Action Steps: Professional Website For Under \$150.00

- Find a website look you like. Browse websites in your industry, and check out some [free themes](#). The goal is to tweak it over time, but knowing what you like or dislike is a great starting point that keeps you from getting bogged down in the design phase of your website.
- Choose a ready-made design template for your WordPress website. I recommend one of the three paths below
- Or you could get your website, hosting, and foundational tools all in one step. [More info here](#).

Centric Pro Child Theme

1. \$14.90 – Domain Name: .com domain name for \$14.90 from [iWantMyName.com](#)
2. \$27.00 – Hosting: \$27/mo from [Synthesis WordPress Hosting](#)
3. \$44.95 – [Centric Pro Child Theme](#): \$44.95
4. \$49.95 – [Genesis Extender Plugin](#): \$49.95
5. **\$136.80**

Dynamik Website Builder & Skin

1. \$14.90 – Domain Name: .com domain name for \$14.90 from [iWantMyName.com](#)
2. \$27.00 – Hosting: \$27/mo from [Synthesis WordPress Hosting](#)
3. \$79.95 – [Dynamik Website Builder](#): \$79.95 from Cobalt Apps
4. \$25.00 – [Dynamik Skins](#) are \$25.00
5. **\$146.85**

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Website



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