

## 15 Core Web Functionalities

Building a website is not only about placing photos and text in specified areas, but is also about understanding how the website itself functions. Most visitors of a website want to find relevant information that is being searched quickly as well as not get overwhelmed with too much information or stimulation. Some of the following points can assist a website in being developed successfully. These points include but are not limited to:

1. **Domain Name** - Creating a strong domain name is important so visitors will easily remember the web address. The domain name should include the main topic of the site and should somehow be memorable to the visitor.
2. **Format** - Everything should be organized and easy to read - this means short to the point statements with "read more" leading to more detailed information as well as organized photos, bullet points, etc.
3. **Simple Navigation** - Most visitors to a site prefer to not search too much. Site visitors should be able to find a desired page within 3 clicks or less. If a visitor feels overwhelmed, there is a possibility of closing it all out and trying another site.
4. **Search Functionality** - If a website is going to be continually growing, it is important that not only there is a search function, but that it works accurately finding the most relevant information. **Filtering** can also assist a user in finding the information in a customized order that is most important to the visitor.
5. **Readability** - Certain color combinations can possibly make it difficult for a user to read information. (**Example:** Blue text on a green background may make it difficult for the user to read information because the colors could cause a strain on the eyes) Readability can assist the user in having a pleasurable experience when getting information. More importantly, it will not irritate the user and possibly encourage the visitor to go to a different site.
6. **Cascading Style Sheets (CSS)** - This allows the making of global changes to a site. (**Example:** If the background color should be changed from green to blue, editing a cascading style sheet would change this color on all pages of the site or anywhere where the green background color was specified)
7. **Browser Continuity** - Some users are still using old versions of browsers. Visitors won't always care if the web browser is up to date and there is a possibility that a user could think a website is broken because a browser does not interpret the information correctly. A website should work correct for all browsers possible.
8. **Speed of load time** - This could have an effect because of how a server is communicating, images being an incorrect size, 3rd party connections bogging it down, etc. which could all slow down the load time of a website. A user typically

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wants a site to load within a few seconds or there is a chance the visitor will attempt to find another website.

9. **Mobility and Responsive Design** - Instead of having a mobile site and full version site, a responsive design adapts to any screen that is any size. This means the visitor can visit a site from any device and the developer only needs to make changes to the site one time and the website will naturally adapt to all clients.
10. **Search Engine Optimization (SEO)** - This can assist the website in being listed in the top results of search engines. It requires a developer to create **alt tags** for images, **metatags** for search engines to quickly find the correct site, and **meta descriptions** for each page so search engines can quickly point the user to the page that is most likely the site that is desired.
11. **Social Media Integration** - Depending on the needs of a company, social media can be embedded directly into a page which will allow for live updates on a website whenever the social media service is updated. At the very least, if a company is using social media, easy to find links and icons should be used to incorporate these services.
12. **Organized Forms** - Most visitors want to fill out a form quickly. If a website is going to use them, the forms should ask only the questions necessary so the user can fill the form out quickly and continue forward. This encourages more users to fill out a form more often.
13. **Form Validation** - It is possible that a user can enter the wrong information into a field. If a user does this, it is possible that communication will not work correctly between the website and the user. (**Example:** if a zip code was needed for a form, the field should only accept numbers as well as only the amount of numbers that are required (in this case 5). If a user does not enter the correct amount of numbers or accidentally enters a different character such as a letter, the form should point out the issue and request the user to correct it before the form can be submitted.)
14. **Security (Secure Socket Layer)** - If a website is allowing transactions or wants to ensure that a user's information is safe, a Secure Socket Layer (**SSL**) should be present. This allows for visitors information to be encrypted while being transferred or being entered into a database.
15. **Analytics** - To understand which features of a website are being used and which ones are ignored, analytics is a tool that can display a comprehensive understanding. This will allow owners to customize information to what the visitors are looking for and bring more traffic to the site as well as remove information or products that users do not seem interested in.