This Issue:

Welcome Ethan Wall!

Directive would like introduce Ethan Wall, son of Project Manager Derek Wall. Ethan was born September 12, 2012 at 2:50 am. He was 21 inches long and 7 lbs and 12 oz.
We'll see if Ethan grows up to love programming as much as his father! Congratulations Derek and Brittney!

About Directive

We are a technology consulting firm specializing in technology implementation and management for businesses. We're known for providing big-business, Enterprise-Level IT services to small and medium-sized businesses.

Visit us **online** at:
newsletter.directive.com

May the New year bring you Happiness, Peace, and Prosperity!

At Directive we've had a wonderful and productive year with only our clients to thank. We look forward to extending our partnership into the New Year and beyond.

We would like to extend season's greetings to you and yours this holiday season!

Web Design Best Practices for Content Presentation

In the past 10 years, the number of people who use the internet in their daily life has skyrocketed. As a result, many jobs now include adding or writing content that is ultimately posted online. Your business depends on your ability to create cohesive, complete information presented in an aesthetically pleasing, and memorable way. How can we know if the content we are writing is presented in the appropriate fashion? There are a few best practices to keep in mind that will keep users coming back to your site, time after time.

Consistency: When you post content to your website, one of the first things that will drive users away is a lack of consistency and styling. Think about websites that you visit often. In general, they won't have random colors, changing fonts or sizes, or different designs on different pages of the website. By nature, humans look for symmetry - and websites are no exception. Here are some areas that should be consistent throughout your entire site:

a. **Fonts:** Are you using a consistent font type? If your website is using "Arial" as the base font, you should stick with it everywhere on the site. Changing fonts and having a mix of Serif and Sans-Serif fonts will detract from the look and feel of the site. It conveys a message of unprofessionalism that can turn away visitors and potential customers.

b. **Colors:** The colors on your site need to be just as consistent as your font styles. All the links on your site should be using one color, and all the titles on your site should be another color. The main body content should be a color that works with your website and is readable against the background of your site. It is essential to avoid bright colors, at all costs. It should be as easy to read your website, as it would be to read the content printed on a plain white paper.

c. **Layout:** Another very important thing to remember is the layout of the content you are presenting. Each page of the site should retain a similar layout. This way, users know how to navigate and access the information they are seeking on any page. If a user pulls up a new page and everything is located in another position, it is as though they are on another website. This is very bad for user retention and will almost certainly cause a

Producing Prime Presentations

At some point or another you will be asked to present information to a crowd of people. Whether you have to give a presentation about how you can best profit from a bake sale for your local PTA or you're presenting a sales pitch to potential investors, vendors, or clients; using advances in presentation technology and methodology to your advantage can help you make a strong first impression and more importantly, a lasting one. Below are some presentation services that can be used to en-hance the content of your demonstration.

Prezi

Prezi is a cloud-based solution for creating vibrant presentations. It's most identifiable feature is the ability to pan and zoom in and out of presentation media to allow the presenter a dynamic medium in which to present information. Prezi is developed using Adobe Flash and Adobe AIR which allows for compatibility with most computers and browsers. The Prezi zooming user interface (ZUI) can be accessed online for free. Prezi also offers pay-per-month packages that offer more in-depth features. The Prezi Pro package allows a user to use the Prezi Desktop feature which gives them the ability to edit their Prezi presentation offline. Prezi could be the solution if you are looking to keep your audience involved and intrigued.

PechaKucha, Lightning talk, and Ignite

PechaKucha, Lightning talk, and Ignite are presentation methods where a presenter displays a set number of slides that advance automatically while the speaker dictates an overview of those slides try to encompass. The main benefit of this presentation format is that it's unconventional pacing allows the presenter to go over a lot of information quickly. In their formal structure, many

DIY IT Repair Hinders Business Growth

You are confident that your employees are good at problem solving, this is why you hired them. Your staff may even thrive on finding solutions with limited resources and keeping operations within budget. It is wonderful that you have surrounded yourself with skillful people, but using your bright staff to fix an IT problem may hurt your business in the long run.

We are living in an age where the internet makes information easily accessible and this has improved the way we all live. One way that we have all benefited is by gaining the ability to research any project online and learn how to do it yourself (DIY). This can save you lots of money with house projects, car repair, learning new skills, and much more. Technology is empowering, it can make you feel like the only thing that stands between you and finding a solution is the time it takes to do the research. This is all well and good for learning a new hobby or tiling your bathroom; but in business, time is money and learning takes time.

Perhaps one day we will be able to plug ourselves into The Matrix and moments later say, "Whoa, I know Kung Fu." It would be great if you could plug in and instantly learn how to fix your PC; but until the day comes when machines drive us underground and harvest energy from our bodies, we are still stuck with the limitations of time to digest this wealth of information before us.

Another factor of education to consider when learning a new skill is how much knowledge someone already has on the subject to begin with. You may be confident that an employee can figure out a fix because they are "good with computers," but IT support is a complex field that requires great expertise. Simply because an employee is great at installing software on their PC, does not mean they will be good at repairing hardware or catching a security risk. If the problem is way outside of an employee's skill set, this will mean a lot of time will be lost to troubleshooting and fixing a problem through trial and error. Sometimes an IT issue can be chased around forever if you do not know exactly what to do.

The time it takes for an employee to digest information to learn a new skill is expensive, it will actually cost you more than whatever you are paying them per hour. As a business owner, you are acutely aware that taxes and insurance make employees actually cost you more per hour than what they take home; and if a worker is spending a few hours researching how to handle an IT fix, this will equate to hours that the employee is not generating revenue for your company. When all of these expenses are considered, suddenly the idea of submitting a request to an IT professional to quickly repair your computer seems like a bargain.

When you encounter an IT problem, you can save a lot of time and expense by , bringing in revenue to your bottom line. Call us at 607.433.2200 to learn more.

Read the rest online!
http://bit.ly/WouXi1

Web Design Best Practices for Content Presentation

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user to navigate away from your site.

Content: The content on your site is just as important as the constancy of your styling. The best way to create content is to imagine your website as a magazine layout, as opposed to a book. Your average visitor is looking for information that can be easily located. They do not want to hunker down and read page after page of content to find what they need, it also helps to have a clear graphic that represents the information.

a. **Paragraphs:** Considering the notion that websites should be laid out like a magazine, each paragraph should be simple and only a few sentences long. Within that paragraph, it's imperative to make sure the information is easy to understand and provides the user a resource link for further information. The paragraphs should also flow together, each one building upon the last. This will keep the reader interested in the topic and make it easy to follow the flow of information to its conclusion.

b. **Grammar:** The importance of appropriate grammar should go without saying. Unfortunately, there is an inordinate amount of simple grammatical errors on many websites.

Poor grammar can be a huge turnoff to potential customers. How can you expect them to pay for your goods or services when you're not careful enough to make sure your content is grammatically correct? Not everyone is going to nitpick your site to this degree. Those who do, however, are going to let you know about it every time, just to "let you know". It's important to have your content reviewed. . .

Read the Rest Online!
http://bit.ly/Wolveo

Staying In Business: Backup Business Continuity

Step back from your monitor for a moment and take a look at your business. Customers from all over the Upstate New York area and beyond are being helped. You have an inbox full of email from countless prospects and clients, and your activity on the world wide web is literally connecting you around the world. This complex coordination of of resources and people in front of you is called logistics.

Behind this complex picture of logistics there is a plan, methodology, and mentality running the business machine, this is known as a business continuity plan. Strong business growth is intentional and happens from a solid continuity plan. The more resources you invest into your continuity plan, the stronger your business machine will stand up to the unpredictable economy.

Your company data is the key to make everything work. Think of your continuity plan as a blueprint for the logistic machine, and your company data as the oil that keeps the machine running. A loss of data is like running out of oil, when this happens the entire business machine shuts down.

A backup solution will prevent this break down, yet a study done by The Diffusion Group estimates that only 60% of businesses have a backup plan in place! This puts 40% of small-to-medium sized businesses unprotected and at risk. Remember, data loss won't just slow down the logistic machine, it will destroy it. The same study reported that 72% of businesses fail within two years of a major data loss.

There is a saying that your data backup solution constitutes 50% of your business continuity plan. This means, if you do not have think about your backup solution, you have half of your complex continuity plan taken care of! This affords you more time and energy to put into the half of the plan that matters the most to you.

There are many different backup solutions on the market to protect your digital information. It is good to have a back-up plan in place, but like machine oil, not every oil works for every machine. Using external hard drives, tape-drives, or USB thumb drives, are solutions we've seen used, but they aren't very good solutions for a real business continuity model.

We have found that when it comes to data protection, the Backup Disaster Recovery (BDR) solution to be the most reliable and secure solution on the market. BDR continuously backups your data off site, this eliminates the threats from fire, flood, theft, and whatever else is hurled your way. If a disaster does strike, big or small, BDR can act as your network and keep your operations in working order.

Whatever the size and complexity of your logistics machine, your data is vital to keeping your business running. We at Directive are here to help you find the best backup solution for your needs. Call us today at 607.433.2200, and let us handle 50% of your business continuity plan.

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Producing Prime Presentations

(Continued from page 2) different speakers speak in one night. If you are using it for business purposes, following the presentation with a question and answer session would be a way for the audience to completely understand and become involved in the presentation itself. It would give you a forum to cement your points portrayed in your presentation without taking up hours of their time and risk boredom and the backlash that comes with it.

Poll Everywhere
For those of you that would like to incorporate some audience participation into your presentation one resource that is available is one offered called Poll Everywhere. Poll Everywhere is another web-based service that replaces expensive audience response software. It allows audience members to give feedback by answering poll questions using their mobile devices. Poll Everywhere uses mobile social media accounts or text messaging to allow users to answer the poll question making it possible to have a completely interactive presentation. Using a freemium pricing model, Poll Everyone allows users to hold polls to up to 40 people for free. This can be a dynamic tool to use in any presentation, large or small.

For would-be presenters everywhere, considering solutions such as these will go a long way toward keeping your audience attentive and engaged. If you are in the Upstate New York area and would like more information about the technological advances that are being made in business software or you have questions about devices that will make your day-to-day more effective, call Directive at 607.433.2200.
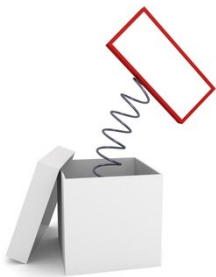
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We partner with many types of businesses in the area, and strive to eliminate IT issues before they cause expensive downtime, so you can continue to drive your business forward. Our dedicated staff loves seeing our clients succeed. Your success is our success, and as you grow, we grow.
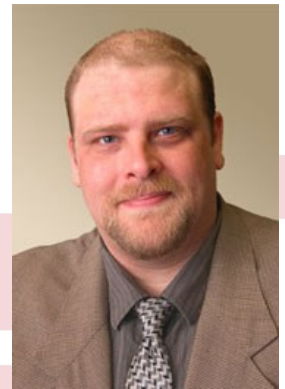
Chris Chase
Solutions Integrator

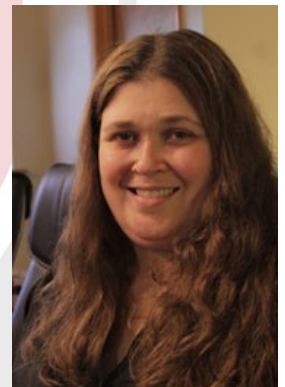# Like our services? Like gifts? We like referrals!

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Here's how it works: Fill out this referral form, sit back and be showered with gifts. As special thanks, you'll receive a small token of our appreciation just for thinking highly enough of Directive to recommend one of your friends. If your referral decides to contract with us for any of our premium IT services, we will reward you with cash or prizes valued up to $500.00. It's that simple. Refer them before somebody else does. Thank you for your business and your vote of confidence.

Check it out Here!
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Like our services? Like gifts? How about combining the two? Let US reward YOU for being a loyal customer. A FREE iPad is ONE Friend Away.

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THIS WAS YOUR FILE & DOCUMENT BACKUP PLAN?