DIGITAL MEDIA WORKS

make it easy to buy.

MindMap Your Website to Increase Revenue

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INTRODUCTION

Creating online marketing solutions to take advantage of new business opportunities and ongoing problems can be challenging when you wear most or all of the company "hats." Finding time and methods to strategize are almost impossible.

If you don't have an ongoing way to generate new revenue you will have:

> Wasted time and money spent on unworkable solutions
>
> Lack of "buy-in" from third parties
>
> Disorganized thinking and planning
>
> Websites that make it hard to buy products
>
> Chaos masquerading as "out-of-the-box" thinking

A proven technique can make a big difference when planning and strategizing. MindMapping is a step-by-step method that helps you develop your ideas in a productive, cost-effective way. This process can incorporate the best principles of branding, direct marketing, sales, design, usability and Web analytics.

After your Digimap sessions are complete you can have:

A working tool that helps you solve business problems

A clear understanding of resources needed to complete tasks

A complete look at ongoing budget needs

A strong website that meets your goals

...and much more!

BACKGROUND

In the late 60's Tony Buzan developed a technique he called "Mind Mapping" to make use of the latest in brain research. His goal was to help people use all their cortical skills, i.e. word, image, number, etc. to learn and problem solve. This technique has grown and developed over the years as brain research becomes more sophisticated.

In our work with clients, Digital Media Works, (DMW) has adapted this method and called it "Digimaps™" (for digital brain maps) to take advantage of all all your resources.

As you know, the marketing group has their way of looking at things, the developers theirs, and management, still another. When Digimaps are applied to interactive design (or any business problem) it removes the barriers and helps each group apply its best creative knowledge.

PROCESS

DWM was asked to help a client analyze and redesign their current website. They wanted to make it easier for their customers to find information and buy products.

A Digimap session was called which included "major stakeholders" from several different departments. This included marketing, sales, management, development, customer service, shipping, etc. Less than 8 people make a good opening group. All departments that

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"impact" the website should be included. You can also do preliminary planning with one or two key members before including a larger group. Digimaps work with groups of any size.

After a presentation of the Digimaps process, we began by looking at the websites of two of their strongest competitors. Starting with two previously "completed" Digimaps helped everyone see how the process worked and highlighted the best of each.

We quickly looked at these completed maps labeled "Competitor 1 & 2" to take attention away from specifics. These were only 'top line' Digimaps with major home page branches. We focused strictly on the essentials—the information their competitor's visitors see first. We didn't compare look and feel or complexity of back-end systems. This helped to crystallize what their competitors thought was most important, an eye-opening experience.

Next we moved to their Digimap. They were already actively thinking about what their competitors were doing and how they could do it better. The Digimap quickly grew and evolved. We knew that their competitors were providing a variety of information formats so they proceeded to beef up their information area. By constructing a quicker path to buy a product, they were well on their way to improving conversion rates. We spent the next two hours developing a very strong design.

Next, we allowed the map to incubate overnight. Everyone was eager to keep going, but was physically tired. This was a good time to stop. I recommend no more that 2 hours for the first session.   A good session can be completed in 1-2 hours.

During the incubation period, I "re-imaged" the map to make sure everything was captured. I asked team members to review it to make sure it captured all the ideas we generated. We began the next session and the map continued to evolve until it contained solutions to all the customer issues they could think of. (See a sample Digimap below.)

My design/development team then took the map and started to focus on the information they needed to develop work plans. Now that they had a grasp of the big picture goals and the details, they could efficiently plan for resource usage, budgets, design etc. This is key because it saves time and money — you don't have big revelations after development has begun. We proceeded to review and complete the steps until the new website was up and running.

This method works very well in corporate setting where the staff has diverse skills. Rather than focus on their skills, you focus on ideas. People feel they are on firm ground and are more likely to share ideas and look for solutions. This is exactly the kind of atmosphere you want to create when groups congregate to solve business problems.

DIGIMAPS ™

Here is a sample Digimap in progress:
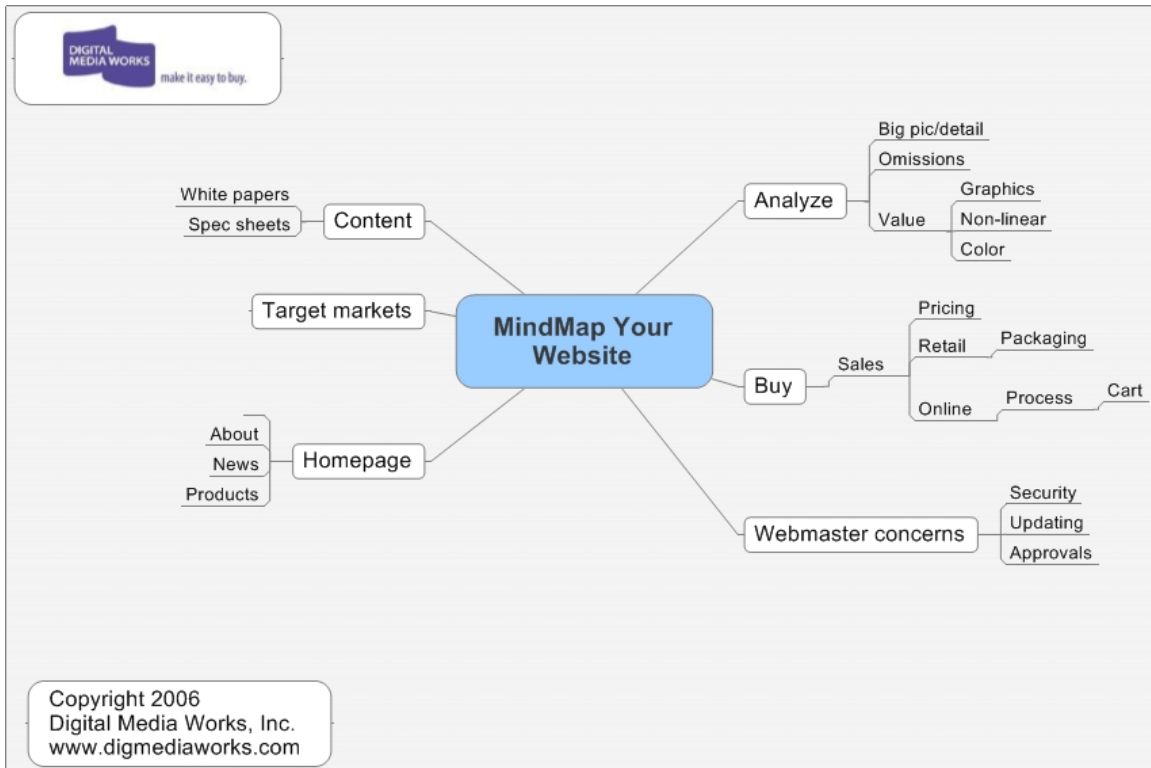
ADVANTAGES

There are four main advantages to conducting a Digimap problem solving session:

•   Promotes teamwork

The first is that it's non-linear. This makes all ideas important and eliminates ideas chosen by employee rankings. When there are open spaces on the map branches, the brain wants closure. Everyone wants them to be filled in. This promotes teamwork.

•   View Big Picture/Details

The second is it provides a look at the "big picture" and the details at the same time. This helps managers focus on their concerns while those tasked with the details can focus on their part of the puzzle and everyone can see the whole.

•   Spots omissions

The third is it highlights omissions. When you follow the same process and look at the same lists you forget or "don't see" what's missing. Looking at the material in a new way helps you analyze it.

•   UTILIZES CREATIVITY

The fourth is it stimulates everyone's creativity by using pictures and colors, lines of different widths and spaces. Programmers use their special skills and designers and managers use their unique skills.

SUMMARY

Digimaps ™ help companies analyze and solve their most pressing problems. You can clearly define your problems and utilize your employees' strongest ideas to create great solutions.

Call us today at 914-765-0720 to schedule a Digimaps ™ session.