

11 Church Website Don'ts

1. **Think nobody uses the internet to find a church** – People of all ages log onto their computers to find quick and easy information on everything, including churches. Having a decent church website will draw in visitors to come to your services.
2. **Have the youngest person on your staff create your website** – Growing up using Google does not qualify somebody as an expert in church web design. There are many easily avoidable mistakes that first time designers make when creating a church website. Unfortunately, many of these mistakes can drive off potential visitors or new members.
3. **Assume that EVERYBODY understands your church jargon** – Many words that have clear meaning to clergy will mean something different to a visitor to your website. If a visitor feels lost among the jargon they will be turned off and leave your website.
4. **Refuse to post your service times** – One of the biggest reasons a visitor comes to a church website is to find the service times so make it easy for them.
5. **Only have content with no pictures** – Visitors will gain more of a “feel” of your church community if they are able to view pictures of the services, events and even current church members. Pictures, along with content, have definitely make your church feel more inviting to visitors.
6. **Ignore the children** – It is difficult to bring in the younger generations to church. Include an easy to find section of your website that mentions all of the childrens' programs and activities that your church offers.
7. **Make visitors feel lost and unwelcome** – A new visitors page is a MUST for any church hoping to gain new members. This should be a short description of what to expect at your church and how to get more information.
8. **Hide your contact information** You want visitors to be able to easily ask church staff questions via phone or e-mail. If they can't find a way to contact them then they will likely leave the website in frustration.
9. **Make every page look different** – If each page has a completely different look visitors will spend too much of their time trying to figure out if they are still on your church's website. You want visitors to read your content without distraction.
10. **Ignore submitting your website to search engines** Even the best designed website is useless to bring in visitors unless they can find it. Submit your church website to all of the major search engines, such as Google and Yahoo.
11. **Test your website in only one browser** Unfortunately every browser interprets a website differently. Yours could look great in Safari on a Mac, but look awful in Internet Explorer on a PC.

Paul Pennel is the Owner and Designer for Minnow Web Design. For help making your small business website to be the best it can be visit www.minnowwebdesign.com or call Paul at 314.249.4690.