

Web Terminologies

Does your web design company use web design terms that you don't fully understand? This could be hindering you from fully understanding their web design quotes, explanations for their website recommendations or excuses for failure in carrying out a web related task. So we've put together a mini glossary to aid you...

ACROBAT

Acrobat is another word for PDF file, but technically it is the program you need to read/create PDF files (Adobe Acrobat reader/distiller)

APPLET

A program written in the Java programming language that can be included in an HTML page, and can contain flashy effects or useful programming.

ASP

Active Server Pages. A specification that enables Web pages to be dynamically created, or to access information from a database. The default language for writing ASP pages is VBScript, but other languages can also be used.

BANDWIDTH

The amount of data that can be sent over a connection in a fixed amount of time. Bandwidth is measured in bits per second (bps), kilobits per second (kbps), or megabits per second (mps).

BLOG

Short for weblog, which is an online journal that is usually created for public viewing. Some blogs are interactive, in that readers can comment on entries within the blog.

BROWSER

The window that you view the website in. Can be powered by Internet Explorer, Netscape Navigator, Opera, and many more.

BTL / ATL / TTL

BTL (Below The Line) advertising refers to print media such as brochures and flyers. ATL (Above The Line) advertising refers to expensive media like TV & radio. TTL (Through The Line) is a

mixture of the previous two.

CAD

Acronym for Computer Aided Design or Computer Assisted Drafting. This is usually a software package like AutoCad used by Engineers for Technical Drawing.

CGI

Common Gateway Interface. Server side program that allows for data to be passed between web applications.

COLD FUSION

Macromedia's attempt at a specification that enables Web pages to be dynamically created, or to access information from a database. The default language for writing Cold Fusion pages is CFML (Cold Fusion Markup Language), and the page extension is .cfm.

CONTENT

The pictures and copy (text) that make up a website.

COOKIES

Small files created by a programming/scripting language to hold information like the times and dates you have visited websites or user and password validation on member sections in websites.

CSS

Acronym for cascading style sheet An external document specifying things like colour and font types that your website reads to get it's style attributes from.

DEPRECATED

Usually referring to an HTML tag that is no longer used, which is usually because a better way of doing it has been specified.

DHTML

Dynamic HTML. Refers to the use of a combination of HTML, CSS and JavaScript to create small animations, effects and dynamic menus on a website.

DOWNLOAD & UPLOAD

Download is when you 'get' a file from another computer on the Internet. Upload is when you 'give' a file to another computer on the Internet.

DNS

Domain Name Service is a system that translates domain names into IP numbers using a DNS server.

DOCTYPE

Document Type Declaration specifies the HTML version used in the page.

DOMAIN NAME

The address of your website (e.g. coza-web.co.za or google.com)

DPI / PPI

Dots Per Inch / Pixels Per Inch. The number of pixels within a square inch. Used to determine whether a picture has high, medium or low resolution. Pictures for web should have 72 ppi. Pictures to be printed on deskjet printers should have 150 ppi. Pictures to be printed at Repro houses should have 300 ppi.

EMAIL SPAM & SEARCH ENGINE SPAM

Most people are familiar with email spam, which is unsolicited mail that keeps appearing in your mail box. In short...junk mail. Search engine spam is when someone tries to deliberately trick a search engine into giving their site better ranking than it deserves through various methods like hidden text on the page or submitting the site to the same engine more than once a month. Sites caught spamming are penalised and ultimately removed.

FLASH

2D animation created in Macromedia Flash. Can have an swf extension for websites or an exe extension for digital presentations. You will need a flash player installed on your machine to view SWF files.

FORUM

An online discussion where readers can state their opinions and ask or answer each others questions regarding a specific subject using online forms.

FRAMES

Two or more HTML pages combined within a single browser screen. This allows scrolling regions on different sections of a web page.

FTP

File Transfer Protocol. Downloading or uploading files from or to computers using an FTP program or your internet browser in folder view. Usually you will need a log in and password for the particular computer you want to upload to or download from in order to this.

GIF

Graphic Interchange Format. A type of picture file usually with a small file size. GIF files can be animated or stationery, transparent or opaque. GIF files derive their size from the number of colours in the picture rather than PPI.

HOST

The physical machine that the files that make up your website are located on. This is a remote machine whose contents can be accessed via the TCP/IP network. A host machine should always be on-line.

HTML

Hyper Text Markup Language. The language used for creating web pages.

HYPERLINK

An image (referred to as a hotspots) or text that link to another page or within the same page (referred to as bookmarks)

IMAGE OPTIMISATION

The act of reducing the file size of a picture while still retaining an acceptable amount of quality for the web.

IP ADDRESS

Internet Protocol Address. Every machine connected to the Internet has a unique IP Address. This is one avenue that the authorities use to track down hackers, although I believe there is software available to create a dynamic (always changing) IP address.

JAVA

Besides being an Indonesian island south of Borneo that makes good coffee, it is also programming language by Sun Microsystems used for writing Java applets.

JAVASCRIPT

A scripting language that can be embedded in an HTML page or accessed by an HTML page as an external document (.js) to create effects or useful programming, such as form validation.

JPEG

Joint Photographic Experts Group. A type of picture file usually with a small file size. JPEG files derive their size from the PPI (pixels per inch).

KERNING

Horizontal spacing between letters of a word or sentence.

LEADING

Vertical spacing between lines of text in a paragraph/list.

MARQUEE

A small area of the browser window that can scroll or blink text at the reader. Usually used for announcements and specials.

META DATA / TAG

Part of the backend (not visible to the viewer) of an HTML page providing information about the page like the title, whether or not the data should be cached and the description & keywords for search engine optimisation.

MOUSEOVER

The action of moving the mouse over a targeted area or link. This (like mouseUp, mouseDown, onKeyPress, onChange etc.) can be used to trigger an event using a script.

MYSQL

An open source relational database management system that uses SQL (structured Query

Language). Typically used in conjunction with PHP and run on Apache server, but it can be run on IIS aswell.

ONE-WAY & RECIPROCAL LINKS

A one-way link is when a website links to your website and you don't link back. Google regards one-way links as a measure of how useful your website is and this can affect your ranking. This is the best kind, but also the most difficult to get. So many sites have started offering reciprocal links (you link to me & I'll link to you), as this will also affect your ranking.

ORGANIC SEO

The art of search engine optimisation by obtaining one-way links from other websites without actively submitting your site. This can be attained by having useful and up to date content on your site, that people want to link to.

PAGE RANK

Google Page Rank is an algorithm developed by Google to measure the quality and number of links to a given page. Rank ranges from 0 (poor) to 10 (phenominal).

PERL

Practical Extracting and Reporting Language. A programming language often used in conjunction with CGI. Somewhat like PHP, but more advanced.

PERMALINK

Permanent Link. A link that readers can use to bookmark a current blog or forum post. This is sometimes necessary due to the dynamic nature of blogs and forums.

PIXEL

The smallest part or single grid point of a raster image.

PNG

Portable Network Graphics. A type of picture file that can be transparent or opaque. Often used within flash files because of it's superior compression.

PHP

The inventors of PHP are vague about what it stands for, but despite this, many insist that it stands

for Hypertext Preprocessor. An open source programming language that enables Web pages to be dynamically created, or to access information from a database. The most used and fastest growing of programming languages and arguably the easiest to learn. Ususally used in conjunction with MySQL.

POP UPS

An advert or content that opens in a separate browser window to the one that you are currently viewing.

PORTAL

A gateway website that is also a directory. It can contain a catalogue of other sites, a search engine, free email and forums etc. Search Engines, like Yahoo and most banks are portals.

PLUG-IN

Small applications that can be installed and used as an add-on feature to your web browser, for example flash player and java software.

RASTER & VECTOR IMAGES

A raster image made up of pixels, for example a photograph. You can tell an image is raster if you stretch it bigger, and it begins to distort. A vector image is made up of paths (lines that link to form shapes), for example clip art. Vector images do not distort if you enlarge them.

ROI

Acronym for Return On Income or Return On Invested Capital.

ROLL OVERS

Graphics that change when you move your mouse over them. For example, a button that has an up state and an over state.

SCREEN RESOLUTION & REFRESH RATE

Your screen resolution is the size that your screen is set to. The default was 800x600, but is moving towards 1024x768. Resolutions like 640x480 are not really used anymore, but can be useful if your monitor is smaller than a 15 inch monitor. Your refresh rate is the rate at which your monitor picture refreshes. The default is usually too low (60 or 65) and can cause headaches and eye strain. Set your refresh rate to at least 70!

SEO

Search Engine Optimisation. The job of optimising a website so that search engine bots can crawl it without errors, and extract necessary meta data, and keyword density to give a good ranking.

SERIF & SANS SERIF

Serifs are the short strokes that appear on the ends of some characters of a typeface (font) like **This**. Sans serif means "without serif" and refers to clean typefaces (fonts) like **this**.

SERP

Acronym for Search Engine Results Page

SITEMAPS & GOOGLE SITEMAPS

An ordinary sitemap is a page with links to all the pages within the website laid out in a tree format. A Google sitemap is an XML document that lets Google know what parts of your site are important.

TAG

Also known as Markup tags or HTML tags. Used in the backend code to define parts of a web page so that it displays and formats correctly in the front end.

URL

Uniform Resource Locator. The address of a webpage or file. Starts with 'http://' (hypertext transfer protocol) and usually, but not always has 'www' (world wide web) followed by a domain name and or folder name and or page name, and ends with an extension like '.co.za' (South Africa) '.co.uk' (Britain) '.com' (commerce) '.net' (network) '.biz' (business) '.org' (organisation, usually non-profit) etc.

W3C

World Wide Web Consortium. A group of companies that set the international standards for HTML and web.

WYSIWYG

What you see, is what you get.

XHTML

The language that is set to take over HTML 4.0. It is a hybrid between HTML & XML, and is more strict than HTML.

XML

Extensible Markup Language. A language that allows users to create their own custom tags.