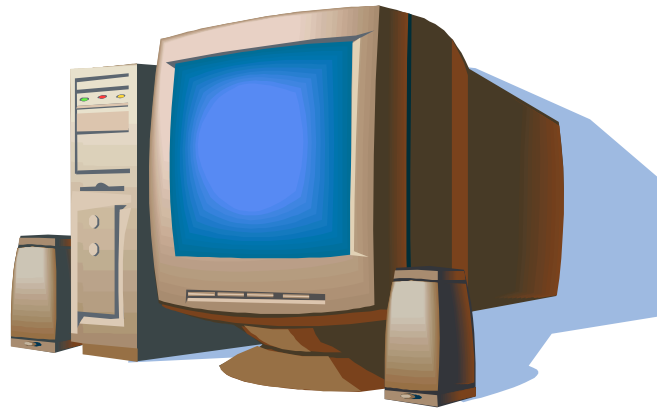


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Unit 4

Investigating Electronic Business



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Introduction

Just recently, within the past couple of years businesses have been establishing their own websites and are using the internet in a big way to advertise their business, their products and as another way of generally promoting as well.

Within this assignment I am going to understand the purpose of an online presence for a business. To do this I will investigate the business aims and objectives. For example, increasing sales, the maximisation of profit, attracting new staff, improving customer services, cost cutting, increasing efficiency and appealing to the global marketing. Also, how the organisation provides effective communication for example the global business, available 24 hours, 7 days a week and the visual factors. Another way would be how the flexibility of the location of the business is achieved and whether or not the website the organisation has set up is user-friendly and responsive.

Secondly, I will understand the impact that having a website has on a business by understanding the impact of the website on customers, competitors, suppliers and the overall business itself. Also the short-term effects of the website, positive and negative, along with what the long-term effects could be if the website was not to be updated when necessary. Lastly what the business should include on the website and the impact on the business in having a website.

Thirdly, to understand factors influencing the establishment of an online presence, I will analyse the relevant and up to date legislation and the selling regulations that apply to an online business. Also the cost implications of the online overall web design, consultancy, employing the relevant staff, the hardware and software costs needed or used and training. Also show the opportunity created by the presence of the electronic business like the increased the efficiency for online orders and more. Also what makes an effective website and the visual criteria or the site design including factors such as the navigation, timings, ease of use, effort, user satisfaction, media rich versus functionally able and how well it reaches the target customer.

Lastly, I will understand the requirements needed for the planning or establishment of a new website. I will do this by considering the use of

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appropriate web authority tools and the industry standards with respect to web presence, domain name creation, registration services, maintenance and listings with internet service providers. Also how the appropriate use of design would help the promotional basis of the business along with the style of advertising chosen.

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eBusiness

An eBusiness is an electronic business so it would apply to any business conducted using electronic media. An eBusiness is also another term that is used to describe businesses run on the Internet to basically improve the productivity or profitability of a business.

Online Presence

Having an online presence helps to invest in the future of the business and unleash potential of what the web may be able to do for that business. Having an online presence can benefit the business by a range of things like for example:

- It can attract a wider and new online audience potential about the existing business.
- If the business was to be home, based then the business would benefit as they would save profit.
- The store would never close as it would be a virtual store.
- Surveys and questionnaires would be used as a pop up on the customers screen so it would be easier to tally up the results in order to better the businesses online service.
- You wouldn't have to employ as many as employees.

The customer would usually search for their desired product and/or service online before actually making the purchase. This would act as an advantage to the business as this would give them an advantage over the businesses competition as your products would be seen before theirs. However, this does depend on who the competition is.

You are able to present a twenty four seven online business. This would enable the customer to access the online store when ever they please or whenever they have any spare time. As this would be an online store you wouldn't actually close. Customers would also be able to learn about the business and perhaps reduce the amount of phone calls made about the information on your online business, as the questions would already have been answered on the businesses website, for example, on the FAQ page.

The businesses website may also provide support to the customer by offering information on things such as, troubleshooting procedures,

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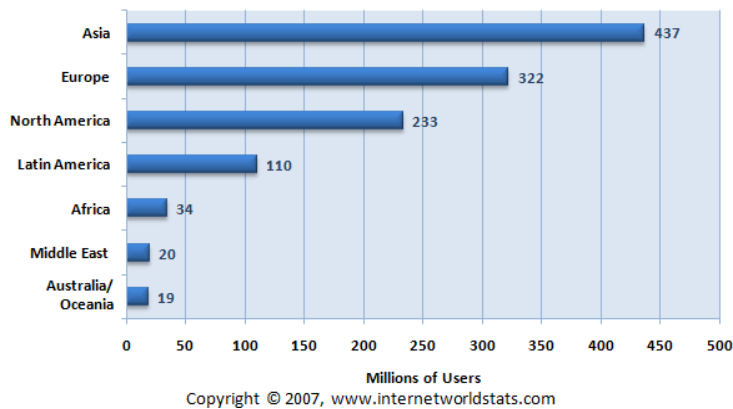
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product specification, diagrams and more. With this helpful information online, available twenty four seven, the business may reduce the staff that work within the customer services department. There could be a chance that the business website could be a good information source for the public by perhaps supplying a variety of helpful tips and information that may be relevant to your industry. As a result of this, visitors would have a reason to come back and continue re-visiting the site. The business may then monitor the number of hits their website may encounter over a period of time to monitor how well their online presence may be doing.

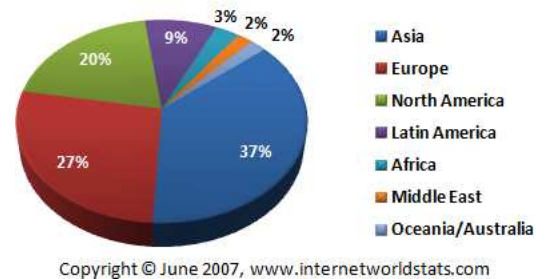
Target Market

The graph below is a graph representing how much the internet is used today around the world region in today's world. The reason as to why I have used the following graph and pie chart is because it mainly shows the internet usage around the world. A business would generally need to know this as if there wasn't any access to the internet then their would be no point in a business having an online presence.

Internet Usage by World Region

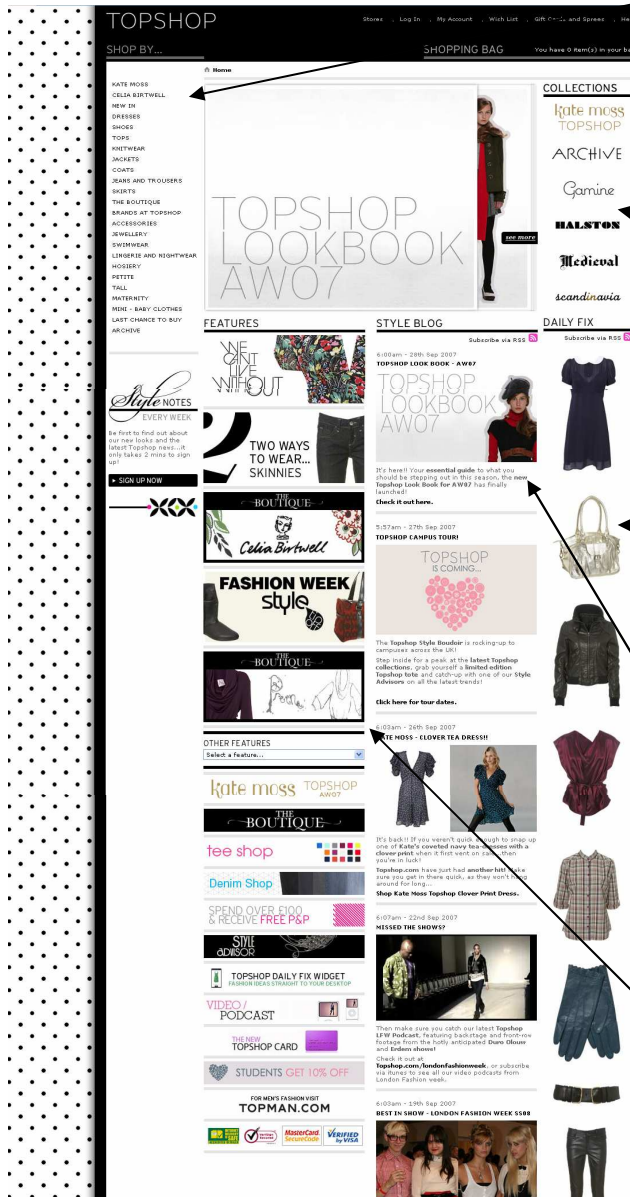


World Internet Users



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TopShop - Content



On the top left hand side of the page is the options available to browse through the rest of the choices and items available on their website.

There are more links placed on the right hand side, opposite the main hyperlinks, offering and showing you a range of collections.

The images placed down the right hand side are the new products in store. A hyperlink goes straight to the details of the general product.

The column placed in the middle of the page going down in a list which is called the 'style blog' which allows you to get up to date with the latest fashion styles out.

The website also has a features section placed on the left middle of the page next to the style blog which entitles the consumer to also browse through new clothes available or perhaps coming soon.

Screen shots taken from:
<http://www.topshop.com/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/TopCategoriesDisplay?storeId=12556&catalogId=19551>

The main reason as to why Topshop has used the features above would be because it is easy to navigate as well as the fact that the homepage is packed with information as soon as you are introduced to the overall homepage as you have events that are about to occur and more information on the subject, for example the new clothe lines being released soon.

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Regular Updates

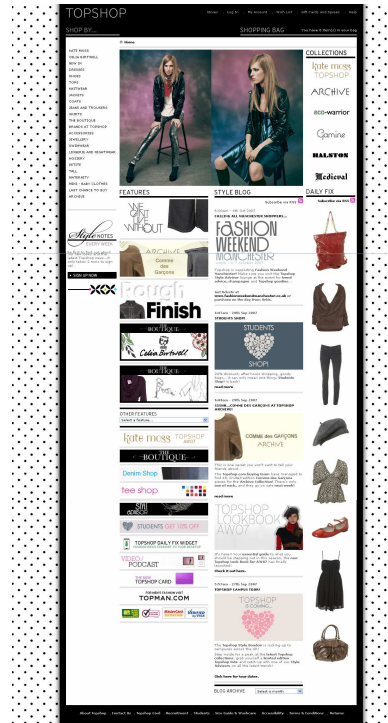
28/9/2007



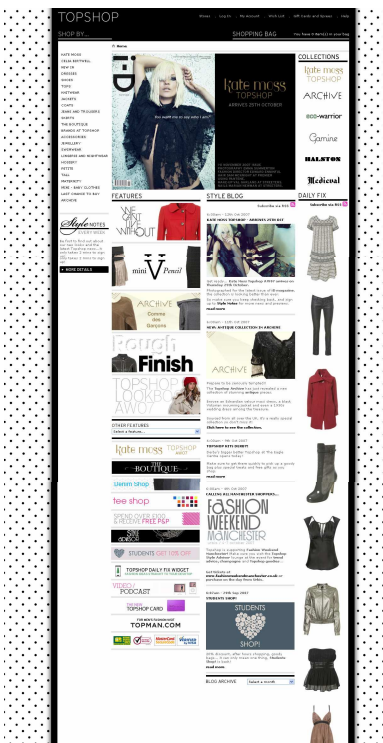
Print screens taken from;
<http://www.topshop.com/w/ebapp/wcs/stores/servlet/TopCategoriesDisplay?storeId=12556&catalogId=19551>

Print screens taken from;
<http://www.topshop.com/w/ebapp/wcs/stores/servlet/TopCategoriesDisplay?storeId=12556&catalogId=19551>

05/10/2007



12/11/2007



Print screens taken from;
<http://www.topshop.com/w/ebapp/wcs/stores/servlet/TopCategoriesDisplay?storeId=12556&catalogId=19551>

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Topshop regularly updates their website, roughly, once a week. When I observed my previous screen shot last week on the 28th September the site had been updated as the main image had changed to another image and the images on the side had been changed. They were the new products for offer within the store at the moment. Topshop may do this as an advantage scheme to them as well as the customers as the customers would be able to see the brand new products online that may also be available within store giving the customers a first hand experience with the products.

Load Time 

Topshop's website doesn't take long to load all features provided and the general website. One of the reasons however why it may have loaded up as quick as Topshops online presence may have might have been because the school provide us with a fairly quick internet connection at 10 meg which would be quite quick. However the advantages of the Topshop site loading quickly would be the fact that customers would not have to wait for the homepage to load, therefore they would not become impatient and carry on returning to the site as it would be classed as quick and informative.

Compatibility

Topshop is compatible with a range of different software as it is a popular website that attracts a different range of customers. Topshop also displays some slide shows on the home page which allows the item being showed to be displayed to the customer viewing the website. Having a website being compatible with a range of different software enables customers to view the website with ease as there is more than one application able to run with whatever may be compatible to the customer. This would give them no problems when using the website. Topshop also provide podcasts too.

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Accessibility

THE ACCESSIBILITY OF TOPSHOP.COM

This site has been designed and constructed to the W3C's WAI accessibility AA rating. This means that the site can be navigated using the tab button and by pre-defined access keys.

The site can also be read by **screen readers, Braille** displays and other access devices. **There is a list of access devices** available for people with different impairments further down the page.

You can also find more information on by following the **web accessibility links** at the bottom of the page.

This site has been designed and constructed to the W3C's WAI accessibility AA rating. This means that the site can be navigated using the tab button and by pre-defined access keys.

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You can also find more information on by following the **web accessibility links** at the bottom of the page.

ACCESS KEYS

You can access the key features of TOPSHOP.COM without the need for a mouse using the following access keys:

C - Jump to main Content

N - Jump to primary Navigation

S - Skip navigation

1 - Home page

4 - Search

To navigate with access keys:

Windows

Hold down the 'Alt' key and the access key, followed by the 'Enter' key

Macintosh

Hold down the 'Ctrl' key and the access key.

The pages on this website comply with the recommended UK Government access keys standard.

IMAGES

All content images on this site are provided with descriptive ALT attributes.

Where images contain important information, such as graphs and charts, alternative information is provided in the form of inline descriptions of tabular data.

NAVIGATION

All pages contain a link to the home page (access key 1) and search box (access key 4).

Jump to main content (access key C) is available to users of screen readers and speech browsers, to bypass graphical and navigational elements - such as the logo and header components - and jump directly to the main navigation.

Jump to primary Navigation (access key S) is available to users of screen readers and speech browsers, to bypass graphical elements - such as the logo and header components - and jump directly to the main navigation.

Skip navigation (access key S) is available to users of screen readers and speech browsers, to bypass repeated page elements - such as the top and side navigation links - and jump directly to the page content.

ACCESSIBILITY DEVICES

Screen Readers:

VoiceOver (Mac)

Jaws (Win)

Window-Eyes (Win)

Emacspeak (Linux)

Braille Displays:

Focus (Win)

Brailliant (Mac)

BrailleNote (Linux)

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FURTHER INFORMATION RESOURCES ON ACCESSIBILITY

Disability Discrimination Act (UK)
Section 508 (US)
W3C Web Accessibility Initiative

(the above is taken from

<http://www.topshop.com/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/StaticPageDisplay?storeId=12556&catalogId=19551&identifier=ts1%20accessibility>)

The above is Topshops key to how accessible they are and looking from the above they are even able to suit the blinds needs as they are able to transform it into Braille format as well as short cut tabs for others. This would be beneficial to Topshop as they would attract a wider target audience.

HCI

Topshops online website is detailed in a very basic way as it is also easy to use because all of the categories, hyperlinks and pictures are stated along the whole of the homepage. The homepage is easy to navigate as all the categories found on the top left going down in a list on the left of the page are easy to use as they open up into more options before it actually changes to the page you want to actually visit.

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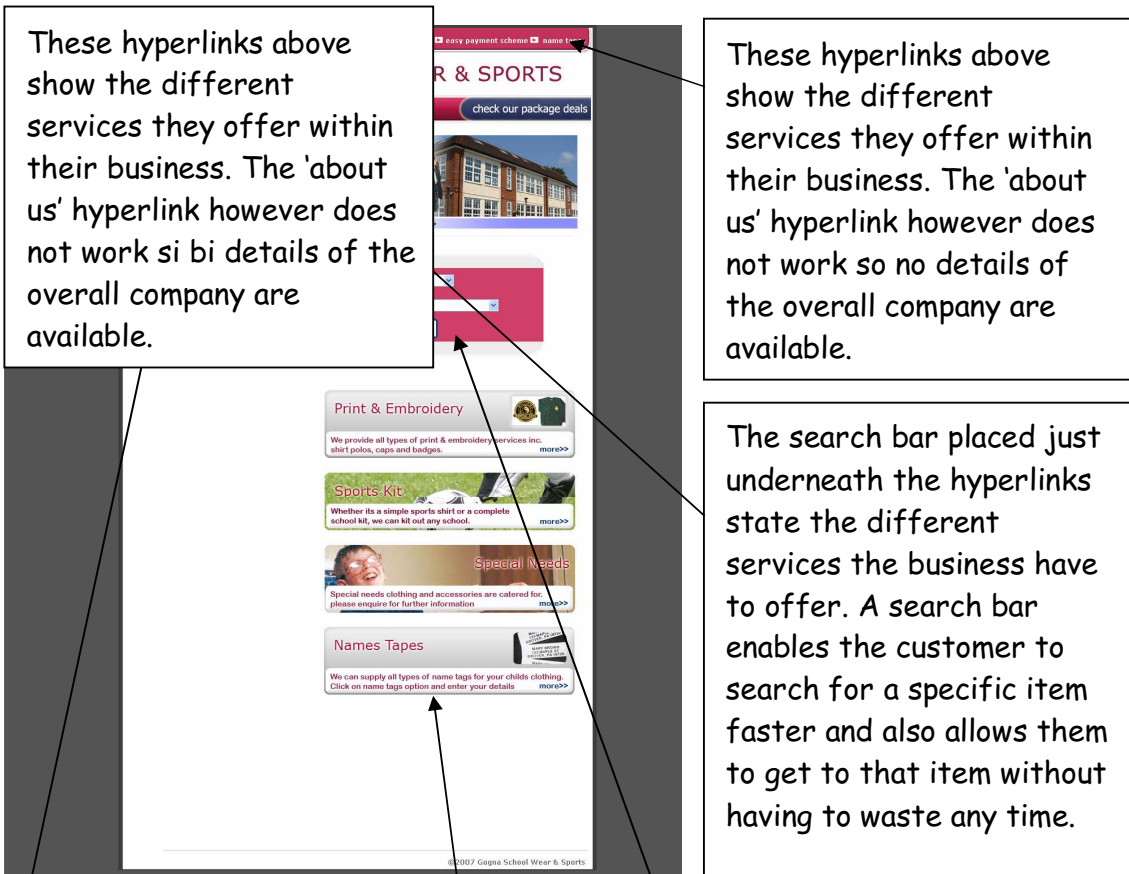
Aims and objectives

Aim- "Topshop's sole aim was to copy the catwalk and to establish Topshop's reputation in design, ultimately positioning the brand as an authority in fashion"

Objective- "Topshop employs the service of top fashion stylists including Camille Biddault-Waddington, Sophia Neophitou and most recently Cathy Edwards to style a catwalk show"

Overall I think that Top Shops aims have been met as it is a fashion website therefore being updated regularly and new fashion items being put up regularly. This allows there customers to always be updat ed with the latest fashion out instead of the business leaving their customers hanging.

Gogna School Wear - Content



These hyperlinks above show the different services they offer within their business. The 'about us' hyperlink however does not work so no details of the overall company are available.

These hyperlinks above show the different services they offer within their business. The 'about us' hyperlink however does not work so no details of the overall company are available.

The search bar placed just underneath the hyperlinks state the different services the business have to offer. A search bar enables the customer to search for a specific item faster and also allows them to get to that item without having to waste any time.

Here are some more hyperlinks stating the different departments, although, it comes up with a blank page with no information about the actual departments of the business.

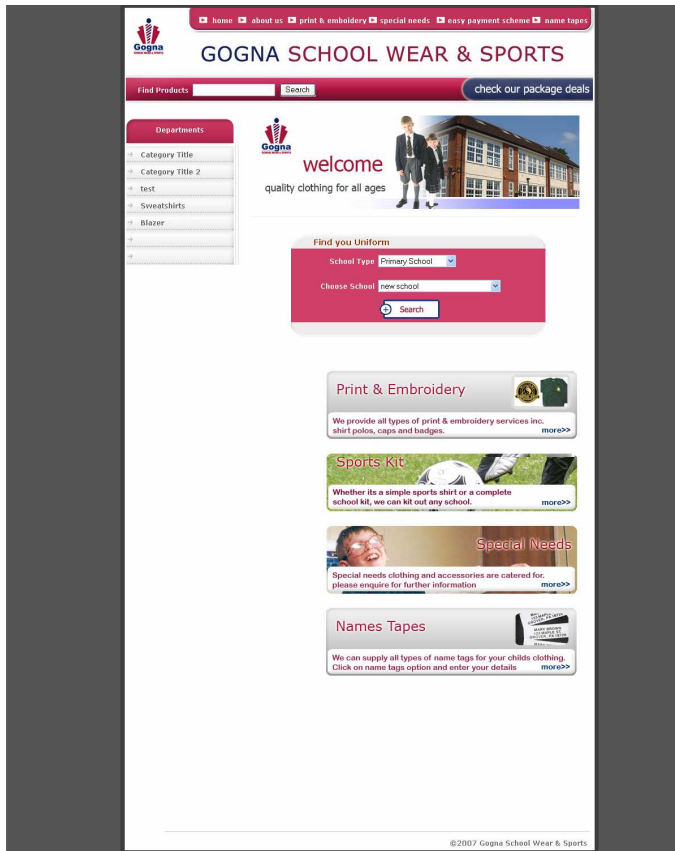
Another search bar is on the homepage but provides the options in which you may be looking for. This would not be useful at the moment, as they only supply no more than 3 options. This would then give little information on the different items they offer.

These image hyperlinks show the other uniform types the business have to offer, as well like the sports kits, for example.

Print screen taken from <http://www.gognaschoolwear.co.uk/>

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Regular Updates

18/10/2007



Print screen taken from
<http://www.gognaschoolwear.co.uk/>

At the moment no changes have been made to the overall Gogna website therefore no updates would have been made to the overall website.

Load Time 

The Gogna website does not take too long to load as there isn't much displayed on their actual home page.

Compatibility

The Gogna website is very simple so it wouldn't be compatible with a lot of software. As it is hardly updated, it doesn't require specific software to access the actual content of the general website.

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Accessibility

Gogna isn't very accessible as it doesn't offer screen readers or Braille displays or other access devices. There are also no access keys to this web page, as the usual ones do not work. The navigation of the page is generally fairly easy to use although there aren't any access keys to use. There are no accessibility devices either making it hard for the website to attract different audiences.

HCI

The appearance of the general website is very basic with very little hyperlinks and information. Some of the hyperlinks when clicked on don't actually work like the 'about us' hyper link doesn't actually change the page once clicked onto it as it stays on the homepage. The website also has limited pictures which makes the website look a bit dull and perhaps boring to the customers that visit this website. The website also doesn't contain a lot of information on the layout and the overall navigation of it. The hyperlinks are placed at the top of the website in a very basic and small printed font going from left to right horizontally placed. There are also more hyperlinks placed on the left hand side of the website and very basic images further down the website.

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Aims and Objectives

Since Gogna's Aims and Objectives were not available anywhere on their website so I called the business and asked them personally and they replied that their aim was to:

"Expand the business, aiming to get more schools to use our company for their uniforms and kits."

This website however does not meet the aims of the overall business as the options are limited when it comes to the choices of the schools listed on the actual website. Therefore the business does not meet the aims of the business.

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Recommendations

There are many recommendations that can be suggested in order for the business to create a good online presence such as:

- Update the website regularly
- Check Links
- More products on show

Update The Website Regularly

Updating the website is vital for the business as it shows the new products available within store and perhaps they care about the customers too as they would be informing them about what's new and in at the moment. Improving the website could also increase the hits and the amount of customers that actually use the website. Updating the website would also allow customers to see a different side to gogna as they are always greeted with the same homepage with the same items.

Check Links

Because the website is not updated regularly the business has not got links that work when clicked on. As a result of this customers will not bother visiting the website as information wanted will not be able to be accessed it.

More Products On Show

Currently on the website there are links leading to different products and once the link has been clicked there is nothing actually on the pages like for examples if you were to click on the skirts like no products would actually show up relating to that actual product. As a result of this customers would not be notified of what products would be new and in at that moment. It was also show what uniforms would be sold there as well also helping to attract the correct customers.

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The opportunities and constraints of a business having a web presence

Constraints

There are many constraints of a business having a web presence such as some of the following:

- Copyright and data protection act
- Content
- Spam/pop ups
- Graphics/appearance
- Layout/navigation
- Download speed
- Accessibility
- Online shopping competition

Copyright and Data Protection Act

The Copyright and Data Protection Act lies as a constraint as although it would protect valuable data of the business whether it be personal or genuinely for the business or paper based or computerised, it is easy to break this act as there are many people with the ability to hack into certain systems of any business.

Copyright

As a result of this act, the act would protect the genuine logo for example against any other business as another business may use a logo like the original business but not be permitted to have exactly the same one.

Content

Content is another way in which would be classed as what I think and opportunity would be as this allows you to place different items in different places when updating the ebusiness as this will allow the newest products for examples to be noticed more easily than the old ones which would keep the customers notified of what would be coming into the business and the new services that the business would offer.

Spam/Pop Ups

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Spam/Pop ups are an easy opportunity for an online business as it makes customers aware of the business and its services that it has to offer and increase the hits of the general website as well as clicking on the pop ups would take the customer straight to the website of that business. Spam/Pop ups also allow the business to advertise cheaply also helping to create awareness of the business as well.

Graphics/Appearance

Graphics and appearance would easily be classed as an opportunity as it would attract customers to the business if it were to contain an attractive appearance the business would receive more hits due to this and it may create curiosity within the customer due to the attractive appearance of the business, as a result to this the customer may want to explore more on the business products and services that they would then offer. However if the business was to have an unappealing appearance then customers may not want to view the website due to first impressions and may not want to explore the online business.

Eg..

Competition spam copyright and data protection act download speed security

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Justification For Setting Up a Website

After conducting some research on what it takes for a business to obtain a good online presence, I will now use the research in which I have conducted on what gives a good online presence, to create a good online presence of my own for my ebusiness which is a service that looks after the customers pets while they are away on either holiday or any other reason.



The above is a screen shot taken from a rough idea on how I would present an online presence if I was to make one for my business. I think that this would generally be classed as a good online presence as I have appropriate images that link in with my business. There is a clear and appropriate heading of the name of the my business. I have then gone on to explain a little introduction and a small welcome to my customers briefly explaining what my business is basically about. I also have a little logo in the top left corner of the page for my business. Going down the left hand side are my links. I have placed them there as they are easy to find and the navigation is fairly simple and easy to use. All of this I generally thing that this would be classed as a good online presence as although there is little information on my online presence it is fairly simple and easy to use.

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The above is a screen shot showing the services I would offer for my business and I have also clearly stated the payment scheme for when I would look after the pets. I have also stated the pets in which I would be qualified to care for whilst the customer is away. The links placed on the left hand side I have placed in the same place as the home screen as it is easy to use and navigate when using the website. Having everything stay consistent throughout the whole of my online presence makes it look neater and more professional therefore giving a positive online presence.

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Within this screen shot I have described briefly about me and my business and a bit about the services that my business would offer to the customer for if they would want me to sit their pets. I have also kept it short as it wouldn't take up much of the customers time and give them an idea of what my business would offer them.

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PAWZ PET SITTING

Contact Us

Home
Services
About Us
Contact Us

Full Name:*

Email Address:*

Postal Address:*

Postcode:*

Daytime telephone no:

Facsimile no:

Please send me:*

Where did you first hear of Pawz Pet Sitting

In a publication (please name)

Was it..

An advertisement

In the editorial section

Other (Please specify)

Any other comments

Submit

The last print screen is about the contact information for the business. This would allow the customer to get in touch with my business for whatever reason. This would also have a positive image for a good online presence for my business as there is a direct way in which customers would be able to get in touch with my business through my online presence

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Bibliography

<http://www.wisegeek.com/what-is-ebusiness.htm>