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❖ New at Aplus.Net

- Aplus.Net is excited to announce Windows Server 2008 for dedicated hosting! In addition to the upgrade, we are offering a limited-time promotion of free setup for Windows Server 2008 on all new dedicated hosting plans. Click [here](#) to read the press release.
- Aplus.Net is now a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner! Effective June 13th, 2008, we have earned our gold certified status in Microsoft's Partner Program, which recognizes our expertise and impact in the technology marketplace. Click [here](#) to read more about this honor.

❖ Expert Opinion

Dos and Don'ts of Photography Online



While the internet is full of great photographs, please keep in mind before you use them that those pictures belong to the person who took them, and they have an *implied copyright* (also known as *intellectual property*). A great alternative is to utilize *stock photography*. Stock photographers take pictures of items, scenes or objects that are typical examples of that item. You can find good quality, legal stock photography online at reasonable prices with no hassle. Here are some points to keep in mind when choosing photos:

Know Your Rights

Rights Managed (RM) content charges by duration used and location of that content. For instance, a common contract might be: image used online for six months for \$1500. If you are using the image for *print* (i.e., newspaper or magazine ads), there is a different contract that you'll need to have. This generally isn't a cost-effective solution for a small business.

Royalty-Free (RF) or *Rights-Ready (RR)* includes content that is usually valued between \$49 and \$750. You can also purchase images that are yours for as long as you need them for online exposure. Web sites such as www.istockphoto.com (one of my favorites) offer images for as little as \$1 each, and the images belong to you once purchased. Monthly subscription sites allow

you to download 25 to 50 images per day. These subscriptions run between \$100 to \$400 per month and have different contracts, so make sure to read the contract before you buy.

The Bottom Line

If you didn't create the content, you can't use it without permission. Some stock photography sites allow their users to sample images before purchase. However, *do not use* content without paying for it. Fines for stealing content vary from \$500 to \$20,000 or more, depending on whether the image is Rights-Managed, Royalty-Free or Rights-Ready.

Keep in mind that stock photography laws and the implied copyright laws are constantly changing, so if ever in doubt, review the Terms of Service information from the site or get written permission to use the content. If you have any questions, give us a call.

❖ What Does Your Site Say About You?

When you're testing the water with a new web site, it can be difficult to make your business stand out and generate interest. Last month we described how graphics and colors affect the mindsets of the people who visit your web site. Today we're revisiting some examples of content that you may want to reconsider showcasing on your homepage. Is your site resonating with your target audience?



Patterns: Backgrounds that twinkle or move are distracting and can cause eye strain if they overwhelm your design. If parts of your web site move, like animation or pointer trails, be sure that they compliment the theme of your site and act as a point of interest rather than the focus.

Photographs: If your website is a marketing tool for your business, it's best to move family photos to a separate, private online photo album. However, if you have photos that identify with your business, like a hobby or collection, you can certainly include them to show your passion. A good example might be a body shop owner/operator who rebuilds or restores his own automobiles during his free time displaying pictures of his work on his website.

Participation: It's ok to encourage your audience to contribute to your website through sections like forums, a company blog or a guest book. The most important part of any interactivity is that you screen entries and responses before they are posted, and that you keep the information up to date.

Partnerships: Another great way to share your website is to establish online partnerships and business relationships. For example, your body shop can refer customers to your favorite parts store or to the graphics printer where you buy all of your decals. If you can put their logos on your partners' page, they might do the same for you. One of the best things about this approach is that it's free for everyone--and a great way to increase your search results.

These four small elements of design can make a big impact on your site. If you can't decide whether or not an element is working for you, ask for an opinion from a favorite customer or call a professional to get some detailed advice. Remember, your web site might be the first thing a new customer sees and you want to leave a great first impression.

❖ Buzzword: Net Neutrality

It's important to remember that the "Net" in "Net Neutrality" is not "Net" like "Internet," it's "Net" like "Network." The Internet is already neutral...but the method of accessing it (the network) may not be. Without regulation, your internet service provider will be able to choose which websites you may visit or how you may access the Internet (*biased data discrimination*). The regulations, however, may stifle innovation. You can read more about net neutrality from Wikipedia [here](#).

❖ Volunteering Everyone Wins

Everyone likes a win-win-win opportunity, and volunteering is one of the best ways to benefit. If you or your employees take a couple of hours each month and volunteer for a charity, you'll be surprised at the rewards:

1. Charity. You're doing something to help your fellow man.
2. Publicity. Your charity may decide to issue a press release about the event you assisted with, generating free publicity for you.
3. Networking. By spending a few hours each month with people outside of your usual business or social circle, you might make connections with potential customers, vendors or employees that will help grow your business.
4. Tax deductions. Talk with your accountant to be certain, but tax-deduction doesn't only apply to money, it could apply to time, too. And not just your time, but your employees' time as well if they volunteer during their normal working hours.
5. Public Image. The programs that you and your employees volunteer for become keywords for your business. Additionally, when potential customers look at your site for your "Contact Us" information or to find out about your business, they should also come across the section where you describe your volunteer work--how you donate time and energy to giving back to your community. This kind of connection becomes part of your brand image as well as builds loyalty.
6. SEO. You can talk to the not-for-profit organizations about trading content: you give them copy and a link and they give the same to you, and then each of you puts the other's information on your own site. This increases the keywords and search engine optimization for both of your sites as well as giving each of you the opportunity to reach a new audience.

To find out more about your tax deductible activities, it's best to contact your accountant. To find out about charities in your area that you can arrange volunteer work through, start with a cause that is close to your heart, or ask your employees if they have passions outside of work. You can also check websites like [Volunteer Match](#) to help you find opportunities in your area. Volunteer Match has solutions for corporations of all sizes or you can find an opportunity to fit your own lifestyle.

❖ Help Links

At Aplus.Net, we are committed to providing you with great customer support, 24x7x365.
Knowledge Base -- <http://www.apluskb.com/>
Technical Support -- <http://www.aplus.net/support.html>
Control Panel -- <https://cp.aplus.net>

❖ Keep It Current!

Keeping your address current is more important than you realize, and the success of your website just might depend on it. For example: "Marty" was a happy and hard-working customer who failed to notify Aplus.Net when his email address changed. Marty didn't realize that he was missing important emails notifying him that his domain name was about to expire. Because of this simple mistake, Marty lost not only his domain name to a competitor, he also lost countless hours of hard work and months of progress. Don't make Marty's mistake—Keep your information current!

Update your new e-mail information in our system online. We've made it easy! [Here's how to do it ...](#)

❖ Refer a Friend

Refer a friend to Aplus.Net and get a FREE month of hosting! Make sure your friend remembers to mention your name and email address when signing up.

❖ Feedback

What do you think of our newsletter format? Let us know! Email us any of your feedback regarding the newsletter at . We're always looking to improve, and we're always happy to hear your suggestions!

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