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Fast Loading Website ?How To?

Are you interested in getting your website to load in the browser quickly? In case you have a personal website for hobby sake, it may be no big deal but if you are responsible for a corporate website attracting customers, this can be tremendously important. If the homepage takes forever to load into the browser, you may be losing out on crucial business. The only solution is to design the page again so that visitors or customers who open it stay there.

We need to understand...

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We need to understand that not every internet connection works on Cable, T1 or ISDN. A major number of surfers in the world still use modems today (normally 56.6Kbps). Therefore it is imperative that the site design should take into consideration that it should load quickly on a low speed internet connection.

Design parameters that have to be kept in mind are very simple:

Loading time depends upon the size (disk size) of the page. More space is occupied when you integrate images and multimedia content. The bigger the size, the larger the bandwidth required assuming that the loading time is constant. Multimedia files containing sound (.wav) occupy a lot of space (for example, a sound clip of 30 seconds occupies about 140KB). Video content is more taxing (at least 1MB). This content should be weeded out of the home page unless you feel that it can make or break your website. If you feel that you should keep these, make sure the page sizes are around 30-40K. Or you could put them on another page linked from your homepage.

Images can also get very large in size, especially if they are of high resolution. Keep the image size as small as possible. A page with a 600X600 image would take a long time to load. Image size depends upon the size. They can also be compressed using certain utilities available free on the internet.

Try and use images that you have used on your homepage, on the other pages also instead of changing them. When the images are opened for the first time, they are stored in the browsers cache, and subsequently loaded from there. This will fasten the loading process immensely.

Another way to load images quickly is by defining the image dimensions in the image tags. By this, the browser understands the amount of space required for the image and it does not need to readjust text and other content after loading the image. This will also prevent page jumping during the image loading process.

The home page should be short and descriptive. The longer the page more is the time taken to load. All extra information can be moved to subsequent pages and linked to the homepage. This will also help organizing the website better.

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