Top 30 Website Design "Do's" & "Don'ts" Tip Sheet

As the Internet matures, user habits, likes and dislikes are becoming known and documented. Listed below is a list of "Do's" and "Don'ts" for Web design. This checklist is compiled from various writings of Jakob Nielsen, based on mountains of research derived from Web usability studies conducted over millions of users. He has been called "the reigning guru of Web usability" by FORTUNE Magazine, as well as "one of the top 10 minds in small business."

DO:

- Include a one-sentence tagline on the home page that summarizes what the website does
- Design for printing in portrait format
- Clearly indicate what the user will find at the site
- Include name and logo on every page
- Provide straightforward headlines and page titles
- Use product/service photos, when applicable
- Provide proper navigation support
- Let users resize text
- Change link text colors after user access
- Name pages for search engine visibility
- Group all corporate/contact information in one area
- Provide search functionality if the site has more than 100 pages
- Use hypertext to structure content space and break up long passages into multiple pages
- Make obvious what's clickable, and use standard links
- Offer contact information prominently and in every form a user may want
- Begin link names with the most important keyword

DON'T:

- Don't collect email addresses without a privacy policy
- Don't use "marquees" (moving type)
- Don't use constantly running animation
- Don't leave outdated information on the site
- Don't do anything that looks like an ad
- Don't do anything that produces overly-long download times
- Don't use a search function that doesn't deliver
- Don't build pages in PDF format
- Don't run text that cannot be quickly scanned by the reader
- Don't use HTML frames (frames are a method to display multiple HTML documents at once)
- Don't require horizontal scrolling or constant vertical scrolling
- Don't use technology for technology sake (Flash, etc.)
- Don't use complex or overly-long URLs
- Don't build orphan pages (pages that are **not linked to** any other page of the site; i.e. it does not have any active links pointing to the page.)

For additional information or assistance with your website, contact the professionals at Allegra. We're your local source for powerful business solutions that get results.