Having a responsive website is essential when trying to captivate a mobile audience.

Big Sky

Internet Design

Getting Your Online Presence In Line

by Melinda Davison
Web design has come a long way over the past couple of decades. What was once limited to very basic coding and design has become an integral part of the way we find information, shop, connect and communicate on a daily basis. Even the horse world has long since caught up with technology and what was once confined to magazines and word-of-mouth, now lives on the World Wide Web right at our fingertips.

Big Sky Internet Design was at the forefront of the digital revolution, beginning their journey into designing websites in 1998. Not only are they web coding gurus, but they also have a long history in the horse world which brings a new level of expertise to a niche industry. Long before they began designing websites, the Bruch’s had success as exhibitors in the AQHA & National Cutting Horse Association as well as a small quarter horse breeding operation.
Big Sky Internet Design is a team of experienced designers including Jessica and JT Bruch, along with Debbie Damiano, Linda Pritchett, and Kelsey Hellmann.

Big Sky Internet Design team of experienced website designers includes:

- Debbie Damiano – lead designer
- Carrie Bruch – Senior Designer
- Joanna Zhu - Designer
- Jessica Bruch – Sales & Marketing
- JT & Tom Bruch – Custom programing
- Linda Pritchett – Updates
- Kelsey Hellmann – Marketing & Eblasts
- Ben Crane - SEO

Some of the services they include:

- Custom designed websites that can be built to work flawlessly on any device, from a large computer monitor to an iPad, iPhone or Android Phone
- Unlimited routine updates completed in 24 hours or less - Guaranteed!

- All sites hosted on their professionally maintained dedicated web servers
- Built in Search Engine Optimization and submissions to search engines
- Social media configuration, design and setup services
- Print services such as business cards, flyers, ads, etc.
- Email blast services.

While you could take a stab at designing your own page, the team at Big Sky knows the ins and outs of the intricacies that will make your website stand out among the competition, as well as appear professional and polished with features like responsive design and search engine optimization.

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Wait. Responsive design? Search Engine Optimization? What is that all about?

While there could be an entire article dedicated to each of those topics, we’ll break them down into the basics, and Big Sky knows more than you would ever need to know about the topics.

In a nutshell, responsive design means your website automatically adapts to mobile and tablet format, making it easier to view on these devices. Nobody likes having to try to zoom in on a website on their phone just to be able to read something or try to click a too-tiny link. That’s a great example of an un-responsive designed website. With a responsive design, it formats itself to whatever screen you may be viewing it on whether it is a desktop computer, mobile phone, or tablet. Sure, there are a lot more nitty-gritty details that go into how to make a site responsive, but let the web gurus at Big Sky handle that for you.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is a bit trickier, but again, is something you’ll be really glad to let Big Sky handle for you. You know those results that pop up when you type a search into Google or some other search engine? They don’t show up in that order by accident. There is a special algorithm (tech speak for mathematical formula) that Google and other search engines implement that scours your website to determine how relevant your site is to that particular search term the person typed in. Obviously, there are numerous factors that these search engines take into consideration, and websites that adequately use these rank
Responsive design means your website will look good no matter the device.

higher in the search results, which usually translates to more website traffic. The goal for your site is to be as close to the top as possible. After all, when was the last time you clicked on page 3, 4, or 5 of your search results? That’s our point. Many times, these factors are handled in the backend coding that you don’t usually see as the website visitor. All the more reason to let the seasoned pros lead the way.

So, you have Facebook page for your business? That’s great! However, that’s only part of your overall digital plan. While Facebook and other social media are fantastic platforms for engaging with your fans and potential customers, they shouldn’t take the place of a great website. Your website is essentially your storefront, your first impression, and your calling card. The goal of Facebook is, of course, to share information, but also interact with fans, and drive them to your website where they can learn more about your business and take appropriate action, whether that is emailing or calling you directly, scheduling a reservation for a service, or making a purchase.

Another thing that makes Big Sky unique is they have expertise in social media as well, so they know how to best integrate any pre-existing social media into your new site, or help you launch a social media presence along with your website.

Also, while it may not be the most fun to think about, Big Sky also handles the really important things like data backups and virus/spyware protection. Both of those things are extremely important and can be detrimental if you don’t have safeguards in place. With Big Sky, those things are handled so you can sleep soundly at night knowing your site is protected as well as it can be from rogue hackers and digital hiccups.

We get it. It’s a lot to take in. You’ve got a business to run, and it’s a lot to absorb. If you want to take a stab at some of the basic templates that many “out of the box” web design services offer, we certainly won’t stop you. Just keep in mind, gone are the days of sparkly mouse cursors, colored scroll bars, and URLs that end with GeoCities or AngelFire (yes, we’re dating ourselves).

If you decide you want a truly polished, professional website that can handle the heavy lifting of your business, give Big Sky Designs a call or send an email. You’ll definitely be glad you did.
Still not convinced? Check out what some of their customers had to say:

“I LOVED working with Big Sky Internet Design on the Colorado Classic Stallion Incentive Auction website! They are hands down one of the easiest companies I have ever worked with - quick, efficient, and most times responded to me within the hour! I highly recommend them for any ranch/association/auction website you are interested in having professionally run! I am so thankful I teamed up with them to put on the stallion auction. What a huge success! We actually sold all stud fees! I will be staying with Big Sky for the future auctions.”

–Kayla Tisdall, Colorado Classic Stallion Incentive

“Getting used to the site and how things work with you guys. Soooooooo much better than the other one and I do appreciate all that you do. It’s strange being able to send stuff and see it up the same day. Wow! What service!”

–Tammye Hutton, Hilldale Farm

“Everything from design ideas to helping build an internet presence on Google has been a first class experience. Thank you Tom and Carrie.”

–Benjamin R Buchanan
DVM, Brazos Valley Equine Hospital

“Thank you! I have to tell you that Debbie is absolutely AMAZING!! I feel like I am her only client! :)

–Jill Finley, Noble Hills Farm

“My experience working with Carrie and Debbie has been AMAZING!! They were able to take a concept locked in my mind and translate it into reality. Avalon Coolies is lucky to have a user friendly, beautiful website for everyone to see. It has allowed me to reach more people and offer them access to more information than I thought possible. Updates are an email away, keeping my site up to date all the time. We encourage people to take the step and have professionals design the site of your dreams.”

–Shawn & Julian Murray, Avalon Coolies