



How do you find a designer? By Keli Etscorn

We're not that easy to spot because we can be anywhere and we blend in well. A designer can be your neighbor's 15 year old or someone 5 states away. The type of message and professionalism you want to project from your Web site will be reflected in the designer you choose. How do you find a GOOD one? One that will listen to you, address your needs, talk in YOUR language and provide you with a professional service?

The good folks at Google.com have given us 3,400,000 results for the keyword phrase search "Website Designer" - that shouldn't take long to go through...

Now what?

Actually starting at Google.com isn't a bad place to start. You can look at the top 10 sites, browse through them... take notes of design practices you like, write down designer names and their Web site address. You could even try different keyword phrases and narrow down your search to see different design styles for other industries. During your browsing be sure to have your **Site Check List** with you, your future Web designer will LOVE you for being so organized. Being organized can also save you money!

Here are some questions that you should ask your designer, or designer prospects. I've compiled them from my research both in the field and on the Internet.

- 1) How long have you been designing?
- 2) Do you have a portfolio? Can I see sample work?
- 3) How much do you charge? Per hour? Per project?
- 4) Do you have forms I can fill out to help me get started?
- 5) Can I monitor the progress of my Web site development?
- 6) Is my bill viewable 24 hours a day?
- 7) Can I see some of your search engine ranking?
- 8) Who will maintain my Web site?
- 9) What kind of support do you offer?

Traits of a good Web designer:

Communication—will they listen and respond to your needs and questions?

Creative—are their designs unique?

Graphic skills—do they know how to effectively use graphics on the Internet?

Programming skills and software knowledge—do they have the latest software and tools?

Internet savvy—do they know how the Internet works?

Search engines savvy—will your site be search engine friendly?

keli@etscorn.com http://www.kelie.com

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