10 Tips for a more effective Website!

Even if you get much of your work by word-of-mouth referrals, more and more people these days check out contractors online to make sure they're an established, credible business. Since a website is your online "storefront" it pays to take the time to make it professional, friendly, and persuasive. Here are a few things to think about:

1 **Focus on the specific needs and problems of your potential customers,** not just your own company. If you show people that you understand their issues, they're more likely believe you can solve their issues. If a prospect is visiting several contractors' websites, this approach will give you a clear competitive advantage.

2 **Offer helpful tips and ideas for keeping their home or their fleet looking good.** These days, success often goes to the competitor who offers a little something up-front. A web page with smart suggestions can then be promoted in flyers, mailers, ads, or even social media, bringing people to your website *and* establishing you as an authority.

3 **Think about what phrases people might be Googling** when they're looking for a contractor like you. For example, "Middleville Pressure Washing." Then use those "keyword" phrases in your website headlines and text, as well as in what's called the website's "Title Tag." That way, when someone types in that phrase in Google, your website is more likely to come up early in the search results.

4 **Keep up with the times.** A cluttered, unprofessional or out-of-date website reflects badly on your business. If you haven't had your website redesigned in a few years, it may be time for a web makeover. Plus if your website is designed on the "WordPress" platform, you'll have the capability of making changes and additions over time yourself, without having to go back to your web designer.

5 **Remember, it's what others say about you, not just what you say about yourself.** When you finish a job for a happy customer, ask them to write a "testimonial" about their experience. Combine several of these in a 'Testimonials' or 'Reviews' web page, and you'll build extra credibility in the eyes of prospective customers.

6 **People like pictures.** The web is a visual medium, so include some pictures of successful jobs you've completed (with the owner's permission of course). Also include a good quality picture of yourself on the "About" page, and don't forget to smile! A shot or two of you or your crew working hard might not be a bad idea either.

7 **They don't know what you know,** so be sure to use words and phrases on your website that customers use, vs. terms that only professionals know. After all, we want to communicate with people, not confuse them.

8 **Guarantee their satisfaction.** It's something you probably do anyway, but mentioning this on your website helps reduce the sense of risk that comes from working with a vendor for the first time. Anticipating, and overcoming, any "barriers" to the sale naturally makes folks more likely to contact you.

9 **Since you use EnviroSpec chemicals,** be sure to point out that the cleaning materials you use are safe for the environment, kids, pets, shrubs and lawns. Simply mentioning this can be a 'competitive advantage' for you. Also, it's best not to use the word "chemicals," because of the negative slant that word might have for customers.

10 **Ask for the job!** Be sure to invite the web visitor to contact you, and mention that you're looking forward to the opportunity to do a great job for them. Include a prominent phone number on your website, and be sure that phone is answered by a live person, vs. an answering machine, almost all the time. You can also include an email-address or Contact Form on your website, with the responses automatically going to your e-mail Inbox.

When your website strikes the right notes, you'll let technology do some of the selling *for* you! Those who don't embrace the new ways of doing business are at risk of getting left behind. If you'd like a sharp new or updated website, and aren't sure where to start, EnviroSpec can recommend a professional and economical web designer. Simply contact rlja@envirospec.com.