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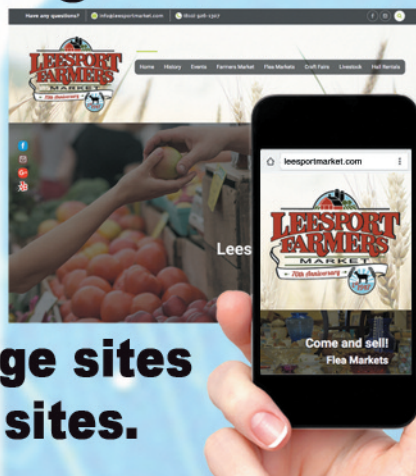


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SPEED!!!



MASTERING SOCIAL MEDIA

By Alyse Mitten, Interlace Communications

This month's column is very different from most of my topical social media columns and I will apologize in advance for being a bit on the technical side at times.

The reason for discussing your website's speed has a direct link to your social media marketing. It's like this, all the effort you do online with your social media marketing is meaningless if your website visitors come to a site that loads slowly. It's a known fact that visitors will wait for at the most 5 seconds when visiting a site before moving on to another when doing a random search.

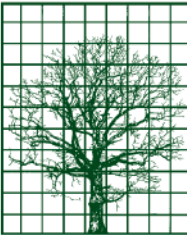
Over the past month we had been experiencing intermittent issues with our server where our websites were loading slowly and in some cases stalling out. After several weeks of several days of numerous calls to our technical team and a lot of trial and error, we discovered a single file on just one of our sites was experiencing a brute force

attack. With a bit of code added to a file on the site called .htaccess, the attacks stopped and all was well.

During that month of trial and error I was introduced to many tools, programs, and plugins to use on our sites. The one tool I want to share with you is one called GTMetrix.com. GTMetrix has become my guide to increasing the speed on our sites along with adding code to the .htaccess file. [Word of Caution] .htaccess is a hidden file on your site on purpose. *Adding code to this file should ONLY be performed by your website developer.*

So what is important that you can do to increase the speed on your site?

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MASTERING SOCIAL MEDIA

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Images

Always upload your images to the site exactly to the size you want them to be used on the site. It pains me when working on sites where people upload their own photos at the largest file size there is. When doing that you are wasting memory on information that is not needed. You see, the largest file size saves the photo at 300 dots per inch (dpi). Your screen on your computer, phone, and TV has only 72 dots per inch (dpi). So when you have a choice in choosing between 300 dpi or 72 dpi, you should only upload the smaller file at exactly the size you need to use.

Cache

Cache? What the heck is cache? Has your computer ever shown something different from what another person was seeing and they said to you, "clear the history of your computer." You did and wah lah, you were seeing the latest version of what was being shown on that page. That's cache. By making certain you always purge the cache on your site when making changes you ensure that your visitors to the site will get only the latest version. The site will load quickly for them.

There's much more that can be done to your site and the information given on GTMetrix will help to complete the changes. What I included in this article are two of the areas which can be changed by you. It will be a great beginning to move the score to a more positive result and provide visitors with a better experience. Reach out to your website developer to complete the other tasks.

Another tool that is ideal to use after you have made the changes on GTMetrix is to check your speed with Google at PageSpeed Tools > Insights developers.google.com/speed/pagespeed/insights/. It will provide you with suggestions and ways to fix whatever needs to be done to increase the speed.

Speed! It's very important for your visitors' experiences and adds to the results for your social media marketing efforts.

Did you discover that your website is only an F on GTMetrix and have no clue what to do next? Alyse and the team of Interlace Communications can help you optimize your site speed with the suggestions made on GTMetrix and Google PageSpeed Tools. Give us a call at 484.709.6564 or email us at TheTeam@gomaava.com.