

## Advertising on Your Website

Your website is prime real estate. It is the online face of your company or organization. Much like combing your hair, picking out your clothes or putting on your makeup the selections you make show the outside world who you are and what you do. Thus it is with some deliberation that you should consider adding advertising to your website. Due to the ubiquity of online advertising and the ease with which it can be embedded on your site it has become quite common. With this ease of implementation the inclination is to add it to your site and make a few dollars as visitors stop by your site. However, I would suggest that you should do so carefully.

Adding advertising depends on the type of site you are running. Sites such as blogs or news sites are prime venues to display advertisements to your visitors. While they can detract from the message of the site most readers are accustomed to seeing them there and they are minimally intrusive. Fundamentally they do not interrupt the user's interaction with the site or detract from the point that the site is trying to convey. Very few blogs or news sites carry no advertising and readers are used to it being there. Thus, it is part of the user's learned behavior and does not detract from the interaction. When advertising makes the user unsure what the purpose of the site is, it has then become intrusive and should not be on the site. A site should convey a smooth user experience; one that is easily navigated through and one where the user intuitively understands the purpose of the site (to sell your product, tell about your organization, etc). Advertising can detract from that as visitors are unsure if they are there to learn about your product or to view the sidebar ads. As well as being distracting ad banners can look fairly amateurish and detract from the overall attractiveness of your site. So, a few rules as you consider whether or not to add advertising: 1. What is the purpose of your site? Does advertising add or detract from that message? 2. What is the effect on the visitor? Does advertising cloud your message? 3. Does the advertising detract from the visual appeal of your site? 4. Do the products advertised match the message of your site?