

## Custom Website Design - A Theory

**Optimizing for yourself** is the key to creating a truly custom website. Just because you aren't using a template does not mean you are unique. You want a site designed specifically *for your company*. You want your pages to display at first glance what your company is about. The hierarchy of your links, the graphics, the color scheme, the functions, and, of course, the written content, all have to communicate the essence of your business.

These days, templates allow anyone to design a professional-*looking* site, and for far less cost than it takes to hire a professional web designer—almost, in fact, for free. You are here because you know the inherent hindrances of the template: that they have no real connection to the business that created them.

**You want to stand out**, which means that you want a site that is tailored specifically for your business. What are the requirements of customization? Simply that you work more closely with your web designers, providing them with information and direction on what you want from your site. What are the benefits? Synthesis. The benefit of using a combination of your knowledge of your field, and the developer's knowledge of Internet standards, for a result that is ideal for both your business and the Internet at large.

**Not everyone requires this level of customization.** If you just want your site to look good, there is no reason not to trust a group of professionals to design it with minimum input, relying on their own skills and experience. Websites don't need to be customized to work, or even to stand out. Those that haven't been customized are not inherently bad, or even inherently boring. They are not precluded from being original, unique, or attractive. Many people want to hire web designers so that they can assign a task to a group of skilled individuals, and go about the other critical functions of their business content that they will do a good job.

And that technique works fine, but it is not the hallmark of customization. You don't want to look at web designers as people who take the job of creation off your hands. You want to look at them as people who have the skills required to bring your vision into reality, and do so under your direction. They provide the tools required, and also invaluable experience that they can share with you to fine-tune and optimize your site for the World Wide Web.

**Such tactics can pay off** for those who are willing to join in the process. For a little more effort in deciding how you want the site to look, what you want it to say, and how you want it to work, you will receive a result that does exactly what you want it to do for your business. The goal of custom web design is optimization—not just for the search engines, not just for the World Wide Web, but for your specific desires and the specific needs of your business. These strategies allow you to do more than innovatively represent your field; they allow you to innovatively represent *your business specifically*. And if that is your goal, then start thinking about what you want your graphics to look like, what functions you want included, what the text should say. This is going to be *your* website, so make sure that it is designed with you, your business, and your customers in mind.

## About the Author

Dustin Schwerman is the head web designer for [Truly Unique - Small Business Website Design](#). Truly Unique works on sites that offer products ranging from jewelry to [wallet brochures](#).

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