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McHugh's Website Evaluation Checklist: Ten Tips

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An effective and inviting website is requisite to success for any organization and that is particularly true for a publisher, whether it be commercial or nonprofit. In evaluating a website, I ask these questions:

1. *What do you want to accomplish with your website?*
2. *What is the profile of the likely visitor to your website?*
3. *Why does that individual visit your website?*
4. *What features are important in the design of a website that will appeal to your visitors?*

I offer this checklist to assist you in reviewing your website and to guide you if you revise your website.

- Home Page Organization:** Is the home page well organized? Are the contents apparent to visitors? Have you prepared a site map? Is it available to visitors? Have you avoided a cluttered look?
- Intuitive Headings:** Have you begun each page with a prominent heading that sums up the main point of the section?
- Three Second Test:** Can visitors find the information they want in three seconds?
- One Click Away:** Is desired information one click away?
- Internal Links:** Do all internal links work properly?
- Stickiness Factor:** Does your site have content that will motivate visitors to stick around your site?
- Contact Information:** Is appropriate contact information prominently displayed?
- Compatibility:** Have you checked to make sure your site works on different browsers, and platforms?
- Legal/Intellectual:** Does your site have the requisite copyright, trademark, disclaimer, and other legal notifications? Have you evaluated your website for any potential infringement of someone's protected material?
- Search Engine Optimization:** Have you maximized search engine optimization by writing a list of key words and a site description? Have you submitted your site to Google and other leading search engines?

ABOUT JOHN B. MCHUGH, PUBLISHING CONSULTANT

John B. "Jack" McHugh, a 30-year veteran of the publishing business, is a long-time successful publishing consultant. He is the author of the McHugh Publishing Management Series—90 practical papers on all aspects of publications management. He also publishes the McHugh Expert Interview series, interviews with publishing leaders on various publishing specialties.

All of these are available free at **www.johnbmchugh.com**. Jack McHugh's specialties include association/nonprofit publishing, book publishing, executive recruiting, journal publishing, rights and permissions, organizational design, and startups. Jack McHugh can be reached at **jack@johnbmchugh.com** or **414-351-3056**, Web site: **www.johnbmchugh.com**.