

CONTENT TWEAKS FOR YOUR WEBSITE

Update your site title and tag-line

Often there are interesting stories behind the title's on people's websites. Your website name may be inspired by a favourite quote, a clever play on words, or just simply have your full name. Your site title is not necessarily your website's URL or domain name. It can actually be anything you want it to be, meaning you can change it as often as you like.

Now, it may not be appropriate for you to change your site title, especially if, for example, it's the name of your business. But if you have a personal site, you might have more flexibility. What you need to remember is that your site title should reflect you and your journey, or brand and its mission, and if either have evolved, then it only makes sense to tweak it now and then. Also, if your site's content has changed over the years, you should make sure your tagline is up to date. For those unsure, your tagline is the phrase that describes what your site is about, and is often displayed underneath your site title in the header area; although it might be placed elsewhere depending on your current theme. Wherever it is, our pro tip is to keep it short and snappy.

Reorder and reword your menu tabs

A bit of digital housekeeping goes a long way. One way to quickly freshen up your site is to update your menu. Always make sure your menu tabs reflect the content that's most important to you; such as your About, Contact, and Store pages if you have them. Make sure these are visible at all times, rather than lying in a drop-down menu somewhere. And if you have outdated pages, update them or hide or get rid of them from your menu.

In addition, get creative. Rename common menu items. If you brew beer, replace "Bio" with "The Brewer Behind the Blog." Or if you have a thru-hiking journal, swap "Contact Me" with "Send Me a Package." Update your menu labels with terms or phrases related to what you post about.

Clean up your categories

Now's the time to tidy up your categories. Do you have posts labelled with Uncategorized? For those who use Wordpress, by default, every post you write is added to this built-in category. But you can edit this category name to something else, as well as add new categories or manage existing ones. On your own website you can create categories to put your various blogs into making it easier for those who want to read your past ramblings.

Revisit your sidebar and footer

The new year is the perfect time to do a sweep of your sidebar and footer areas and for removing any cobwebs. Are there dead links to blogs that no longer exist? Social media icons to services you no longer use? Maybe a broken Instagram feed of an old username? Double check that all hyperlinks work and go somewhere relevant. There is nothing more frustrating to users to end up with the 404 message.

Audit all of your pages

Your readers and customers expect all of your site content to be up-to-date, so audit existing pages and make edits as necessary. Get inspired by other people's About pages, then revisit and refine your own.

Or add new pages which promote your best work. If possible, take a peek at your stats, especially your most popular posts and pages, and use the data to create a Best Of page. (Alternatively, compile a list of personal favourites — the content doesn't have to be the most-clicked!) Also consider a Press or Awards page and showcase work that's been highlighted in other publications or blogs. Having a My Interviews page with links to other people's blogs, Q&A's, Radio Interviews or podcasts helps the community and spreads details of you across the internet.

Finally – Think globally?

The world of social media is a global network meaning readers can be made aware of you even across the other side of the world. Link with other authors, writers or illustrators as well as Book Groups in other countries. It helps get you noticed. And if possible, do reciprocal links on each other's websites. It all helps to spread the word.

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