

Website Tune-Up

A collection of tips for the beginning website owner



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Audience:
Beginning website owners

Introduction

- Error pages
- Favicons
- Robots.txt
- Index.html

Note:

This guide uses `http://YourDomainName.com` to reference your website. You are required to replace it with the name of your own domain in code examples.

Setting up your Error Pages

When a surfer visits a non-existing page on your website, he will see an error message. This is called a “404 error” or “Page not found” in simple English.

You can test this by surfing to a page that doesn't exist on your domain, for example: <http://YourDomainName.com/tralalala>

If you don't have your error pages set up, you will see something like this:

Not Found

The requested URL /tralalala was not found on this server.

Additionally, a 404 Not Found error was encountered while trying to use an ErrorDocument to handle the request.

Why would somebody surf to a page that doesn't exist ?

- He typed the link for your site manually, and made a mistake
- He tried to guess the download link for one of your paid products
- Your site might have one or more links to missing pages

How can you recover this lost traffic ?

- Instead of showing the page-not-found warning, you can show the visitor an advertisement
- Or even simpler, is redirecting him to an existing page on your web space (usually your main page)

How to do this ?



- Log in the cPanel of your web space
- Click on “Error pages”
- You will see several types of error pages that you can edit

The most common is 404 – page not found. But there is also 500 – internal server error, and a few more. You can update them all with the same code.

With this tool you can create custom error pages to display when a user enters a wrong URL, an outdated URL or when the user is not authorized to access a specific directory of your web space.

400	(Bad request)
401	(Authorization required)
403	(Forbidden)
404	(Wrong page)
500	(Internal server error)

You can write any html code or even javascript there, depending on what you want the visitor to see. Here is some short code that redirects your visitor to a page of your choice:



```
<html><head>  
<META HTTP-EQUIV=Refresh CONTENT="0; url=http://YourDomainName.com">  
</head><body></body></html>
```

- Don't forget to replace the link in this code, with the link for your own site.

After you have set up this code for your error pages, try surfing to a non-existing page on your webspace again. It should not show the error message anymore, but re-direct you to the link you used in the code above.

Favicons

What is it ?

A favicon is a small graphic that some browsers automatically look for when a surfer visits your website.

This is how it looks like (in the FireFox browser):



The file is called favicon.ico, and if you don't have it uploaded on your webspace, your error log will often show warnings that this file can't be found.

How to create and use a favicon for your site ?

You can create a favicon with any graphics software that can save images in the .ico format.

● Here is an easy online tool that allows you to create a favicon from any picture:

<http://tools.dynamicdrive.com/favicon/>

● An easy, free tool to draw your favicon by hand is PixelToolbox:

<http://www.axiomx.com/PixelToolbox/>

● Or download my own favicon if you want to get started quickly. Surf to the link below, right-click, and choose 'save image as'.

<http://adboardz.com/favicon.ico>

Once you have your image, save it as favicon.ico and upload it to the root (main) folder of your webspace. Every time a browser expects that file, it will be there.

In your website html code, you can add the following line of code between the <head> and </heads> tags. This is optional, since some browsers will automatically search for the favicon. Other browsers will only use the favicon when you add this code. And still other browsers will never use it.



```
<link rel="shortcut icon" href="/favicon.ico" />
```

Not all browsers are capable of using this favicon.

- In FireFox, the above steps will show the favicon graphic next to the link of your site in the address bar

- In Internet Explorer, the graphic will only be shown after you have added the site to your favorites. It will also show the graphic in your list of favorites (bookmarks).
- Other browsers may not show them at all (like CrazyBrowser for example)

Missing index.html

When you surf to a link on your website, without adding the exact page, your web space will usually assume that your visitor wanted to surf to index.html.

In other words, when you surf to ...

<http://YourDomainName.com>

... you are actually surfing to:

<http://YourDomainName.com/index.html>

Now consider that you also have a download folder on your web space, where you have a file called MyProduct.zip that people can download. The download link would be:

<http://YourDomainName.com/download/MyProduct.zip>

When people see this download link, they will often try to surf to link without MyProduct.zip at the end. Like this:

<http://YourDomainName.com/download/>

➔ If you have no index.html file in your download folder, then all files in that folder will be visible to your site visitor. He will also see MyProduct2.zip, and MyProduct3.zip, and any file you have for download there.

That is why you should always place an index.html file in folders where you don't want people to see what else is in the folder. Ideally, you upload a file that re-directs people to your main web page. You can use the same redirect code as explained for the error pages. Just save it in a text file, called index.html, and upload it to the folder you want to protect.

Robots.txt

Search engines like google and yahoo have software called “bots”. Those bots crawl the internet to analyse webpages so that they can index them in those search engines.

Robots.txt is a file that is used to determine which pages of your website can be crawled. For example, you don't want your download links to be indexed in google, because everybody could be downloading your (paid) product for free then.

A lot of website owners don't have a robots.txt file on their webspace. You don't really need it, unless you want to disallow search engine access to certain folders of your website. Or, the opposite, if you want search engines to crawl certain folders of your site.

But there is a good reason to have the file on your webspace anyway. If you don't have it, then every time a search engine looks for this file, your website will write an error message in your webspace logs. And this can add up to a lot of error messages. So it is recommended to have at least a basic robots.txt file.

Just create a text file with the following text in it.

You can use a simple text editor like NotePad.

<http://adboardz.com/robots.txt>

Call the file robots.txt and upload it to the main folder on your webspace.

Some useful resources

● This information is provided by AdboardZ:

<http://adboardz.com>

● Learn how to protect yourself against spam-complaints and improve the email delivery of your website. This is a must-read for any website owner.

<http://emaildeliverysecret.com>

● Try ProfitsDesk for a quick and reliable helpdesk for your website.

<http://profitsdesk.com/order.php>

- Requires no installation on your webspace. Ideal for beginning website owners.
- Easy to customize.
- ProfitsDesk passively increases your advertising results too.

● Join our community where you can network with other website owners:

<http://adboardz.com/community.php>

● Some places to advertise your websites:

<http://trackerboard.com/?sponsor=valleyken&gr=17>

I hope you enjoyed the information in this report, and that it will help you to increase your website traffic.

Sincerely, Valleyken

<http://helpdesk.adboardz.com>



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