FRAMES; THE PRO'S AND CON'S

INTRODUCTION

Frames are a convenient and easy way to break up the contents of a page. With Frames, you could have a video feed of a band playing music, while another part of the screen gave you a history of the band and its music, while yet another part provided the words to the song currently being played.

Frames can also be used to simply split off the navigation of a website from its content. This should be avoided, as it provides no benefits and lots of problems for Search Engines and users with older browsers.

THE PRO'S

- When used wisely frames can present information from different sources in ways that make better sense to the viewer.

- Frames can be used to refresh, or change the information in specific frames at set intervals, again making the information easier for the viewer to disseminate.

- Frames can be very useful in the hands of experienced web developers who need to present multifaceted information.

- ### THE CON'S

- Frames can make put your content out of reach of search engines.

- Not all users have browsers that can interpret frames.

- Users cannot bookmark content in frames.

- Users who manage to access your content through a search engine or external link can be trapped without navigation if they do not have compatible browsers.

- Although simple to use, they are difficult to use well.

- Users do not like to scroll frames.

THE CON'S CAN BE OVERCOME

If you and your web developer are considering using frames on your website you should discuss the points above and ensure that you have good reason to go ahead. It is possible to address the problems, but you should evaluate the benefits against the costs. Perhaps as a compromise frames could be used on one or two pages to meet the requirements.

WHAT IF YOUR WEBSITE ALREADY USES FRAMES?

If your website already uses frames you should talk with your web developer. Ask if they have already addressed the issues listed under the con's heading. If this draws a blank ask your web developer to call Web Assets and we will point them in the right direction.

CONCLUSION

Frames should only be used by experienced web developers who understand how to overcome the inherent problems of the technology. Most small businesses do not require frames to present information to their users. If your site has been built using frames you should speak to your web developer immediately to see if any of the problems listed above are relevant to your website.