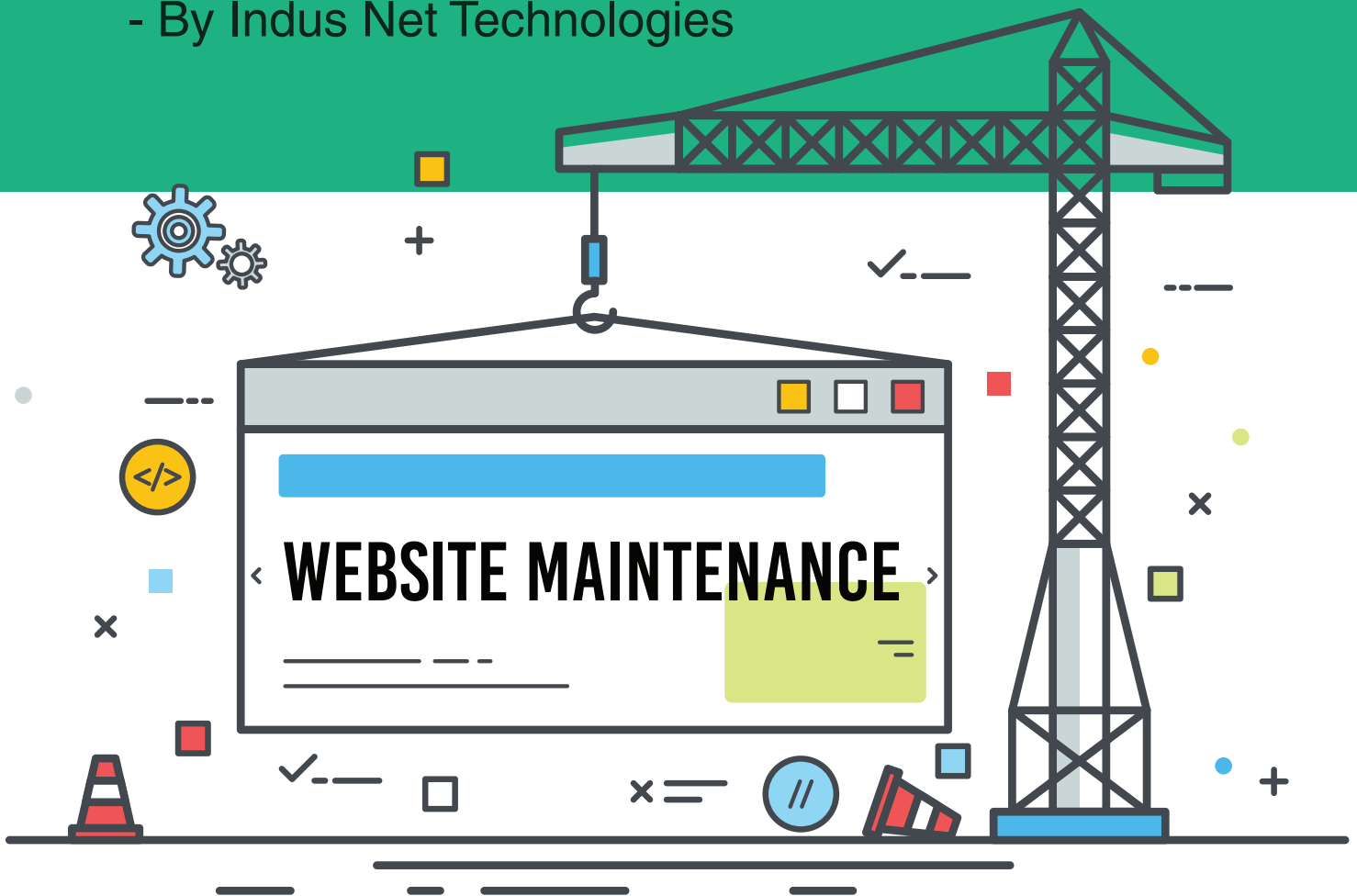


A QUICK GUIDE TO WEBSITE MAINTENANCE

- By Indus Net Technologies





Indus Net Technologies is an innovative IT Service, managed Outsourcing & Internet strategy company, with unique combination of Creativity and Technology.

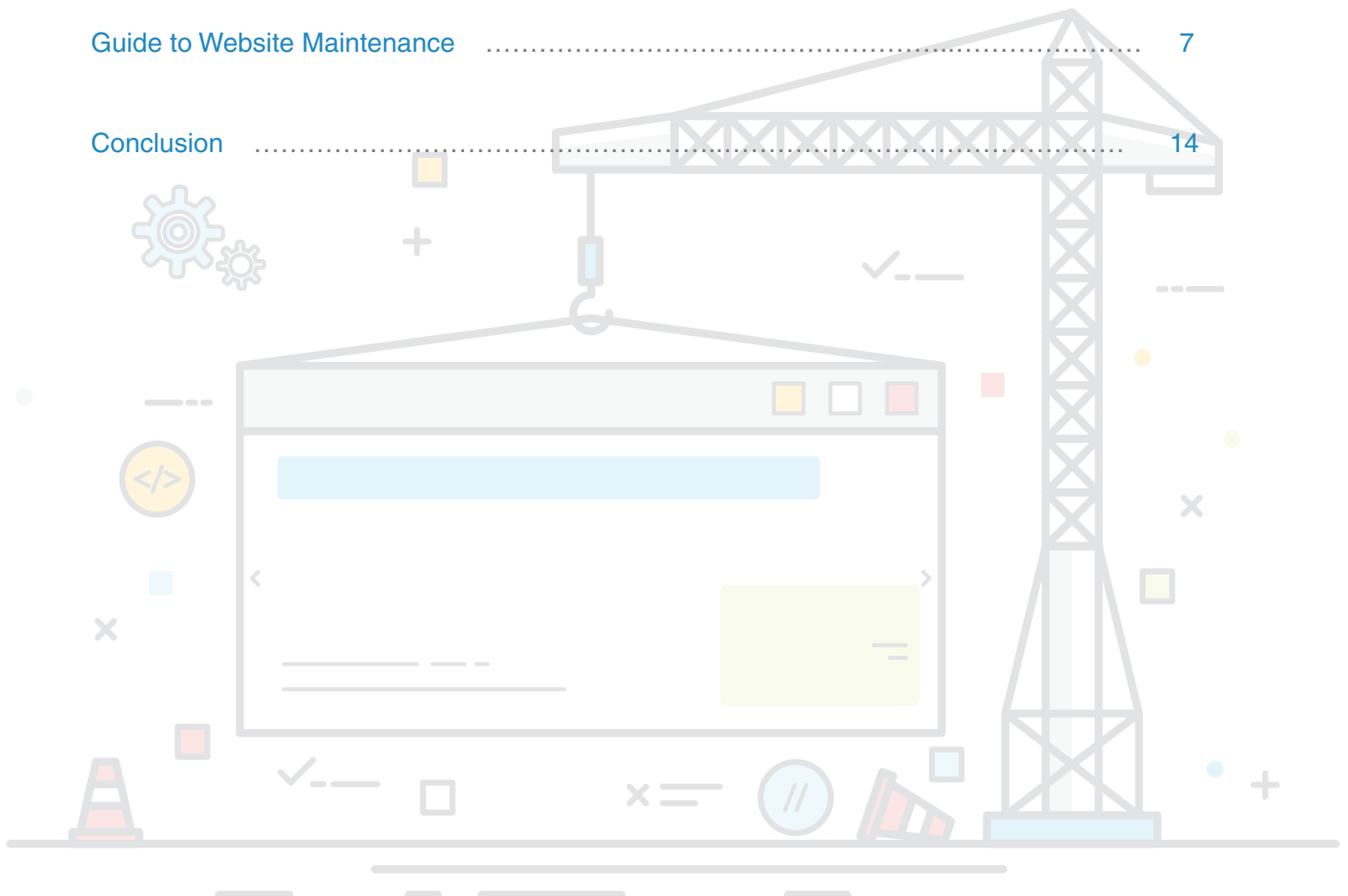
With deep industry experience of 19+ years and technological expertise across all major business functions, Indus Net Technologies helps corporations and Governments across the globe embrace the “Nexus of Forces” – Cloud/Web based custom application development, Mobility and Digital Marketing Services.

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Maintaining A Website

It is easier to create a website than to maintain it. Many small business owners find it enticing to create a website, which is a good practice, without realizing the effort that goes into maintaining it. The hope of improving the reach of your content and your product is often shattered when you don't get the expected return on your investment.

As a matter of fact, website building helps you to create a mark in the online market arena. However, only if you live up to the changing dynamics of online marketing, customers, & search engine algorithm, your website will yield results. You just can't create a website, however great it is, & sit on it.

Website maintenance is a regular phenomenon and you need to address it every now and then. It is your online marketing tool. The following eBook will serve as a quick guide to maintain your website.





Why is it important to maintain a website?

Keep customers engaged

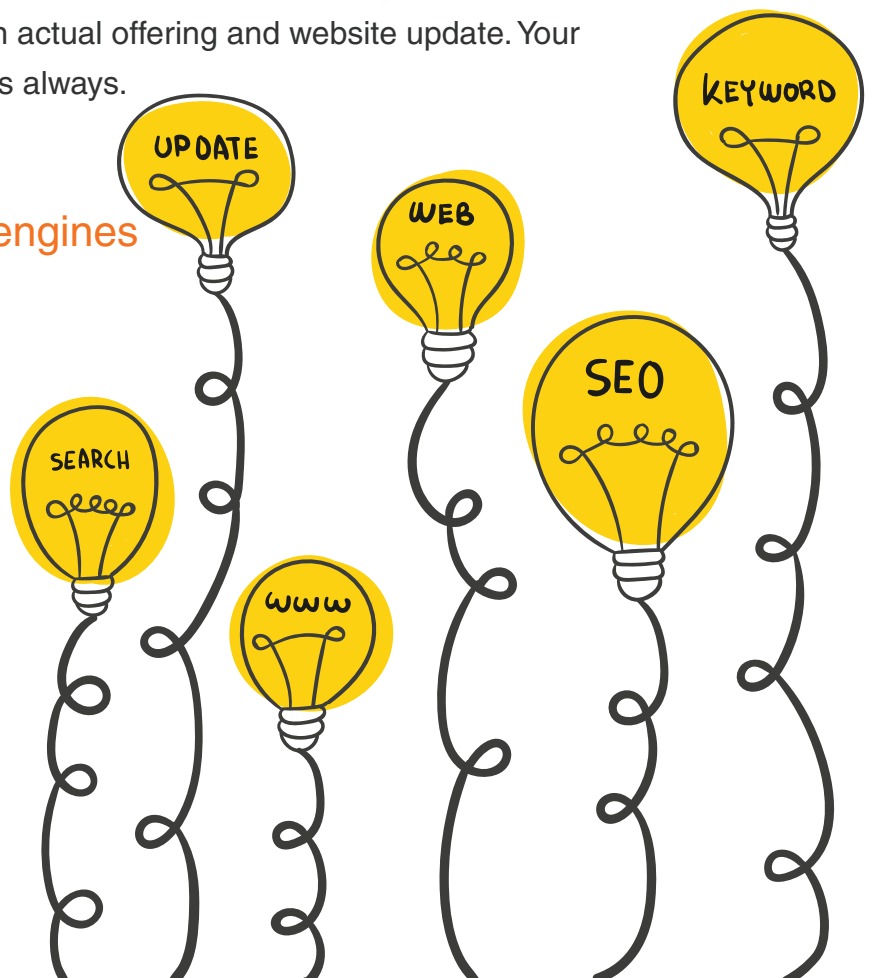
Customers like to visit a website that offers interesting and updated content. If you want them to come back to your website, create engaging content, add images, graphics, videos and be an expert in your field.

Regularly update your offerings

Every marketer tends to revise his services, products, features and solutions. All these changes should immediately reflect in your website. An outdated website is a big turnoff for visitors and potential customers. Avoid time lag between actual offering and website update. Your website should run in line with your offerings always.

Maintain high ranking in search engines

Search engines give preference to websites that offer updated content to its users. High quality content is preferred over dull and boring content.





Why is it important to maintain a website?

Fix errors before they create trouble

A well-maintained website will have all its links working perfectly. A website may have external links, images, and email function. A broken link will create hindrance in smooth functioning of your website and annoy visitors. Fix errors before they start creating trouble.

Align your website with changing technology

Website maintenance has many components like database management, content management system, APIs, etc. As a marketer, you have to make sure that you use the latest technology to provide maximum benefit to your visitors and please search engine algorithms.



Brand image

Website is a part of your brand identity. Information, links, usability, aesthetics, and quality -everything counts from the customer's perspective. Project the image that you actually want to create by addressing all the parameters of your website.



Guide to Website Maintenance

Website maintenance should be taken up with a comprehensive approach by attending to critical business areas on priority. Parameters like copy, production, quality control, performance monitoring, feedback monitoring, infrastructure maintenance, security, back-up and routine check-up should be part of your maintenance strategy. Your hosting service provider should understand your requirements and maintenance should be under your control.

Steps to maintain your website:






STEP
01

Regular back up



Website database contains all your posts, links and comments. It is crucial to maintain all your information safely. However, if the database gets corrupted, you are likely to lose entire information. A periodic back up is necessary to prevent any permanent loss.

Quick points on back up:

-  Frequency of back up depends on how often you post.
-  Back up should be stored at different places and in different forms like email, hard disk, flash drive, CD/DVD etc.
-  File size of database can increase disproportionately especially if you include anti-spam or statistics in back up.
-  Remove unnecessary files from back up process to save space and retain only useful information.
-  Back-up process can be easily automated. However, it is recommended that you conduct manual back ups every now and then to make sure that the back up is sound.



Guide to Website Maintenance

STEP
02

Install updates



Updates should be installed by the one who has enough knowledge and experience in doing so. If you are using a CMS, make sure that it is updated. A complicated CMS requires knowledge of HTML and CSS to update. With these technical updates, there are other updates like content updates on news section. Many business owners prefer to do these updates on their own. It gives them ability to quickly upload and share fresh content like new products, features, services and achievements of your business with their customers.

STEP
03

Comment monitoring



Visitors generally have a freedom to post on websites and blogs. It is important to monitor comments not only to get their feedback but to know if it is meant to defame your business. Undue and unjustified criticism may harm your company image. It is your responsibility to monitor and delete such content. It is a leading practice among designers to ensure that users log in through Google or Facebook before posting a comment. It makes it easier to block users creating nuisance.



Guide to Website Maintenance






STEP
04

Beef up security



Security is critical to your website's success and leverages customer trust. Many websites are vulnerable to attack by hackers owing to poor security measures.

How to beef up security of your website?

-  It is essential to update your website with the latest plug-in and CMS version available. You can also set alerts that inform you about the latest updates.
-  Choose long and complex passwords and remember not to reuse any password.
-  File size of database can increase disproportionately especially if you include anti-spam or statistics in back-up.
-  Be careful while giving access to multiple users. Give access only for a particular job and restrict it as soon as the job is over.
-  Always change default settings of CMS which is actually quite easy to do. Changing default settings prevents numerous automated attacks which rely on default settings.

STEP
05

Keep track of website health



Checking health of your website is extremely important to find out how well is your website doing. There are a number of parameters that indicate health status of a website.



Guide to Website Maintenance



Coding errors

A website can have HTML, CSS, or XML coding errors. Resolving these errors is significant to make sure that your website stays healthy and stable. It is far easier to maintain and upgrade a website free from coding errors. W3C Markup validation service helps you to point out various coding errors.



Page speed

Poor page speed is often a turn off for visitors. Visitors should get optimum page speed while loading desktop and mobile website else you are likely to get a high bounce rate. Google Pagespeed Tool is an easy tool to calculate and improve page speed.



Keyword optimization

Keyword optimization makes it easier for search engines to understand what your page is about. Search engines can index your web page properly and helps in increasing traffic to your website. Website owner should make sure that each webpage is optimized for at least one key phrase or keyword. Presence of keyword in page URL, browser title, on-page title and within the page is very helpful.



Mobile-friendly

Rise in mobile traffic makes it necessary for website owners to ensure that website is mobile ready. If mobile visitors immediately abandon your website, it shows that your website is not ready for mobiles and Google stops directing mobile traffic to your website. A website has to be mobile ready and have a responsive design to make it easier for mobile users to browse your website.



Guide to Website Maintenance

STEP
06

Website and server downtime



Knowing downtime of your website is important to find out how well prepared your website is to cater to customers. Downtime is a signal of weak hosting server and website is likely to be slow. You can always request your host to upgrade the server. Pingdom is an effective paid service that monitors website downtime and server speed.

Multiple monitoring servers around the world run protocol based tests on your website at regular intervals. If monitoring location detects a connection failure or error, then you receive alerts through email, SMS. You also come to know when your website becomes available again.

STEP
07

Check domain authority



Domain authority is important to predict the performance of a website in search engine rankings. A range of metrics is used to get the score of domain authority like number of root domains, number of total links to your website, MozRank, MozTrust. You can use it to compare your website with competitors, and track your marketing and SEO initiatives over time.



Guide to Website Maintenance

STEP
08

Fixing broken links



Broken links leave a bad impression on visitors. A user clicking a link and being directed to 404 dead-end errors may get frustrated and never return to your website. Apart from that, they devalue your SEO efforts. The flow of link is restricted and your ranking is badly affected. It is clearly a mark of poorly maintained website. Search engines don't give preference to websites with broken links.

A tool called BrokenLinkCheck helps you to locate and fix broken links on your website. Google Analytics is another great free tool for tracking website performance and find broken links. Once you locate broken links, create a report and track your changes. Analyze data and decide which pages should be redirected. Finally, redirect the broken links in your content management system.

STEP
09

Backlinks



Backlinking is considered as an essential part of SEO efforts. Backlinks also known as inbound links are incoming links to a website or web page. The number of backlinks is an indication of popularity of that website. Higher the number of links pointing to your website, higher is the preference given to your website by search engines. Backlinks is a way to popularize your website and entice visitors to visit it. Besides that, links from important and big websites are considered more relevant than from small websites.



Guide to Website Maintenance

STEP
10

Optimize database



Size of database can be enormously huge if it is left to grow uncontrollably. It is important to use plug-ins and tools that help you to optimize database. It helps you to delete redundant revisions of posts and pages. Trashed posts and comments can be deleted. Spammed content can be deleted easily. You can also optimize database tables and create a log file of optimization.

STEP
11

Update content



A website serving stale content is as good as nothing. In today's dynamic environment, customers need up-to-date information and fresh content. Even though the quality of your previous content is high, you just can't stop updating it. You must update your website frequently to gain more visibility among visitors.

STEP
12

Addition of features



Addition of new features is another way of updating your website. Addition of videos, newsletters manager, blogs, Google Map, RSS feed, social bookmarking, content management system, social media profiles, e-commerce, photo gallery, exclusive content for members etc. are some of the common features added to a website to enhance its usability.



Conclusion

We had earlier written an exhaustive whitepaper on website maintenance. Feel free to download this valuable document so that you have something to accompany with this eBook. Meanwhile, follow all the tips and tricks given here and you can rest assured that your website will never face downtimes and will remain popular with your visitors. After all, there is nothing more important than a well maintained website. That says it all about how efficient your company is!

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