Why Web Standards are Important

Standards on the internet refer to the guidelines and specifications that govern site design and building. This affects the tools and software used when creating a website. Tools and software for web design are a huge industry, which make standards important, but on top of that you have the user experience, which is what should be the main concern.

Having a set of standards, universal to all websites, ensures that no matter what a site is being viewed on, or which browser it is being viewed with, it will look the same. Universal standards mean that browsers can be built knowing what to expect from websites. This not only means that all current websites work on all browsers, but websites built in the future will as well, as long as the standards are maintained.

It sounds relatively simple, but, during the 90's, Internet Explorer and Netscape both began ignoring web standards, instead seeking to add features that would give them an edge over each other.

The results were pages that would only display correctly in one browser, developers having to develop multiple pages for different browsers, some websites only being displayed correctly on a specific version of a browser, and an increase in bugs and security holes as development of features took time away from quality control.

It also led to a louder call for standardisation, and once Internet Explorer had emerged as dominant, W3C standards such as XML and CSS became more strictly adhered to.

The benefits of this were that developers knew what they were designing for, users didn't have to worry about which browsers they were using, and more time could be spent on addressing bugs and security holes.

When the second browser wars began, browsers were already adhering to these standards, and so the competition become which browser could provide the best user experience. This led to features such as tabbed browsing, enhanced Java reading and more options for customisation.

Hopefully, these standards will be maintained in the future, and new technologies or developments will be brought in in a manner that works with web stantards.

About the Author

Tom Sangers is a regular contributor to the Online SEO Blog, which contains plenty of information on Tom's Fruity Mug.

Source: http://www.kiarticle.info