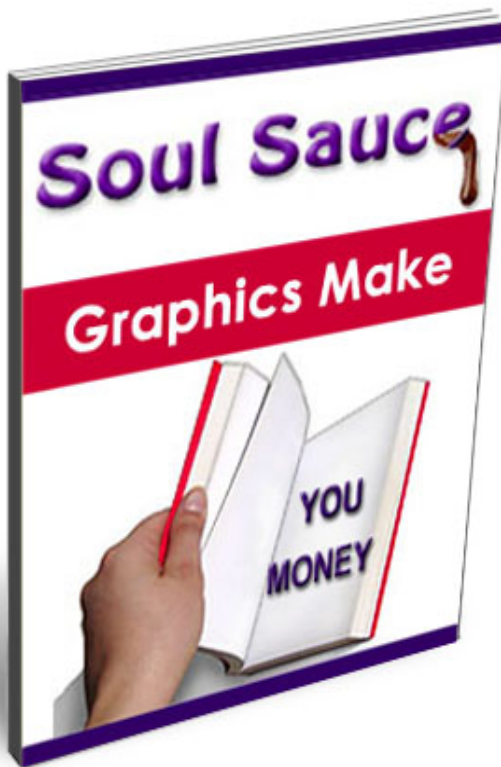




## GRAPHICS MAKE YOU MONEY



## What Are Graphics?

A graphic is the representation of an image used to convey visual information.  
I'm going to introduce everything that you need on a website to maximise sales:

- **The background**
- **White space**
- **Positioning**
- **Sizes**
- **Photographs**
- **Icons & Bullets**
- **Headers**
- **Logos**
- **Favicons**
- **eBook / Report / CD Covers**

## Focus On The Message Your Site Tells A Stranger

When you build a business website keep in mind that you are selling to strangers. Anyone can sell to their friends, because you have time to explain what your site is trying to say. You only have seconds to show a stranger that they've found the right place for solutions to their concerns. You don't have the luxury of time or personal contact.

Using a graphic is a great way to grab instant attention, and this gives you the opportunity to present your message. Think of it as an open door, instead of a closed one - it simply makes life easier.

The brain processes visual information 60,000 faster than text, so a picture may be worth 60,000 words! It's been found that visual aids in the classroom improve learning by up to 400%.

Graphics are the easiest way to create your own unique brand, and make yourself stand out from the crowd. Take the time to decide what impression you want your site to give. It's perfectly OK to show your personality, you don't have to be bland and anonymous, but you do have to be appropriate for the services or products you offer.



What does this image say to you? Possibly -

Hard working  
Professional  
Efficient  
Serious

You know how clothes change your mood, so you can feel serious or fun depending on your choice, and using graphics has the same effect.

This lady is also wearing a suit, but because it's in bright red with bold contrasts, it shouts fun, not sombre and possibly boring. Different colours in the same 'outfit' tell a completely different story.



## How Each Visual Affects Your Website (And Your Income)

- **Background**



I know it's tempting to have a decorative background, but most graphics are presented on a white background.

That means the photograph above looks much better with no distractions, than if it was surrounded by a white oblong standing out on a contrasting background.

This background detracts from the message.

Having a white background also saves time working out which colour text is best. My suggestions are avoid pale turquoise and yellow text if you don't want customers to struggle to read what you're selling. I've even seen these colours on top of fancy backgrounds, which make it completely impossible.

Think of your website as a shop in a busy shopping centre. If a customer can't understand what's in your shop window, they'll simply go next door. No matter what your personal tastes are, you have to put the customer first - if you want to sell.

- **White Space**

White is one of the most important colours you need to sell more. It doesn't matter how knowledgeable and persuasive your words are if nobody reads them. You don't want to waste hours perfecting your sales pitch, when just one click creates a white space, and makes a huge difference.

Instead of one overwhelming mass of typing, viewers can see manageable chunks. Where they would dismiss a page because they don't have time to face lots of reading, they can scan the first paragraph easily, and if they find it interests them they will continue on to the next paragraph.

Think of white space as room to breathe. If you try to deliver a speech without breathing you won't get very far. White space gives the eyes chance to rest.

- **Positioning**

Graphics also allow you to place text to the right or left of an image, and make a narrower column of words. This makes it much quicker to read. So the placement of text has a big impact on how, or if, your copy reaches your intended audience.



Remember how important white space is. It isn't enough to insert a picture just anywhere. Beautiful photographs with the text crowding up to them means that neither can be fully appreciated.

Use a table with 2 columns, insert your image where you wish, then adjust the columns to create a pleasing amount of white space. Anything will automatically be positioned to the left of each column.

This means if a graphic is inserted into the right-hand column, it will move to the left as you adjust the size. Leave it in its original position, and use 'Enter' to click each line of text down to create white space. Or you can add a third column, if you want to work out the necessary measurements, but this is an easy solution as you type.

- **Size Of Graphics**

Decide what sizes of images will suit your site. It's best to keep them all the same size on each page to give the most compelling symmetry. It's worth spending time thinking of the layout because this will be the foundation you can then adapt easily in future.

I like to keep my graphics in the following sizes: 100 x 100 pixels, 150 x 100, 200 x 150. It adds to the feel of uniformity through the website, even though the variations still allows plenty of room for creativity.

Obviously someone who is selling their photography, for example, will use larger sizes because in that case it's the image that matters more than the text.

You can only reduce sizes satisfactorily to fit the position required, and then, always in proportion. Graphics can't be enlarged without loss of quality.

- **File Size Of Photographs And Buttons**

The file sizes of the graphics should be as low as possible to allow the page to upload as quickly as possible. Very few visitors wait for flashy images to take ages to reveal themselves. Use JPGs for photographs, and GIFs for the other graphics on your web site, such as buttons. JPGs are the highest quality files, because they retain all the colours in the photograph for an accurate reproduction.

Buttons and icons are much simpler designs, so they can be compressed into GIF files, which only use 256 colours. Aim to keep all files under 30kb. It's easy to make very small GIF files, so you can increase the size for the header if necessary. It should be possible to create a header for around 40kb which will look good.

Always spend time making the graphics the exact size you wish to view on your website. If you upload a large file, and then select different sizes of the image for different parts of the website, a) it takes longer to upload, and b) it takes longer to be re-sized, and this isn't always accurate.

All of these buttons have to match or co-ordinate, as different shades of a colour will stand out, and spoil the overall effect. If you can't find exact matches for different designs, it's much better to use a contrast.

There are so many good quality graphics available free online, it should never be necessary to resort to poor clip-art with blurred text and jagged edges. These actually make you lose sales. If you don't look as though you've made any effort to design your website, it's unlikely that a visitor will trust you to part with their money, particularly if you're selling a service. The visitor make a decision based on the perceived lack of effort, and not have much faith in your promises.

**Forming a trusting relationship is crucial, and graphics can play a big part in this.**

**Icons can give directions, and lead the way to the sale, so they're very important.**

Choosing the right graphics for your intended market increases the call to action, and engenders trust and credibility. You can create recognition, so the visitor knows they've found the place that understands them and their needs.

## **Personalising your web site has been shown to increase sales by over 300%.**

You appear instantly more professional, and graphics also say if you've spent time on designing your site, then you intend to be in business for a long time. Even standard, ready made free sites can be modified, so you can easily create your own style.

- **Website Header**

The header is the most important part of your design to establish brand recognition, especially since it's the largest graphic you will most likely use, and it's the first welcome to your website. First impressions definitely count, so spend the most time choosing this.

The most important part of your website is the initial view when they first land on a page, (above the fold), so you have to ensure they want to scroll down and read more.

Don't have a header with a pretty picture that fills most of the page - that is throwing sales away. A smaller header is best to make room for your important sales copy, but if you're set on a larger design, you must incorporate some text to hook the visitor in.

- **Logo**

Your logo is also very important, and it can be used in many different ways. Create a square, 300 x 300 pixels, and it will be easily reduced to the correct size on various forums, membership and social sites in your niche. Register on Global Gravatar, and every time you comment on a blog that uses it, your logo is automatically reproduced.

Keeping the same logo wherever you go to market your business pays dividends. The more you become recognised in reputable locations, the more trust you build.

- **Favicons**

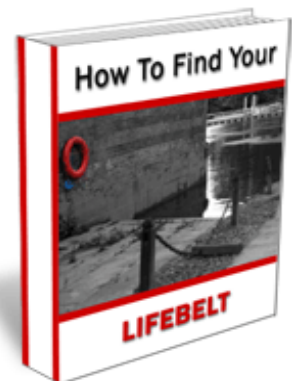
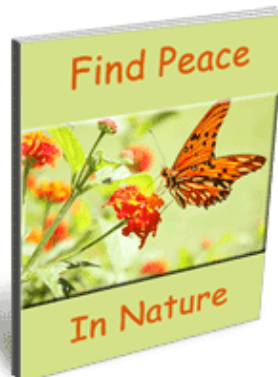
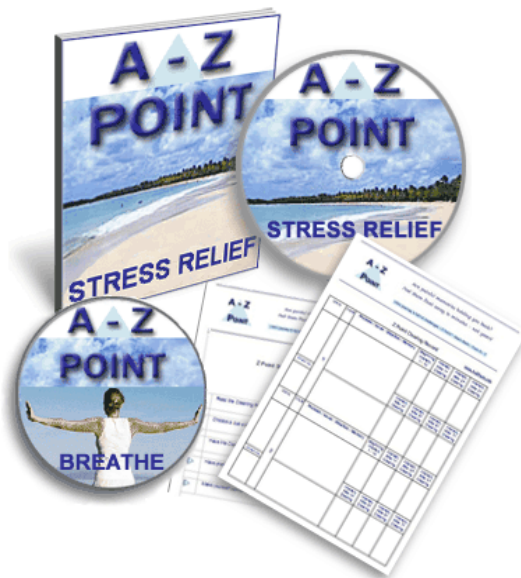
This tiniest of graphics can be one of the most effective to set you apart. This square is shown when your website is opened in a browser, making it easily identifiable among other open websites. It's the finishing touch which really highlights how much effort you've put into every detail, and looks very professional.

- **eBook / Kindle Book / Report Covers**

Providing a free gift to attract subscribers to your list is essential. This becomes the focus of your sales efforts. Your compilation can take many forms from a report to an audio recording. They all need a cover, and this is another opportunity to continue your brand promotion.

Many eBook covers are illegible, and although it is more difficult to design one that is legible when it needs to be small, it's a case of simplicity is best. Unless the cover is the digital copy of a published book, they don't need to be full of too much information.

Here are [more examples](#) online. Please [get in touch](#) for quotations.



## SUMMARY

- Just because a graphic is free it should never look it - high quality is essential.
- Use uniformity of colours, sizes and designs to create a professional impression.
- Don't squeeze everything in - use white space for effective presentation.
- Choose graphics to attract your ideal client, and encourage the sale.
- Keep file sizes as small as possible without loss of quality.
- Graphics show your personality - but keep your target customer in mind.
- You don't have to be Coca Cola to create a memorable brand.
- Design a square logo for multiple free ways to advertise your brand.
- Time spent on design will be rewarded with increased sales.

## FREE RESOURCES

[Stock XCHNG](#) is a leading stock site for free, high quality photographs.

[Color Hex](#) gives you all the options and codes for the colour of your choice, and it shows you the web safe colours that are universally acceptable.

[Colors On The Web](#) shows the importance of choosing the right colours to provide the contrast to make your website a success.

[Icons Etc](#) have a great range of professional free icons and bullets to enhance your website.

[Free Icons And Buttons](#) for a wide range of choice.

[My Live Signature](#) is a great way to personalise your message, and it's especially useful for your emails and newsletters.

[Global Gravatar](#) saves your logo and reproduces it automatically when you leave comments on blogs etc.

Please [contact me](#) for quotations for headers, logos, favicons, or book covers.