Web Design Workbook

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Introduction

What makes a good website?

Although a good web design will let your customers know that you care about your business, web design doesn't end with just how the site looks. A good website is defined as having five aspects: Purpose, Experience, Design, Audio/Visual, and Usability.

The **purpose** is the mission of the site and how well the site accomplishes that mission. The **experience** aspect describes the feeling visitors have during and after going to your web site. Did they have fun or were they irritated? Was their experience in line with the goals of the web site? The aspect of **design** refers to the visuals - layout, color, and structure of information, which is the audio/visual aspect of your site. Does the site have **audio/visual** components or song samples? What quality are the songs and how well do they download or stream? Can visitors turn the sound off and on? **Usability** is defined by how friendly the web site is. Is it easy to use? Can visitors get lost? Can they easily recover from a mistake? Do they have to hit the "back" button?

A top-rated site does not necessarily have to have all five aspects but if it does there are rules it should follow. In addition to these five aspects certain priorities must also be considered. Because not everyone can afford high-speed internet and be first in search engine results, priorities change from site to site.

From a marketing point of view the speed and quality priorities differ. For the clients whose audience includes rural areas, being able to see part or all of the website within a few seconds with a dial-up connection - or in more modern terms "Mobile" - is important. This means that the amount of graphics and quality may be reduced or compromised.

For website owners whose target market is upper-end corporations and high-speed surfers, speed becomes less of an issue. In these cases design plays a more important role and factor in the influence of the viewer. Knowing your market, keeping your priorities in order and adhering to the five aspects of a good web site will always produce an effective and enjoyable web site.
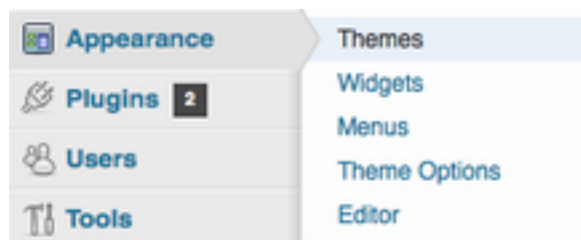
What you will need:

- Access to your Wordpress website (username and password)
- Branding images and logos
- Pictures of your business products, services, and/or backgrounds
- The name of your Wordpress theme (To discover the name of your Wordpress theme, login and click on *appearance* in the Left column. The name of your theme will be the one at the top of the page.) NOTE: C *hanging your Wordpress theme will disregard any customizations that have been made to your current theme.*

- Wordpress theme documentation. (If you have a premium theme then there should be documentation on how to use it.) Once you know your Wordpress theme visit our [Resource](#) page to download your theme documentation. If you do not see your Wordpress theme documentation please email us (tech@shepherdsloft.com) for help.

Theme Options:

You will have different options, all of which depend upon your theme. Once you know what your theme is you may narrow down the location of your **Theme Options**. *Striking* has a link in main navigation on the left. Some themes have *Theme Options* located under the *Appearance* tab. Less advanced themes may not have any theme options at all.
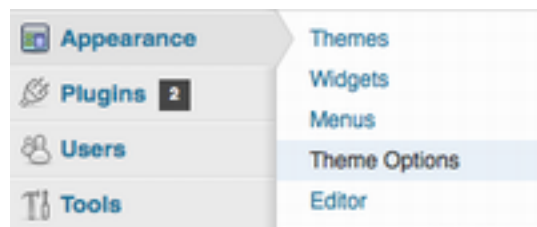
These options may be different or unavailable based on your Wordpress theme. If you do not have these options available in your theme you may upgrade to a [Premium Theme](#). We will be glad to assist you with your purchase and install the new theme for you.

On the following pages we will show and explain some examples of themes with *Theme Options*. Refer to the theme's user guide for detailed instructions.

Layout and Standards

As a general rule of thumb your header - including logo and phone number - should take up approximately 15 to 20% of the top of your page. The navigation should take up 10% of the layout and 70% should be left for content.

The standard size for websites is about 1280 pixels wide. You should update your design every one- to two years, purchasing a new premium theme for compatibility with the latest browsers.

Color and Design

Great looking websites are very simple with a minimum number of colors. Use your color scheme from your branding workbook. Avoid red text on black background and dark-colored text on dark-colored backgrounds. Let your style sheet keep your color scheme consistent and use your dropdown options for headings. Avoid using the underline tool on web pages because most visitors will think it is a link when it actually is not. Use **bold** to highlight text but do not use combinations i.e. **bold** and *italic*. Search engines dismiss your content when you use headings and bold together; they think they are being tricked.
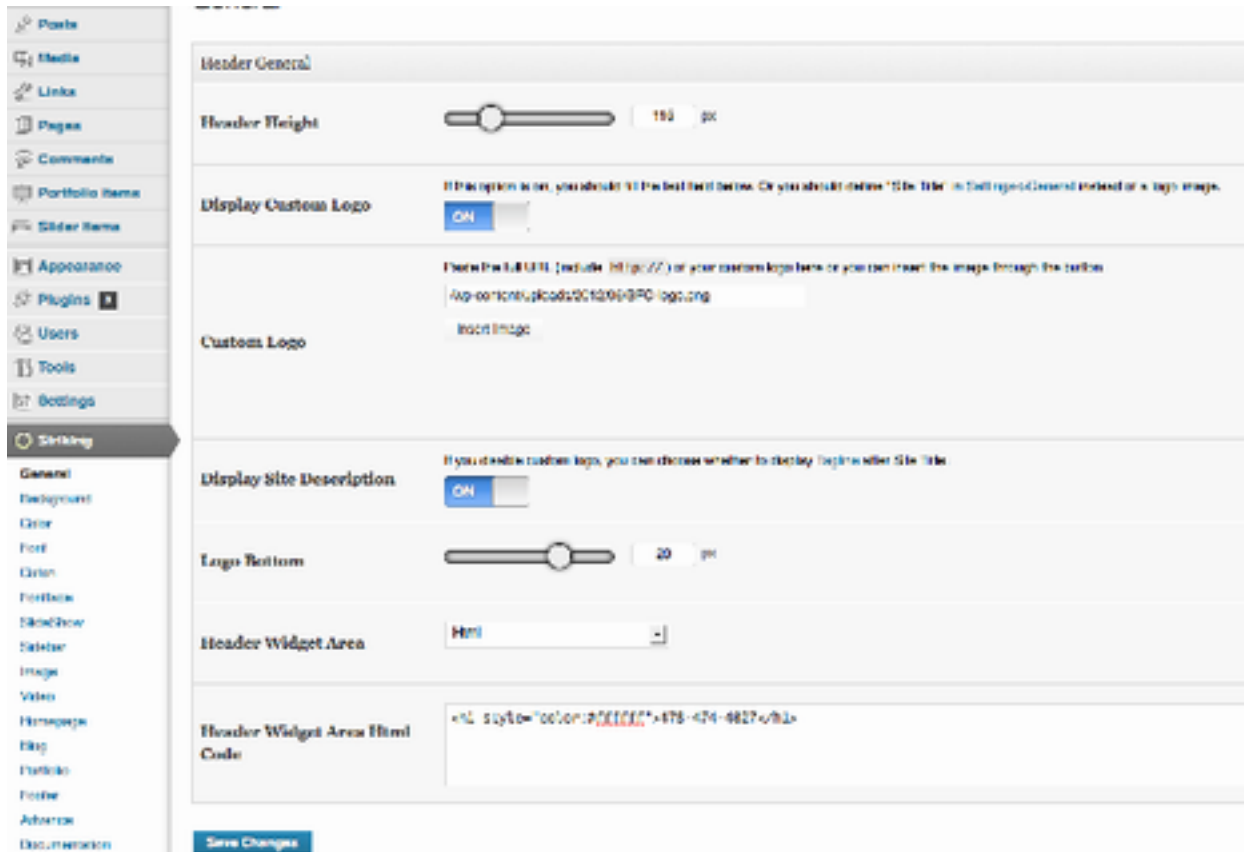
Custom Theme Examples

Striking
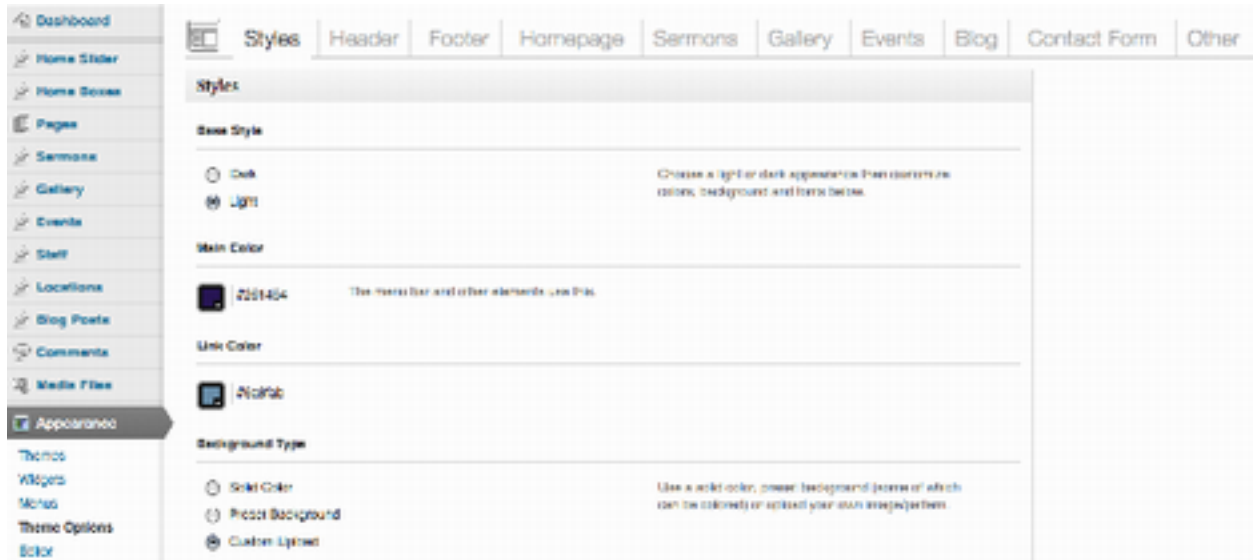
The Risen theme, shown above, has two preset design styles to choose from as well as the ability to change the main colors. If you look at the left side of the screen shot you will see custom post types with little thumb tacks beside them. These custom sections are "posts", traditionally speaking, but they are separated from your RSS feed. This allows you to utilize Wordpress as a website separate from the blog area. See the theme documentation for details on how to complete your web design and layout.

[Download the User Guide for Striking](#)
Visit Shepherds Loft website, click on the "New Media Training" button at the top and then click on "Resources" below the banner.

Risen

The Striking theme, shown above, has two custom post types: "Portfolio Items" and "Slider Items". The Slider Items is great for building slideshows such as the one on the home page. The Portfolio Items is great for products, partners, clients... any type of page where you would like a multiple-column layout of a thumbnail and description with click-to-launch a picture, link, or video in a lightbox.

View the Risen User Guide:
Visit Shepherds Loft website, click on the "New Media Training" button at the top and click on "Resources" below the banner.

Arras

The Arras theme is one of the earlier themes with options. The category page will allow you to choose which posts will show in the home page slide show. On the navigation page you may choose to show pages or posts. You can control the number of posts to be displayed on the home page by setting the numbers on the layout page. The main feature of the design page is to add your own custom background image and make it repeat.

Check List

☐ **General (Logo)**

☐ **Background Color/Image**

☐ **Style (some themes have a light and dark style)**

☐ **Fonts** (We recommend one; two at most)