

## *Radiant Website Design, Ltd.* It's a new day for your business

### Are you using that picture legally?

There are many reasons to use photos and/or graphic artwork on a website. It can make it more visually interesting, to explain a point, a "picture is worth a thousand words", etc., etc. But like the written word, pictures also have copyrights belonging to the person creating it. Using a picture without permission (or at least crediting them) can lead to lawsuits. So before you grab any pictures off the Internet, let's look at your options for doing it legally.

#### 1) **Create your own.**

Always the best option. Take your own photos or hire someone. Also applies to creating graphics for logos, etc. If you do it, the copyright belongs to you. If you hire someone, make sure it is clear in your work agreement whether the person you hire retains the copyright or signs it over to you. Creating original work also is important for branding to give a unique look.

#### 2) **Buy stock photos.**

If you don't want to hire a photographer, another solution would be to use stock photos. Stock photo companies hire professional photographers to take pictures of common things such as city scenes, people in various professions, food, etc. Do a search on "stock photos" and look at what comes up. You pay a fee (which can vary greatly) to use the photo in your own print and/or web advertising. "Royalty free" means you



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pay once up front and can use the photo as many times as you want and don't have to pay a "royalty" each time. Just be careful you understand their policies for using the pictures. Usually it involves putting a copyright notice with the pictures and crediting the company you purchased it from. Failure to follow their policies can lead to being sued for thousands of dollars. Getty images, one of the largest stock companies, is notorious for doing this.

I hope you have found this information useful. Even if you can't use my services at this time, maybe you know someone who can.

Happy Hanukkah! Merry Christmas! Happy New Year!

Next month: Important things to give your web designer (after the chocolate)

Until we Geek again,

Cathy Gazzolo, the "Artistic Geek"

Creating websites that are easy to use and easy to find.