

Report: Web Site Review

The World Wide Web is a collection of diverse ideas. Today, your assignment is to find an appropriate web site and key a short report following the format outlined below. Be sure to start with a short explanation as to why this web site interests you. Then, write a brief paragraph on each of the paragraph headings identified below.



Web Site Review: jackgrassel.com

By:

YOUR NAME

Jack Grassel is an award winning Jazz guitarist that performs in the greater Milwaukee area. He also performs at guitar clinics and seminars and publishes a variety of books on guitar technique and jazz guitar styles. Currently, he lives in Racine, Wisconsin; and is concentrating on performing with his wife, Jill Jensen.

Because they are personal friends of mine, I try to visit this web page periodically to see where they are performing -- I enjoy going out and listening them. I have studied guitar with Jack, and am impressed with his ability to take complex musical ideas and break them down into easy to understand concepts. While he demands a great deal out of his students, his teaching techniques and insights are very helpful and inspiring to those that take the guitar seriously -- his work has won him some international acclaim. He has also helped me acquire professional guitars and shared his experiences in the music business with me. Personally, I'd rather be a teacher!

Web Site Organization. When you first enter jackgrassel.com. you arrive at a screen that welcomes you to his web page. There is a "*hot button*" to actually "*enter.*" Once at his home page, there are links for the following information:

- ♪ CD's
- ♪ Biography
- ♪ Booking
- ♪ Seminars
- ♪ Reviews
- ♪ Schedule
- ♪ Home
- ♪ Contact

Eye Appeal. The web site features animated guitars, text, and musical symbols that get the viewers attention. I believe the color choices of dark blue and jet black are very eye catching. Clearly, this web site is for a guitar player. Each of the links contains primarily text that is clear, concise, and easy to read. I believe Jack has found an excellent balance between "*glitter*" and substance.

Ease of Navigation. The site seems clearly outlined. If you are looking for his books, music, schedule, seminars, or biography; they are easy to locate. If you want to know how to contact him, the information is easy to find. Jack tells me that this web site has helped him promote himself -- many jazz fans are computer literate. In many ways, jazz is an art form for intellectual types that enjoy technology. Evidently, others have found the site easy to use.

Content. If you are interested in jazz guitar, either as a listener or performer, there is something here for you. I especially appreciate the schedule. Trying to keep track of performing artists can be a challenge -- the Milwaukee Journal frequently gets dates wrong in their Friday Que. section. As a fan, I am grateful that I can check his performance schedule and get recently updated information 24 hours a day.

Critique. While I find this a useful web site, Jack is having trouble with his computer. The schedule has not been updated recently (which is why September gigs are still listed). I asked him about this and he told me that the web site has generated contacts from all around the world. Unfortunately, his computer became infected with a serious virus that actually damaged his hardware.

Fixing the computer is probably not a good idea. If he is going to essentially rebuild his CPU, he should probably just upgrade to a better system. Because he recently got married, is in the middle of a couple of recording projects, and just purchased a house; he does not feel that he can replace the machine at this time. This is unfortunate for him and his fans (like me).

If he does upgrade to a better computer, perhaps he would like to put actual samples of his music on-line. As a professional musician, however, he has some concerns about posting his music on the web. He produces all of his CD's himself (Frozen Sky Records) and needs to maintain control over the material. Even if he upgrades his hardware, he may still be reluctant to post his music on-line.

Conclusion. The music business is a tough one that has changed dramatically over the past few years. Without the support of a major recording company, it is virtually impossible to get a new release noticed. To help get around this, many artists are trying to use the Internet to raise awareness of their work. Jack jumped on the World Wide Web as it started to develop, six or seven years ago.

For him, this strategy seems to be working. He is selling CD's and books around the world. Because people are buying directly from him, he is not sharing any of the profits with other retailers. A major musical instrument manufacturer from Germany, Hofner, has noticed and signed him up as an endorsing artist. They have given him some great guitars at no cost and are currently underwriting one of his recording projects.

Jazz and the Internet seem to work well together. Maybe some of your favorite artists are also experiencing the same kind of success. Certain types of music can be promoted on the Internet. Jack tells me that his web page has opened many opportunities for him -- perhaps the Internet will dramatically change the music business and give artists more control over their destiny.