How To: Add a Favicon

Difficulty: Beginner

Introduction

If you look at the top of your browser, you will see a tiny image to the left of the address bar. This is the Favicon.

Favicons are often overlooked when creating a website, but they can be very useful. If a visitor bookmarks your site to return to later, then the Favicon will be saved too - and the Favicon will draw attention back to your site when they look for the bookmark again. Also, if you are like me, you will have lots of tabs open as you browse the internet - again, the Favicon is used up there and will draw the eye back to your site tab.

If you have your own domain you can add a Favicon to your Clikpic site very easily to help brand your website. This how-to guide will run through creating a Favicon, uploading it to your Clikpic site and some tips to making a good one.

Creating a Favicon

While most modern browsers now allow JPGs, GIFs and PNGs to be used as a Favicon, it is recommended that your Favicon is in the .ico format for compatability with older browsers.

Not all image editing software will allow you to save an image as an ico without downloading a plug-in, but luckily there are lots of websites that will allow you to upload your image and convert it into a Favicon.

But before we get to that stage, we need to create the image. Favicons are only 16x16 pixels in size, so you will need to decide what you want your image to show. Given the lack of space, a logo is probably the best idea. If you don't have that, putting the capitals of your name in your site font could look good too.

You can have any colour for a Favicon background, and even have it transparent. You can be quite creative by leaving the background blank, such as using circles, triangles or even just letters. See the end of this guide to see some links to sites with good Favicons.

Converting into a Favicon

As previously mentioned, there are lots of websites that will convert your Favicon, but we recommend using www.favicon.cc. Here you can upload your image saved from your image program, and see a preview in a browser setting. Then just click "Download Favicon" to get the ico file.

You can upload an image that is larger than the 16x16 dimension and allow the website to shrink it for you, but sometimes the image can get blurry, so I'd recommend you upload a 16x16 image into favicon.cc from the beginning.

Uploading your Favicon to Clikpic

Now you have your .ico file, you are ready to add it to your Clikpic site.

To do so, log in to your site and go to the Options page. Favicon file is the fourth option down and you can use the button there to upload your Favicon. Save the page, go to the preview, and your Favicon will appear:

My Favicon won't appear

Sometimes when you make your site live your Favicon may not appear - this is because your browser needs to reload the new image. Try refreshing the page (F5) or closing and reopening your browser.

Tips for making a good Favicon

Don't make it too complicated. It's very easy to make an image that looks very nice at a larger size, which has your logo on it and a few words, but remember it has to be shrunk down to 16x16, which is a very limited space.

You should therefore design with 16x16 in mind. If you are trying to shrink your logo but still want it to appear sharp it's worth knowing that image editing programs and the favicon.cc site will produce a cleaner and sharper Favicon if the input image is a multiple of 16. So when you are preparing your logo for shrinking, if you do it at 64x64 or 128x128 then it will be slightly better when shrunk.

To get some inspiration, just look over your browsing history, or visit these sites:

- http://www.smashingmagazine.com/2007/06/14/creative-favicons-when-small-is-beautiful/

- http://www.smashingmagazine.com/2007/01/31/inspire-yourself-50-remarkable-favicons/

- http://www.smashingmagazine.com/2007/03/29/inspire-yourself-more-creative-favicons/