

WEBSITES FOR SMALL BUSINESS



WHY YOUR BUSINESS NEEDS A WEBSITE

Today, over 60% of Americans use the Internet. We use it to communicate, to learn, to shop and to buy. It is just as important in our lives as the telephone.

The Web has changed the rules, both on the consumer side as well as the business side when it comes to the market place. In competing for consumers many companies are adapting their strategies to respond to a more informed consumer and a consumer who demands to be better informed. This proves especially challenging to small businesses with tight budgets and limited resources.



A WEBSITE CAN INCREASE YOUR CUSTOMER BASE

- Over **126 Million** Adult Internet Users in U.S.
- 66 Million go online daily
- Despite the Dot-com bubble burst in 2000 there has been an increase of over 63% in online sales since then.



A WEBSITE CAN INCREASE YOUR CUSTOMER BASE

- According to *The State of Retailing Online 8.0*, an annual Shop.org study conducted by Forrester Research of 137 retailers;
- 2004 online retail sales rose 23.8 percent to \$89.0 billion
- 2005 online retail sales are expected to reach \$109.6 billion
- Women's retail categories are expected to increase by 30% in 2005



INFORMATION GATHERING (WEB CUSTOMERS)

- 32% dislike sales-oriented email that is unsolicited
- 59% of business customers consider receiving online customer service their most important Web activity



CHECKLIST FOR MARKETING A WEBSITE

- Use Page Title
 - Include Meta Tags
 - Submit to Search Engines
 - Submit to Google & Yahoo
 - Submit to Indexes
 - Request Reciprocal Links
 - Include URL on Everything
 - Use Traditional Media
 - Issue News Releases
 - Business Link Sites
 - Publish an E-Mail Newsletter
 - Put URL in E-Mail 'signature'
 - Announce a Contest
 - Purchase Banner Ads
 - Buy a Text Ad in an E-Mail Newsletter
- **ASK visitors to BOOKMARK your Website** ●



PROMOTE YOUR WEBSITE LOCALLY

- Approximately **25%** of online consumers will use the Internet to shop locally.
- Potential consumers will use your website to do research on your company, products and services before they do business with you. They want to be informed. If your local competitor has a website and you don't who will the consumer choose?



WAYS TO PROMOTE LOCALLY

- Register with Local Portal Sites and Search Engines
(i.e. Tri-CityLinks.com)
- Chambers of Commerce
- Local Conferences like this one
- Networking Opportunities
- Targeted OPT-IN email newsletter or mailing list
- Put your URL everywhere and on everything
 - Any and ALL Advertising
 - Business literature (Business Cards, etc.)
 - Phone Book listing
 - In your Store
- And most important of all...Put your URL everywhere and on everything



WHAT YOUR WEBSITE CAN DO FOR YOUR BUSINESS.

- Promote/Sell Products or Services (E-Commerce/Store)
- Provide Information to your Customers
 - Business History or Mission Statement
 - Location & Contact Information
 - Employment Opportunities
 - Work Examples
- Technical Support for your Customers
- Communication Base to Remote Offices/ Employees (Intranet)
- Create an Online Community for your Customers



TOOLS TO DEVELOP YOUR WEBSITE

- Hosting Provider for website (free is not free)
- Website Design
 - Out Source vs. Do it yourself
- Software
 - HTML Editor
 - Text
 - WYSIWYG(What You See Is What You Get)
 - Graphics Program
 - File Transfer Program
 - Browsers
- Hardware
 - Computer
 - Graphics Equipment
 - Camera
 - Scanner
 - Movie Camera
- Knowledge/Informational Resources
 - Books
 - Websites
 - Classes



CREATING AN EFFECTIVE WEBSITE FOR YOUR SMALL BUSINESS



TIPS FOR CREATING WEBSITE

REQUIRED CONTENT FOR EFFECTIVE WEBSITE

- Contact Information
 - And make it easy to find because you don't look legitimate if you are hard to find
- Company History or About Us section
- Good Consistent Navigation within your website
- Consistent Look and Design throughout your website
- Don't overload visitors with too much information per page
- When creating external links use a pop-over window



TIPS FOR CREATING WEBSITE IMAGES

- Keep the total number of graphics per page to a minimum to help speed the download time for each page. If a page takes too long to download people will go elsewhere.
- When you scan images start at a medium to high resolution, modify your picture and after you have the look you want, lower the color bit depth and resolution.
- Use a maximum of one animated graphic per page (if you must use animated graphics at all).
- Never design your images to only look good at a certain resolution there-by limiting your viewing audience.
- Design your images to look good for everyone. Not everyone has a 21 inch monitor, a new computer or a fast internet connection.



TIPS FOR CREATING WEBSITE IMAGES

- Keep image file sizes as small as possible but use the proper format. To do this use the following advice:
 - If your image contains lots of detail like photographs use JPEG format (.JPG).
 - If your image contains distinct separate areas that are the same color, like a comic strip or stylized text, use GIF format (.GIF).
 - Keep the total number of colors what's called bit depth, in each image and per page as low as possible
 - When creating images for use on your website final resolution should only be 72 dpi (dots per inch). One exception to this is if the images you are providing for download from your website will be used in print work.
 - Size your images to final display size.



TIPS FOR CREATING WEBSITES

TEXT

- Although it is technically possible to have one webpage that contains dozens of printed pages of information, it is best to keep each webpage to a maximum of 2 to 3 printed pages in length.
- When using stylized text on a webpage make sure to specify alternate fonts that are installed on other computer platforms like Windows, Macintosh, LINUX, etc.
- For page titles of company logos or other text where you need to use a *custom* or non-standard font you can use a graphic of the text so that the text will look the same on all computer platforms. This way you can use any font you want and have it look exactly the way you want it for every visitor.
- Run a spell checker on the content of your website before you post it on the Internet.



TIPS FOR CREATING WEBSITES

PAGE LAYOUT

- Use tables or Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) to control the positioning of the elements of your webpages.
- When using tables, always specify a table width to decrease download and rendering time of your webpage.
- Whenever possible, always specify the actual image width and height, to decrease download and rendering time of your webpage. Never specify dimensions other than actual ones associated with an image.
- Preview your webpages on various computer platforms at different resolutions to make sure that it looks good to the majority of your visitors. Don't design for only one resolution.
- Always check your HTML coding for syntax errors. Some HTML editors have a syntax checker built-in.



TIPS FOR CREATING WEBSITES

HELPFUL LINKS

A FEW HELPFUL WEBSITE LINKS

A Beginner's Guide to HTML programming

<http://archive.ncsa.uiuc.edu/General/Internet/WWW/HTMLPrimer.html>

WebDeveloper.com's Developer Forum

<http://www.webdeveloper.com/devforum/>

Dave Raggett's 10 Minute Guide to HTML (on W3C)

<http://www.w3.org/MarkUp/Guide/>

W3C's HTML Home Page

<http://www.w3.org/MarkUp/>

Composing Good HTML

<http://www.ology.org/tilt/cgh/>

W3 Schools

<http://www.w3schools.com/>



Q AND A

