

DESIGN PROFIT!

Everything You Need To Know
To Create A Website That Sells.



By **Sandi Hunter** and the
Worldprofit.com Design Team.

Preface by **Dr. Jeffrey Lant.**

Design Profit

Everything You Need To Know To Design A Website That SELLS!

By Sandi Hunter

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Design Profit: Everything You Need To Know To Design A Website That SELLS!

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Free Website Design Consultation Offer

In Appreciation.....

A special note of appreciation to the members of the Worldprofit Design team who each day create brilliant websites for Worldprofit customer's around the globe. In the "Ask A Design Expert" section of this book, it is the following who have shared their insights and knowledge - Jody, Colin, Cris, Gary, Doug, Sam, Amy, Patrick, Jenny, and Design Services Manager, Nikole. To each of you, THANK YOU!

~Sandi Hunter

Preface by Dr. Jeffrey Lant

Every business doing business online - and at last count there were over 200,000,000 of them - has one insistent question: what does it take to design a website that SELLS?

Now, with the advent of this key resource, they'll know, because this valuable guide delivers just the information they - and you - must have.

This book couldn't come at a better time. Millions of business people have sunk billions of dollars into their websites, but most have never received a straight answer about what that site should contain so that THEY get what they want -- more prospect leads and more sales. Design Profit, with its wealth of practical detail, takes care of this problem.

I've been in the fortunate position of watching this book as it was written. It started out as a series of superb Question-And-Answer articles written by the hot-shot designers of Worldprofit Design Services and their leader, Sandi Hunter.

As one fact-filled article after another emerged from these people it was obvious that the information was far too valuable to leave in article format alone. I was the guy who said, "This is terrific material that simply must be used in a book". This unique book is the result.

Now, right at your fingertips, you're going to get the very best information available anywhere online (or off) on what it takes to design a website that sells. The kind of information you'll find here could ONLY be produced by web designers at once technically proficient, mature, adept - and talented. What's more they have a gift for arranging so much information in handy steps you can easily follow.

This is not merely a book to be read once and put aside. No way! Because the problem it addresses is so important to so many -- how to produce that all important website that SELLS - do yourself a favor and read it over and over again. Treat it like what it is: a treasure trove of hard-to-find, wonderful-to-use information, most available no where else whatsoever.

As you're reading it, ensure that you're subscribed to the fountainhead of this information - Design Profit ezine at www.worldprofit.com/ezines These smart designers aren't done mastering online design and the creation of profit-making websites. I'm delighted to tell you they just keep on getting smarter and smarter. Best of all, they share this detailed, useful information every single week in the pages of Design Profit Newsletter. Subscribe free above, and you keep this smart information coming.

For additional web design information, be sure to visit www.worldprofit.com/design Take a very close look at the stupendous work done by Worldprofit Design Services designers, including the knock-out "Before And After Redesign Gallery." There you can see the tired old websites businesses worldwide used until these designers created the marketing powerhouses that are really doing them some good! These pictures are worth well a thousand words. Compare the old with the new, and you get a real sense of just how good these talented designers really are and just what a difference they make to your bottom line.

Finally, take a good, long look at your current website. If it's a year old (or more), it's time for refurbishing. Aging websites will not get you the level of prospect leads and sales you want. That's why for both the creation of your next website from scratch or to refurbish your existing site, you should use the talents of the clever designers who produced this book. Their business is the growth of your business, and they'll do you proud!

Now dig in. This book could be worth literally hundreds of thousands or even millions of dollars to you and your business. It's our very special gift to you!

Dr. Jeffrey Lant
Worldprofit Co-Founder and CEO

Chapter 1

Getting Started: How To Put Your Business Online

By Sandi Hunter

You know you need a website for your business but you don't know where to start. Here's the help you've been looking for!

A website starts with a domain name, your own www.nameyoupick.com. The domain name is usually your business name. Example Wal-Mart's website address is www.wal-mart.com and also www.walmart.com. The head honchos at Wal-Mart must have been concerned about websurfers mistyping their address, so smartly booked both variations of the spelling. The news giant CNN, uses www.CNN.com. At Worldprofit Inc., our website address (URL) is www.Worldprofit.com and also www.worldprofit.ca (the .ca version denoting only that we are a Canadian company.)

The address you pick for your website should be easy to say, easy to remember, preferably non-hyphenated unless that is how you spell your business name as is the case with Wal-Mart. The preferred address remains to be a .com variation for commercial enterprises, and .org for organizations. Given that your first choice for a name may have been selected by someone else, you can decide on another extension such as .biz. or .info or .ws although many more extensions now exist.

Once you pick a domain name you need a provider who will store, or host your website. This provider is normally called a Website Hosting Company, or Website Provider. Worldprofit.com is both a website hosting company and a website design firm. Now what? You have a website address, a service to host your site but what do you put at your site? What will people see when they access your website address? How do you know what information or content to include?

You are the expert at your business. Professional website designers are experts at what we do. You will get the best possible results from your website if the two knowledge bases can be married.

Knowing your business, understanding your buyer and working with a design professional will result in a site that is:

- targeted directly at your customer
- in keeping with your business goals and objectives
- is professionally designed
- integrates proven marketing strategies.

Knowing where to start, begins with asking yourself some good questions about your goals and your business. The answers to those questions will help you formulate your website development plan.

Let's get started.

1. What is the primary purpose of your website?

Do you plan to use the site to simply generate leads that will ideally lead to sales?

Or

Do you plan to directly sell products / services at your site?

Once you know the answers to these questions you can plan your site accordingly. If the goal of your site is to generate leads you need to consider how you will do this. Simply posting your company flyer to your website will do little to generate leads and stimulate sales.

Marketing online is an active process; your website needs to speak directly to prospective customers.

Your copy/wording must be compelling and motivating so some action is taken. This could be to encourage site visitors to complete a form, pick up the phone, send an email inquiry, enter a contest, or sign up for your free newsletter, or ideally buy something **RIGHT NOW!**

Leads from a website just don't fall into your email box.

Just like any type of advertising, you have to strategically create your site to motivate people to respond.

If you plan to sell products directly from your site, how many products will you sell and at what cost?

You will need to determine where can you ship the products to, and how much will it cost to ship.

What is unique about your products? Why should people buy from you and not someone else?

The number of products you plan to sell will dictate the set up on online ordering. If you have more than 20 products to sell you will need a shopping cart service so customers can enter credit card orders securely at your site. Your website developer can assist you with the set up and advise you on how to become an online merchant.

2. Who is your customer? Who buys your product or service?

All successful business people know their customers. Specifically, they know who buys their product or service. Is it primarily men? Women? Seniors? Teenagers? Farmers? Parents? Teachers? Who?

Knowing who your customer is will help you and your site designer; define the type of website you need so it is targeted at your specific buying audience. It should come as no surprise to you that large companies like Coca-Cola and The Gap are smart marketers.

They target their campaigns at specific demographics in everything from the selection of music, colour, models, and ad copy.

You can be just as smart by knowing your buyer and working with your site designer to develop your website to target that specific niche.

3. How will you use your website to bring you more business?

A website is not static. A website is an interactive situation between you the merchant, and your prospective customers.

To get maximum results from your website you need to cater to your customers on their terms. This means using your website to provide content of value, content that is quick to load, easy to navigate, and is buyer-oriented.

Think about what your customers want and how you can give it to them so that they benefit - and you benefit.

Remember to keep your answers to Question # 1 in mind. Your site need not be elaborate and complicated if the purpose of your site is very basic. When you read through the list of suggestions below, consider your own goals and whether these are appropriate for your business plans.

Keeping it simple is still great advise. Most websites continually evolve over time as the business grows.

Consider the following strategies for delivering value and service to your customers while you the merchant benefit from the lead or future sale.

- A) **Offer an Exclusive Newsletter for your website visitors and clientele.** Offer your subscribers advance notice on special offers, upcoming sales events, discounted pricing and so forth.

Not sure what I mean? Eddie Bauer offers a free newsletter; you can do the same! See an example at www.eddiebauer.com. Guess who else offers one? Retail giant Wal-Mart at www.wal-mart.com. Look at what the big companies are doing and why, then think how you could use a similar type of marketing to build your business.

- B) **Make Special Exclusive Offers on your website to stimulate instant sales.** This can be a featured item, a holiday item, best selling item and so forth. FutureShop.ca offers discounted pricing if you order online; you cannot get the same price in their stores. They have created sales exclusive to their website patrons. Here is another example, WestJet.com offers passengers an airfare discount when flights are booked online.

- C) **Reward customers and visitors to your site by offering printable coupons or offering a contest entry.** Be smart about the offers you make. If you offer a contest, make it a stipulation that to enter, entrants must deposit entry forms in your store. This is less convenient of course but it encourages people to come to your store rather than blindly entering web contests. Your offers should be planned with the end goal of getting the sale!

- D) **Make the most of the traffic you get to your site by offering a "Refer a Friend" option or Email this to a Friend Option.** Chances are that if your site is about organic food, your site visitors will know others who are interested in your site. Self-referrals are a great way to build your traffic.
- E) **If you plan to build your online business you must have someone at your office ready to respond to email inquiries and manage online orders.** If you don't do this, you will be committing business suicide. Internet users want information fast, and you will need to be prepared for this new consumer. Determine who will update the site, handle email inquiries and orders promptly and efficiently so your customers get excellent service.
- F) **Finally, you will see better results with your website if you promote the address EVERYWHERE.** If you purchase traditional advertising in print, TV or radio be sure you also include your website address to maximize your traffic. You must also consider that you cannot just post your website and expect the orders to start rolling in.
- G) **You must promote your website address online and offline.** Search engines are one of the best ways to get traffic to your site. Some major engines such as Google.com still accept free submissions of new website addresses (URLS), but if you truly want results and to be in the top listings you will have to pay for this. Don't be fooled by the marketing pitches telling you your site will be listed with 1500 engines for \$49.95. You will not get the results you want. Use a service such as PayPerClick.com or Google.com or Overture.com. You will get better results for your hard earned dollar.

4. Do You Know What You Are Doing?

If you don't feel that you know enough about the web, and doing business online, then you need to talk to someone who does.

Every day I talk to people who jumped into a website without adequate planning or input from a design and marketing expert. Not surprisingly they aren't happy with the results. Good planning BEFORE you start your website will lead to better results, and less headache from redesign in the future.

If you feel like you are in over your head, give our office a call. In 1994 when we started, we had no idea what we were doing either. Today we do! Let us share what we know works with you.

Chapter 2

Why "Do-It-Yourself" Website Design will Cost You Time, Money and Frustration Beyond Belief!

By Sandi Hunter

This morning I glanced out my window.

There in his yard was my neighbor John with three landscapers looking on as he pointed to various parts of a haphazard yard and a semi-constructed retaining wall.

'Poor John', I thought as I laced up my runners for my morning run. Early this spring, John told me he had bought a book on do-it-yourself landscaping and taken a one-hour course at the local hardware store. Tired of looking at a dirt lawn, and in an effort to save some money, he thought he would tackle his landscaping plans himself.

For the last several weeks I have watched John toil away digging, drilling, sawing and leveling. I observed him powering up various tools, and winced at his profanity when plans would go awry. After hours and hours of sweat equity, he's got a sparse lawn, some staked trees, a crooked brick path, and a collapsing retaining wall - plus a few more gray hairs. Yesterday John told me he wishes he had done what our fellow neighbor Sue had done. As a full-time catering company owner, Sue knew she was out of her element when it came to landscaping her lot. Sue loves yard work and has no fear of dirt under her nails, but she compared the cost to hire a landscaper with how much money she would lose if she did it herself and had to be away from her business. After calculating the numbers, she discovered her time was better spent at her company doing what she did best. She hired someone to come in and do all of her landscaping. Since she was able to spend more time at work she managed to bring on three new clients in her catering business! Now Sue enjoys her coffee in her lush landscaped garden as she creates mouth-watering menu plans for her customers.

John now says that for the amount of time he spent on this he could have been putting in extra hours at work. As it turns out he has had to bring professionals in to fix the mess he created and finish the job. John's a smart man, one of the brightest and ambitious attorneys in the city. However, when it comes to landscaping he's lacking in patience and skill. Like many of us tend to do, we take on too much, sometimes more than we can handle and we end up paying for in the long run.

Smart business is really about making smart choices. When I have a legal issue, I go to a lawyer. When I need my driveway shoveled after the 3rd snowfall that week, I hire the eager kid next door. Knowing when professional assistance is required can literally save you thousands of dollars and many many tension headaches. When it comes to website design hiring a professional is the difference between having a site that nets sales, versus a site that puts you on the web but gets you little or nothing in return.

Have you guessed it yet? Yes, I've worked as a senior consultant since 1994 at a professional website design firm. Each week I hear from frustrated people who need a website and have woeful tales to tell of bad experiences with non-professionals.

Here are some snippets of what I've heard.

a) 'I wasn't sure if the web would work for me so I just posted some info to see what would happen and..... well nothing happened because I had no idea what I was doing.'

Or

b) 'I thought I could save money by getting my sister's son to design the site. End result, kid started, kid got bored, kid gave up. No site.'

Or

c) 'I read a Website Design for Dummies' book but it wasn't as easy as I thought.'

Or

d) 'I hired this guy who said he was a designer. Now he's not returning phone calls and the site is only half done. Sometimes I can't even get the site to load!'

So what's an honest person to do?

Hire a professional to design your website! Yes! Someone who knows not only how to design a website that works, but one that will get you noticed, get you leads and get you sales! Who is a professional designer?

Here's what to look for so you make the best decision.

- Professional website designers have an established online portfolio. If they are indeed a design firm they should have plenty of examples of work they have done and be proud to show it off!
- Professional website designers have applied business experience not just book smarts. The website design industry is not regulated. Any kid or high school flunkie can hang up a sign that says 'website designer.' Remember cool design technique doesn't necessarily mean good results. The purpose of the site and goals of the business dictate the kind of design rather than creating the design, then as an afterthought adding the business elements. To get results, your designer must have experience in website design, graphic design, online marketing strategies, and much more. It's not about pasting copy to a webpage and plunking in a business logo. Experienced designers listen to your goals, ask what you want the site to accomplish, determine who is your audience, and take an interest in your business, your products and services. They want to complete your site on time and earn your business as a customer for life not for just one project and a fast buck. Professional designers earn their living creating sites and helping you build your online business.
- When it comes to choosing a professional designer, full service design firms are often your best approach. Usually they charge more, but you get all services in one place and that reliability can save you frustration. The old expression "you get what you pay for" rings true in any type of service business. A full service firm offers

reliable hosting, technical support, experienced design, professional copywriting and targeted marketing, a one stop shop if you will for online business.

Chapter 3

How To Hire A Website Designer and Get The Best Results!

By Sandi Hunter

It happened again today. I talked to yet another website design prospect that tried to cut some corners by hiring the kid down the street to design a website for his business. It came as no surprise to hear a story I've heard many times before. It took over six months for him to get a cheesy website that has since resulted in no sales and no traffic. This call came right on the heels of a conversation I had with a local customer who paid \$70,000 to a professional design firm for a five-page basic web site. It had no interactivity, no online ordering, just a standard site layout. The site should have cost no more than \$3,000 at the outside. Then there is the story of the gentleman I talked to last week that hired a flash designer without comparing his flash design portfolio to other designers. He paid in excess of \$10,000 for a flash site that was poorly designed, error-ridden, 8 minutes to load on a cable modem, and crashed most browsers. How many sales do you think that business made when the site couldn't even be viewed! Like many people though, this business owner did not know what to look for in a good designer.

So what's happening out there? What's the average person to do when searching for a website design firm? Who do you go to? Who do you trust? What's a reasonable price to pay for professional website design?

After ten years in the website design business I have found that website designers and design firms have five main approaches they use to their advantage.

1. Some design firms talk above the heads of the customer. They spout terms like CGI this, PERL that, Java that, and flash this. They try to impress or confuse customers with terms that they do not understand and fail to explain how any of these effects will help the customer make sales on their site. If you hear a lot of unfamiliar terminology without explanation, this could mean the designer doesn't have a solid understanding of e-commerce. A good designer or design firm will assess your needs and apply design effects that serve to meet your purposes for the site, that will add to the appeal of your site and help make you sales. The purpose of the site dictates the style of design and an experienced designer should be able to take your needs and weave with this their own creativity. Bottom line -- at all times -- to get you RESULTS!
2. Some design firms underquote on a project then charge additional fees for extra design hours and hidden fees for items after the initial contract. I've seen this a number of times. Read the fine print and ask a lot of questions! How many hours are allocated to your project? What is the time frame for development? What is the editing process? What's the cost of site maintenance? Can you access the site yourself should you choose to do so for no cost editing? Exactly what are you going to get for what you are paying? Knowing all upfront and hidden fees from the outset will make budget planning and the overall design experience more enjoyable.

3. A large number of design firms don't examine the specific needs of the customer or the business. They set their own agenda for site design and what should be included without thoroughly assessing the purpose of the site. Some firms have a mind-set for a one-size fits all approach to design. Although there are many basic design functions that can be applied to any style of site, it remains that each website is unique and the needs of each business will vary.
4. You as the business owner need to accept some responsibility here too though. Thoroughly consider what it is that you want to accomplish with your site. Do some initial planning of the content to be included and then pass this on to the designer. A good designer will listen to your goals for the site and start thinking about how this can be accomplished within the website.
5. Some non-professional website designers try to convince the customer that anyone with a little knowledge of FrontPage and an image editor can create a fabulous web site and will save you money. If you choose to deal with an inexperienced website designer who has read a couple of books and dabbled with flash, accept the fact that you will get an unprofessional website. On the surface the site may look good to the untrained eye, but there are a number of hidden design elements that are critical in good design. Factors if not considered and integrated into the design will affect your site traffic, load time, prospect response, accessibility and viewability, and visitor to sales ratio. These are all considerations that an experienced website designer plans for and accommodates. Website design is a lot more than scanning your company logo, inserting it on the page and adding in a paragraph about what you do along with your contact information.
6. Finally, some design firms hit the customer with a large design quote with all the bells and whistles that is far more than what the customer requires. Knowing this it's no surprise when I see so many dot com companies filing for bankruptcy. They rushed onto the web, planned poorly, spent their wad, got no results and then had to close up shop. Successful smart online businesses are often the ones that tested the waters first. They started off small with very basic websites, then added to them as their profits grew. As more traffic came to the site, profits increased and so too did the site size and expenditure on advertising.

What you should look for in a good website design firm

Results

View the company's portfolio. Who are their clients? In their portfolio, is there variety in the sites that they produce? Do the sites load quickly? Are they appealing and professional looking? What about marketing clout? Do the sites they've designed make you want to do business with the site owner? Are the sites you see easy to navigate? Is the design firm focused on you the customer and your results, or are they more interested in flaunting their own egos with site design that is "the latest and greatest effect" but does nothing to represent your needs and purposes. Good design firms reap the rewards of designing sites that work for their customers as those satisfied customers refer others and remain loyal by renewing services.

Reputation

How long has the designer or design firm been in business? Are they a member of any professional organizations, consumer protection boards, Better Business Bureau etc.? Do they have testimonials from satisfied customers or can they give you some referrals to contact. Established design firms stand behind their service as they realize that what they create is viewed by the world and reflects on their design talent.

Pricing

Smart people know that the lowest quote is not always the best quote. I have had competitors underquote me to get the customer in the door then once the design work is underway they bring in the "real prices", the "overcharge" charge if you will. Make sure you know exactly what you are getting when you agree to a design contract. How many hours are you getting at that price? What will you get for that price? How much is ongoing site maintenance etc.? Ask about time frames, how long will it take to develop the site?

If you are a small business make sure the site you are quoted for is one that meets your needs and is not beyond your goals and budget. If you simply want "presence" on the web and aren't at this point going to be selling anything at your site you do not need a pricey e-commerce enabled site. You can always add it or other more expensive features later if you need to.

When it comes to pricing, go to at least 3 different companies and assess not only the prices, but the level of service provision, making notes of the other factors pointed out in this article. Do not underestimate the importance of customer service. If the company you are interested in is slow to respond to you then this may be an indication of the overall service you can expect to receive.

Experience

Know something about who you are hiring to create your business' worldwide online image. Is the designer someone who has read a "Dummy's Guide " to website design, then hung out their shingle as professional web site designer? A lot of website design involves self-learning but there is no substitution for professional design experience, commercial site design experience, graphics and fine arts training. Ideally your website designer should be experienced in both web and print design work as the two complement each other. However there are very unique applications for website design. Remember, visitors to your site will form an impression of you and whether they want to do business with you in under 30 seconds. When you select a design firm you are trusting them with your reputation and with your sales potential. It is critical that your site be professional and inviting to potential customers.

Marketing, e-commerce knowledge, professional copywriting

Any college kid right out of school can design a website for your business. But a website that will get your business results is one crafted by a trained and qualified professional who understands that a website is a marketing tool for your business.

Websites that get results are a weave of marketing strategy and design skill. If your designer is a skilled graphics artist that's not enough. Be sure to ask about the website designer's marketing knowledge, and professional copywriting, so that your site is designed well from a graphics point of view but also in such a manner that the site has marketing clout.

Knowledge of marketing means that the site is designed in such a way that it is visually pleasing but also encourages interaction, includes motivating offers, content of good value, reasons for people to return to the site, and other effective tested sales tools. For most business sites they are commerce based so the site should be structured for that purpose.

A good designer works for you to create a site that is not only stunning but is effective to bring you leads or sales. This means, your designer should be able to make suggestions to you about the design of the site but also marketing and sales tools that will help you increase your results.

The next time you drive by a billboard along the highway, take notice of the images used AND the wording used. I guarantee you that the company who bought that space paid for an advertising company skilled in both design AND copywriting. The wording and advertisement must work with the image to evoke an emotion, an action, or a reaction. Your website works the same way but it is not static like the billboard, it is interactive! Make sure your website designer is skilled in both design and marketing.

Doing business online offers you a number of advantages. Use the points outlined here and consult them when you are researching website design companies. Successful online business starts with selecting the design firm that will deliver what they promise and help get you the results you want.

Chapter 4

Help! What Do I Include on My Website? Business Models with Website Development Plans

The number one purpose of most business websites is to generate leads and increase business! Some types of business offer products or services that can be sold directly online, while others use the website to promote their business and bring prospects to their brick and mortar business.

Included within are some business models to consider and some examples of successful website development plans. These are just samples for the sake of demonstrating what can be included in a website. It is by no means a complete list or a required list. A website's development takes time and is the result of a careful assessment of the business's goals and objectives coupled with the expertise of a design and marketing professional.

As you are reading through these, try and find a business model that most closely resembles your business and your goals. Use the examples as a starting point to create a plan for your own website development.

Business Model # 1

Business: Bella Bakery Inc.

Overview: Traditional bakery business needs a basic website for promotional purposes. No direct selling from the website is required.

Website Development Plan

This type of business can benefit as follows:

- a) The first step is booking the website address.
- b) After consultation with the site owner, the website designer creates a home page design. It should be created to be inviting and appealing so one can almost smell the bread baking! It is critical that a food website be very clean with rich graphics and uncluttered layout.
- c) A webpage is included that offers information on the bakery's services, freshness guarantee, delivery, quality and more.
- d) Since the business does not want orders placed online, the goal is to get people from the website into the bakery. A webpage is included that offers store hours, location map, contact information, and phone number for orders.

- e) A webpage is included that offers information on the family owned aspect of the business, local community involvement, food bank donations and so forth.
- f) Also included is an Offers webpage with printable coupons that can be presented in store for a special offer. Example: A free muffin with any purchase over \$ 10. Or a loyalty program coupon for website visitors that also can be printed out and presented in store. Example, buy 11 loaves of bread and your 12th is free!
- g) Once completed, the bakery promotes its website address instore and in all of their traditional advertising.

Business Model # 2

Business: Happy Hotel Inc.

Overview: Traditional hotel business needs a basic website for promotional purposes with option for guests to reserve and pay for rooms online.

Website Development Plan

This type of business can benefit as follows:

- a) The first step is booking the website address.
- b) After consultation with the site owner, the website designer creates a home page design that is professional looking, easy to navigate, and with a family theme. 90% of the hotel bookings are family vacations. The hotel's primary marketing pitch is that "Kids Stay and Eat FREE!" so this offer will be featured prominently on the main page.
- c) A webpage is included that offers information on the hotel, seasonal savings packages, descriptions and 360 degree views of rooms and amenities.
- d) A webpage is included that offers location map, contact information, 800 phone number for reservations.
- e) A webpage of offers specifically targeted at attracting family bookings that includes information on the children's menu, the waterslide, the children's play park and funland.
- f) The online booking and reservation system is set up to allow customers to reserve a room and pay online. When a reservation is made the customer gets a confirmation number within minutes.

Business Model # 3

Business: Spruce Grove Kennels

Overview: Traditional business needs a basic website to promote a dog kennel, boarding and breeding services.

Website Development Plan

- a) The first step is booking the website address.
- b) After consultation with the site owner, the website designer creates a home page design that appeals to the dog lover, colorful images of happy, panting, playing, “cute as a button” puppies.
- c) A webpage is included that offers information on the kennel services, the facility, commitment to care, guarantees, comments from happy dog owners, certifications etc to boost consumer confidence in the service.
- d) A webpage is included that offers a location map, contact information.
- e) Also, an information request form that can be completed by website visitors to request additional information on the kennel, boarding, litter dates and so forth.
- f) An Image Gallery is a must and should include colorful quality pictures of the puppy nursery, the staff, puppies for sale, the grounds, kennel and more.
- g) An option to sign up for a free newsletter that is delivered by email with updates on new litters, tips on puppy care, canine nutrition and more.
- h) Promotion of the website address in all their advertising.

Business Model # 4

Business: Smith and Lawson Legal Services

Overview: Traditional business needs a basic website to promote legal services.

Website Development Plan

- a) First step is booking a website address.
- b) After consultation with the site owner, the website designer creates a home page that will appeal to the law firm's corporate clients. Traditional colors should be used with clean-cut lines and quick navigation links for the busy corporate websurfers. Flash design is recommended to give this site a unique look that will stand out from competitor websites.

- c) Included is a webpage that offers information on the services offered by the law firm, along with the profiles of each lawyer, practice specialties, and credentials of each lawyer.
- d) Included is a webpage that offers location map, contact information of the law office.
- e) Also, an information request form that can be completed by website visitors to request additional information on the types of services offered.
- f) A page that offers example of successful cases so that satisfied clients can tout the benefits of dealing with this law firm.
- g) The law firm should promote their website address in all their traditional advertising including yellow page listings.

Business Model # 5

Business: Photography by Pat

Overview: A home-based photographer who specializes in wedding photography but can take on any project, wants a website to promote her business and offer customers online access to their proofs.

Website Development Plan

- a) The first step is booking the website address.
- b) After consultation with the site owner, the website designer creates a main page that is rich in colour, with a variety of images used to convey that services are not limited only to wedding images as business owner wants to attract and capture a wider market. The images used must be high quality and quick loading.
- c) A page that offers information on the photography services, the photographer herself, accreditation, guarantees, certifications and so forth.
- d) An information request form for a free quote that can be completed by website visitors to request additional information on pricing, services and so forth.
- e) A portfolio of a variety of types of pictures taken by the photographer.
- f) Password protected area to allow customers to logon to the site and view their proofs without having to make an office visit. This would also includes a form allowing customers to check off which images they want and order them securely online with credit card payment.
- g) A free newsletter should be offered to keep past and present customers up-to-date on new pricing, seasonal packages, repeat customer discounts, refer a friend offer and more.

- h) When the site design is completed, the website address must be promoted in all forms of advertising.

Business Model # 6

Business: Ray's Real Estate

Overview: Real Estate agent wants to promote his services and increase leads.

Website Development Plan

- a) The first step is to book the website address.
- b) After consultation with the site owner, the website designer creates a home page design that targets the home buyer.
- c) A webpage is included that offers information on the agent, a professional photo, his credentials, comments from happy customers, any areas of specialty and complete contact information.
- d) An information request form is included that can be completed by website visitors to request additional information on the services offered or real estate listings on the site.
- e) A Listings webpage that offers up-to-date listings, searchable and is browseable by website visitors.
- f) As a way to generate leads, the site owner may offer such as a Free Report: "What Home Owners Needs To Know To Sell Their Home Fast! " To get the report, site visitors have to complete a form with complete contact information. Interested leads will take the time to complete the form, tire kickers won't.
- g) A newsletter can be offered to site visitors to keep them up-to-date on homes just posted for sale on the website, or also include selling and/or buying tips. This is a great way to get repeat traffic to the site and stay in touch with interested prospects so when they are ready to buy/sell this is the real estate agent they think of first!
- h) Promotion of the website address in all forms of traditional advertising, radio, TV, print.

Business Model # 7

Business: Foundation for the Prevention of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

Overview: Non-profit organization wants to promote cause and increase donations.

Website Development Plan

- a) First step is booking a website address for the foundation.
- b) After consultation with the site owner, the website designer creates a home page that is professional-looking, quick-loading and of a theme related to mothers and babies. This theme can be carried throughout the site with similar soft colors and images.
- c) A webpage is included that offers information on the charity, mission statement, fund allocation.
- d) Included is a page that offers contact information, 800 phone number for donations.
- e) An information request form that can be completed by website visitors to request additional information on the charity, volunteer efforts, etc.
- f) Inclusion of a secure webpage for donations to be made online. Interested supporters can enter credit card information and receive a receipt on completion.
- g) Following completion of the site the organization must promote their website address in all forms of advertising.

Business Model # 8

Business: Sharpe Furniture Clearance Center

Overview: A Furniture Clearance Center wants to promote their business online and offer a inventory catalog of all items in the warehouse. The site owner's goal is to allow site visitors to browse the furniture inventory online, then call or visit the warehouse to place an order.

Website Development Plan

- a) The first step is to book the website address.
- b) After consultation with the site owner, the website designer creates a home page design that targets business owners as they are the primary buyer of this furniture.
- c) A webpage that offers information on the center, warehouse images, photos of staff, comments from happy customers, business history, any areas of specialty furniture, and complete contact information.

- d) An information request form can be included that is completed by website visitors to request additional information on the services offered or furniture items viewed on the site.
- e) An Inventory Catalog program will be created that allows all items to be browsed or searched on the website. The items can be enlarged, printed or saved to a favorites file for the site surfer. The site owner has the option of accessing the program as often as he likes to add or remove items.
- f) A newsletter can be offered to site visitors to keep them up-to-date on when new lots of furniture have arrived and in what quantity to encourage repeat visits to the site for browsing of the catalog, then call or visit the warehouse for purchase.
- g) Promotion of the website address in all forms of traditional media including TV, print, radio, and instore banners.

Business Model # 9

Business: Rocko's - Big Time Entertainment

Overview: Rocko's is an entertainment club. They offer an arcade, pool, bowling, live entertainment, corporate event planning. They require a website that will target individuals and corporate clients to encourage bookings and patronage of the club.

Website Development Plan

- a) The first step is to book the website address.
- b) After consultation with the site owner, the website designer creates a home page design that is a multimedia style flash design and that showcases the services and events offered at the club.
- c) A webpage that offers links to pages with additional information on the club, a Calendar of Events, Corporate Booking Packages, Dining, Fun Stuff, secure online ticket bookings, and an online tour of the facility.
- d) An information request form can be included that is completed by website visitors to request additional information on the services offered.
- e) A newsletter can be offered to keep subscribers up-to-date on announcements for live entertainment dates, contests, and so forth.
- f) The club needs to promote their website address in all of their traditional forms of advertising in the club and outside the club.

Business Model # 10

Business: Healthier You Air Cleaners

Overview: Healthier You Air Cleaners sells Air Cleaners and wants to increase their sales through a website but only to a US and Canadian market.

Website Development Plan

- a) The first step is to book the website address.
- b) After consultation with the site owner, the website designer creates a home page design that is in keeping with the goals of the site, in this case selling Air Cleaners within the USA and Canada. Since this is a product-based website the products must be first and foremost on the site and presented in an appealing manner with secure order options. All of the benefits of the Air Cleaners and why they are the best products on the market should be included in an easy-to-read format.
- c) A webpage should be included that offers information on the company, production, shipping, warranties.
- d) An information request form can be included that is completed by website visitors to request additional information on the specific products.
- e) A Frequently asked Questions and Answers page might be included for the convenience of site visitors, to save staff time in handling repeated inquiries, and also help educate the consumer about the value, benefits and features of the products.
- f) As there are over 25 types of Air Cleaners offered by this company, a secure shopping cart is set up with automated order processing. This allows visitors to browse through the selection of Air Cleaners, enlarge image views, print a picture of the product, compare products and prices, and read a detailed description. When a selection is made the customer can securely enter their credit card information, check the order and submit. A confirmation receipt is generated automatically to the customer, and the order is processed by the merchant.
- g) When the website is completed, the website address should be promoted in all traditional forms of advertising including TV, print and radio.

Chapter 5

How To Make Your Site Visitors Do What You Want Them To Do!

By Jody Hatton, senior flash designer at www.worldprofit.com

Quick! Think about your website. If I were to pop out of your screen in the next few seconds and ask you why you've got one and what its purpose is, would you be able to tell me on the spot?

Every site has a purpose, and every site owner has a goal. Regardless of whether you're selling products, information, or nothing at all, you want your visitor to reap the benefits of visiting your site. In an ideal situation, you'd be right beside your site visitor showing them where to click and what to do. This isn't always possible, so read on and let me show you:

How To Make Your Visitors Do What You Want Them To Do!

Let's say you're in a mall with \$50 in your hand and want to buy some T-shirts. You come across a store that has a huge sign blocking the doorway, upon which the company's logo is prominently and proudly displayed. Looking around at the other stores, you think, "This is ridiculous! I'm here to buy t-shirts, not look at a fancy logo." Still a little curious, you move the sign aside and have a peek inside. On one rack, you see that women's pants are on the same rack as men's overcoats. The mannequins are all wearing strange assortments of clothes that clearly do not match, while everywhere there are banner ads for completely unrelated products hanging from the ceiling. At this point, you promptly step back from the doorway and walk to another store which has been laid out better.

Sadly enough, this is the exact same way 90% of the world's business-oriented websites "work." If you want your viewers to buy from you, to contact you, or to simply sit and enjoy your site, you've got to plan it properly!

1) It's The Headline They Should See First.

If you get the newspaper delivered to your door every day, you'll notice there are three things you'll look at first: The headline, the photo on the front page, and the area above the paper's logo which shows the featured articles of the day. In your case, the publisher has already made the sale and wants you to continue buying their papers because you enjoy reading them, so the headlines are there to get you to dig in. In the case of people walking by a newsstand, the paper is designed in such a way so that the headlines or photos will grab their attention.

Your site should be laid out the same way. Are you selling products? Make sure you've got a headline or banner saying any one of the following: "Sale! Click Here to Save!" or "Buy one, get one free! Click for Details!" or "50% off! Click Here!"

Are you selling information? Try these headlines on for size: "Get 10 FREE reports when you sign up for our newsletter!" Or, "Click here for details on 3 FREE courses that will help you build your online business!"

Or are you selling dreams? It's all the same: your headline MUST be speaking to your viewer directly and it MUST imply immediate action. "Are you broke? Don't wait another minute! Click here to find out how you can make money from home!"

2) Use Graphics To Your Advantage.

Many sites have graphics on them just for the sake of having graphics, be it a fancy logo, buttons that change color when you move your mouse over them, sometimes even animated images that have nothing to do with the site itself.

While a site's logo is important for branding purposes, it should never be the focus of a site, and in the case of the clothing store analogy above, should NEVER get in the way! Don't be afraid to move the logo aside and replace it with a headline. It will only be a benefit to you (and your visitor). After all, you don't want people looking at your logo, you want them looking at the things that'll make you money!

In addition, any one of the headlines in Point 1 above will make excellent buttons for your viewers to click on. The advantage of using graphics in this case, rather than plain text, is that now you can add arrows, numbers, or bursts to let your viewer know what they should be paying attention to.

If you're selling products, whether it's T-shirts, calculators, books, widgets or gadgets, you'll definitely want to showcase your best-priced and highest-profit items first, just as you would as if it were a retail store in a mall. The simple rule of thumb is as follows: every graphic on a site should have an action associated with it.

3) Spell It Out For Your Viewer!

Don't be afraid to limit the number of choices you give to your visitors right away; you'll find that more often than not, it will work to your advantage. Regardless of your site's purpose, your visitors will appreciate the fact that you've taken the time to properly show them the steps necessary to getting the most out of your site.

If your site's focus is to help people make money online, combine Points 1 and 2 above and create numbered headlines to show your visitors exactly what they need to do to get started. This is far more effective than throwing a hundred links in their face and expecting them to know what to do next!

If you're selling a lot of products from your site, obviously you don't want to put them all on the front page. Categorizing your products or services properly will ensure that the people serious about buying will find what they want easily, and it will also increase the chances that a first-time viewer will buy from you.

To sum it all up, your best bet in having an effective site is to think of a real-world application, be it a clothing store, grocery store, or hardware store. Lay out your site

the same way you'd lay out your store, with your best deals and highest-profit products or services first. Don't forget that headlines and color bursts are good at pulling in new customers, but be careful-- having a banner or button that's too flashy will have the same negative effect as shining a strobe light into someone's eyes. Lastly, think about how you could hold your visitor's hand and show them around your site; having a site that's well-organized is always effective and always appreciated!

Chapter 6

Ask A Design Expert - Business Education Series

By the Worldprofit Design Team

Each week in our ezine, entitled "Design Profit Ezine", we have featured a Business Education Series. If you'd like to subscribe to this free weekly ezine, go to <http://www.worldprofit.com/ezines>

We called this feature "Ask A Design Expert" where we would answer questions from our readers and questions that we hear every day talking with our customers. By popular demand, we have included the questions and answers for you below.

Special thanks to the talented members of the Worldprofit Design Team who not only design stunning websites day after day; they have also found the time to help educate our many customers and friends around the world. We hope that you too find this information helpful as you build your online business.

Question: I run a small business. Is there really any benefit to setting up a website?

Answer: Having specialized since 1994 in the needs of small business we understand that budgets are often very tight. However, do not make the mistake of underestimating the power of a website. Websites are relatively low cost and offer you 24 hour, 365 days a year of worldwide advertising!

Even if you are only targeting a local market, you really cannot afford NOT to have a website. Having a website allows your business or organization to be open 24/7, offering mouse-click access to all your product and service information. Ask yourself this question:

"If I invest \$2,500 in a professional website that lasts 365 days, how many of my products/services to I have to sell to recoup my cost?"

Compare the cost of a one day ad in your local newspaper with the cost of a website for an entire year!

Question: How do I know which company to pick for my hosting and design?

Answer: Select a company that specializes in website design and hosting and earns their living in the industry with a vested interest in customer satisfaction. If you hire a part-time designer you will get part-time services when/if they are available. Hire a professional firm and you will get detailed assessment of your needs, one-on-one expert consulting, reliable website hosting, and a website that yields results. Ask to see references and a portfolio showcasing a variety of website clients.

Question. What are the main advantages of having a website for my business?

Answer. The Internet is growing so rapidly that it is becoming harder to find a household without access. The Internet has become one of the best ways of marketing your product and showing off the identity/character of your company.

Without a website your company can even reflect poorly upon the customer or client. Some important benefits of having a website are:

- Your customers can find INSTANT information about your company without having to talk to an employee directly one on one. A website is perfect for handling questions about business hours, directions to your location, return policies and so forth.
- A website saves you printing costs (handing out flyers, business cards, and any other form of publishing materials)
- If you sell product, you can sell it online to THE WORLD, not just your neighborhood.
- One of the most convenient things about selling products online is that your store is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Even though you go home at 5:00 p.m., your business is still making you money.

Question: Should I concentrate more on getting traffic to my site or on getting my website redesigned?

Answer: This question is similar to the chicken and the egg debate. If you have little or no traffic to your site, it will not matter how nice your website is. On the other hand if your site looks like a fifth grader created it, it will not matter how much traffic you get. Look for an answer somewhere between. Invest in both. Allocate funds for a professional, results-oriented website, then invest in proven promotion strategies. (and NO we do not mean an illegal spam blast to 10 million people).

Question: What is the most common mistake you see on websites?

Answer: The number one mistake that we see on websites is failure to capture leads! A website that sells is one that asks for the sale! How do you get a sale? You make an offer that is going to get you an email address, a phone number or a form submitted on your site. Effective websites capture lead information. Effective sites SELL not TELL. Offers motivate action! This is one more reason why hiring a professional design firm gets you further ahead. Professional designers are marketers working on your behalf and understand this.

Question: How can I get the most POWER out of my website?

Answer: Having a website is not going to mean instant profits but it IS an extremely powerful marketing tool. Combine your website address with all other forms of advertising such as print, TV and radio advertising, and you are on the right track. Don't be afraid of purchasing key words at search engines, it is not as expensive as you might think and will get you targeted site traffic and leads. Forget about trying to be in the Top 10 listings at the major search engines or paying some company to list you with 1500 search sites for \$50. If you want results from search engine listings these days you will have to pay for them. We suggest you contact overture.com, or payperclick.com, or google.com and ask about paid key word advertising.

Question: I've heard of flash website design. What is it and do I need it?

Answer: Flash design is often the preferred choice of site designers because it permits more creative options with a multi-media style of interactivity. Whether to use flash design on your website though should be related more to your goals for the site than the preference of the designer. Flash design undoubtedly can bring a site alive, add excitement and the professional chic that most business owners want to create that critical first impression. Flash designed websites typically cost more money as they are usually more labour intensive to create. Refined professional skill is required to not just design flash but effective flash design that loads quickly, is sequenced for maximum effect and is purposeful, not just a cool add on.

In short the purpose of the site and the goals of the site owner should dictate the style of design used.

The question of whether or not to use flash is best discussed with a design professional who can assess your goals for the site, your budget and make recommendations for design that is the best fit for you.

To see samples of both flash and non-flash websites go to:

<http://www.worldprofit.com/design/default.cfm>

Question: What's wrong with making the website myself?

Answer: Professional business websites should always be designed by people who earn their living in that field. Anything less than that is not going to get you the desired effect or results you want. When you need a lawyer you go to someone who has earned that credential you don't decide to buy a 'Dummies Guide' book, and tackle it yourself. If you want to get results from your site and create the right impression for your target audience, don't even think about creating a website yourself.

Question: Should I put a traffic counter on my main page?

Answer: The problem with publicly displayed traffic counters are that it's easy to fudge the numbers if you choose to do so and why would you want to tell everyone how much traffic you are getting, or not getting? Now of course you want to know how many

people are visiting your site. Smart marketers need this information to track advertising, but you don't have to put the counter on your main page.

Sophisticated website statistics trackers are available that allow you to tabulate visitors daily, weekly, monthly. You can track referring sites to determine which search engine was used to find your site and with what search word. You can analyze which pages on your site have been viewed and how many times. All of this is much more helpful to you as a site owner than having a counter on your main page that simply tells potential customers how few visitors you may be having.

Question: Does it matter what colors I pick for my website or can I just choose my favorite colours?

Answer: As a graphic designer, I've studied color psychology and understand which colors to use for which subject matter. If you own a store that specializes in baby garments, we do not want to use dark reds and blacks on the site. I think most people would find it obvious and agree that pastels and lighter colors are more suited. On the other hand, if you are a photographer and you want to put your portfolio online, then using a lot of black is a better choice. The reason being that photographs are better viewed on a black background. Yellow is a very visually intense color and will irritate most viewers, even if they do not realize it, because their eyes have to strain to view the page.

There are many things to consider when you design a website and color is one of the most important ones. When in doubt, trust the experience of your designer, who has your best interest at heart. We would be more than happy and willing to answer your questions on why certain colors were chosen to give your site the best impact.

Question: Does my website have to fill up the whole screen?

Answer: No, it does not. In fact, when you have a site that expands to fill the entire screen, it may look different on another viewer's smaller monitor.

What happens is the tables expand to 100% instead of a specified width and the text expands with it. Sometimes this can make the text look a little less clean. Imagine a newspaper with specified columns that look very well organized and easy to read. Then imagine if you expanded that newspaper and all the text slid over. This would not make it look as organized or easy to read.

There are reasons for making a site expand to fill the screen and conversely, there are reasons to make it a specified size. Your designer can help you choose which one is best suited for you.

Question: Do I need to bold everything so that it stands out to the viewers of my website?

Answer: No. Definitely not. If you have a parking lot full of expensive cars, none of them stick out. But, if we took one car and made it bright red while the others were all black, then the red one would stand out. Also, if we had only black cars and we took all of them and moved them to one side of the parking lot, leaving just one car behind, then the isolated car would now stick out.

When we use bolding and complimentary colors in moderation, we can direct the viewers to the information we want them to see. If I see a headline that appeals to me, I will read the underlying copy. But, if the headline and most of the copy is bolded, then nothing will jump out at me and propel me to read on.

Remember that you can have the nicest car in the lot, but if nobody notices it, then it doesn't really matter. It's the same for your website. You can have a multitude of helpful information and important offers on your site, but if nobody is compelled to read on because the entire site is bolded, then you've defeated your purpose.

Question: How do I arrange my content on a webpage? Where do I start?

Answer: First, you have to establish a high to low level of importance for your content category.

Important categories should appear high on your web page so users can locate them quickly and the reader's attention is caught.

Placed with prominence on your page should be products or services that are:

- a) most popular, in demand, or best selling
- b) will net you the greatest immediate profit and/or
- c) will capture you a lead for future sales direct or indirect.

Some site owners mistakenly place a large corporate logo at the top of the page rather than placing a motivating special offer for prospective customers. Site visitors need to know who you and your company are of course, but more important is making a statement or offer that will get viewer attention and encourage a sale today or generate a lead for future sales.

Categorize and organize your main page content and remember that a website can consist of many, many pages. You are not limited in space; therefore do not feel you have to cram everything on your main page. Determine what is a priority to your viewer and of best interest to your company.

Your site visitors care more about what your company's products or services can do for them than the history of the corporate founders. Treat site visitors to a special offer, or deal of the day, or motivational incentive to contact you!

Having said this you also need to consider convenience; existing customers may visit your site and already know what you offer, they just want to print out a map of how to get to your store to get it! A map of your location may be a lower priority for your site, but it is something to include and consider as it is a customer aid that may very well result in a sale! When planning the content for your site be sure to consider the needs of both prospective customers and current customers.

Question: Does my website design need to be complicated in order to be effective?

Answer: Absolutely not. When it comes to design simplicity is crucial in keeping your website clean and professional looking. It's common for amateurs to believe that the more they put in, the better it will turn out.

In reality this type of thinking leads to a busy looking site and diminishes the selling power of the site. Before undertaking any web design project the most important question you should ask yourself is 'What is the main purpose of the website?'

If any content, image or element does not contribute to the overall purpose of the website, it shouldn't be there. "Keep it Simple" is a principle that applies nicely to site design.

Question: Should I use music in the background of my homepage?

Answer: No. Background music has caused some of the most annoying webpages I've ever visited.

Here are several reasons why from a design view and a site visitor's perspective:

1. Background music makes webpages very slow to load.
2. A good webpage conveys information and background music can be a major distraction to a visitor's concentration and your primary sales message.
3. No matter how nice the melody, it will get annoying after a short while and can cause visitors to leave your site prematurely.

Considering these consequences, background music should be avoided altogether. If you absolutely must use background music, ensure that the user has some way of turning it off.

Question: Is it ok to create a different design and look for each page of my website?

Answer: This is not something we, as design experts, would recommend.

Pages at a single website should share a common look-and-feel. This means to carry the same design throughout. The user can become annoyed if key elements of the site

move from page to page. The navigation and design elements should always stay consistent.

There is nothing worse than going to a site where navigation or button labels change dramatically from one page to the next. This can stop the user from using your site altogether, and move on to one of your competitor's websites.

In addition to creating a sense of flow from page to page, reusing the same design on every page improves speed, since the browser can cache each image. A slow-loading website may also drive the user away from a site. By keeping the look-and-feel of your website constant and clear to the user, you in turn are making it easier for them to find what they are looking for. Happy users mean return users making your website a successful business tool.

Question: I don't have a lot of money to spend on getting my website set up, how do I know what designer is going to get me results?

Answer: You may think why should I pay \$1000 for a website when I can get one for \$100 or free from the kid down the street. Well that's easy! As with many services, you truly get what you pay for.

Getting your website done for '\$100' means you may very well end up with a site with no purpose and does not generate any business for you.

Cheaper websites generally mean 'cookie-cutter' type websites created by newbies or amateurs that look identical to half a dozen other websites on the Internet! This is not good when you are trying to stand out from your competition. Generally when you spend more money on something you get better quality. A one size fits all approach to design will not get your unique business the sales and results that you want.

The same idea is used in web design. Not only do you want to invest your time but also your money into one of the key aspects of marketing your business. The web is the Number One marketing tool and should be used wisely.

Spending money on professional website design gives you confidence that you will get:

- a website designed to suit the needs of your business.
- a designer with experience who will take the time to get to know you and your business in order to give you the most powerful design for your needs.
- a design firm that can offer you the right hosting package to suit your business needs.
- a design firm that is up-to-date with the newest technologies and hottest new looks in design.
- graphic artists, programmers, project managers and web designers all working together on your project to make it the most valuable to your business.

- Accountability. When you pay an established business for a service, you have a better guarantee that they will still be around in six months.

The more value you put on your website will reflect on your overall business for your website is a 24 hour advertising tool. So use it sensibly.

Question: What can I do to establish trust and a professional image on my website?

Answer: There are several things that can give your site a professional image that instills trust.

1) Professional Design from a recognized design firm.

If your site doesn't look professional, then guess what? It looks unprofessional. Simple right? People want to know that they are dealing with a reputable company that is going to take care of them and not scam them. Image can count for a lot, so don't underestimate the power of a professionally designed site that looks professional and delivers professional results!

2) Visible means of contacting you or your business/organization

If people have questions, how can they get help? Can they call, write, drop-in, email? Think of how many times you've used the phone yourself to phone a business for more information. I say, give the customer as many ways to get a hold of you as you're comfortable with. Make sure that your contact info is clearly visible on all pages, or at least the main page.

3) Guarantees

A guarantee is another great trust builder. It shows that you are confident in your product and that you back it up. Someone is surely going to feel more comfortable making a purchase that has a guarantee behind it.

4) Up Front and Honest

How many times have you picked up on a company's dishonesty? It could be in the form of outright lying, misleading advertising, hidden costs that show up later, or trying to fool the customer about what they're getting. This is not a good idea and isn't going to help your business in the long run. If you're up front and honest, the prospect will be more likely to trust you, and in turn you can turn that prospect into a customer -- hopefully a repeat one that also tells all their friends about your great business too.

5) Secure connections for Online Orders

When it comes time for the customer to actually make a purchase online, you want to make sure that they don't change their mind due to security issues. It would be a shame for the customer to turn away when all they really want is to buy your product/service!

Don't let that happen to you. Make sure that the customer's transactions will be secure. If you aren't sure ask your site host or designer how to accomplish this.

Question: What is the best type of navigation to use on my site?

Answer: There are different types of navigation that one can use on a website. Horizontal or vertical orientation, text or image, static or rollover images, and even Flash integration.

a) Generally most sites use a Vertical Orientation, usually placing the navigation on the left or right side of the page. The advantages are:

- very intuitive navigation method.
- allows for easier expansion with virtually limitless room to add more navigation.
- Horizontal Orientation is OK only under certain circumstances.

Ask your designer if it's right for you and your website purposes.

b) Once the orientation or layout of your navigation is decided, there are still many options to be considered. One of those options is whether or not to use images or graphics as your actual buttons. If not, plain old HTML Text/Javascript could be used instead.

The two main factors that influence this decision are SIZE and ease of EDITING.

- Huge & complex sites with many navigation buttons, requiring frequent changes or edits from someone other than the original site creator, could use HTML Text instead of images to lessen file size, load time, and editing problems.
- Normal sites should use image-based navigation or Flash-based navigation. Why? Because it looks better! Why sacrifice if you don't have to? Most of the sites we create here at Worldprofit.com use image-based navigation because it gives the designer more control, and as a result creates more impact for your site. Most sites work great with this option. More and more however, we find ourselves using Flash for navigation because it's fast and fully customizable in every way.

c) One other option is whether or not to use 'Rollovers' for your navigation. A 'Rollover' means that when a user points their mouse over a button, something about it changes. Either colour, shape, size, indicators, etc.

- Rollovers are interactive. The user will feel more in control of their environment.
- Rollovers make the navigation more clear and evident so people don't miss it.
- A true Rollover requires the use of images or Flash for your navigation.
- If you want to use HTML Text for your navigation the equivalent effect is called 'Hover' and is more limited in terms of effects compared to Image Rollovers or Flash.

The type of navigation that should be used on your site depends on several considerations. When in doubt, trust the experience of your designer, who has your best interest at heart.

Question: I know you do wonderful design work, I have seen it - it's beautiful. What I don't understand is how a customer can do everything over the phone for the site design without ever meeting face to face. How can that work?

Answer: First off, thank you for the compliment about our design services! Secondly, yours is a VERY good question! We have customers all over the world that we have worked with exclusively by phone and by email. Since 1994 we have developed a polished system for gathering the information we need from the customer and marrying this with our expertise, then creating a site development plan.

Our custom design services first involves a thorough needs assessment of the business goals for the site, target market, purpose, results desired and so forth. We then arrange a detailed phone consult for clarification and further discussion. We don't start any work on the computer in terms of design until we are confident we have a thorough understanding of what the customer wishes to accomplish with the site.

We then create a draft which is placed online in a private viewing location so that the customer can review the work to date and discuss with their personal designer. An editing process follows, and when the site is completed we start promoting it so the customer gets a kick start on their advertising.

Once all design work is said and done, every customer receives a Customer Satisfaction Survey and is asked to rate the service they received and make comments on how we can improve. We learn from every customer just as we hope they learn from us!

Our customers have told us how thorough our approach and procedures are and how they appreciated that we didn't have to meet numerous times for time consuming meetings. The Internet offers people speed and convenience. We have adapted our methods effectively to meet the needs of our busy customers. For our local customers who do want to meet in our office, we of course accommodate them and schedule appointments as required. However, when for distance reasons this isn't possible we rely on the power of the phone and email to earn our customer's business and develop stunning, results-oriented websites.

Question: Do pop up windows work? Should I add them to my site to increase sales?

Answer: This is a loaded question for sure. A number of websites use pop ups/pop unders to try and get you to notice a special offer or to encourage you to sign up for a newsletter. Other pop ups are sometimes part of an advertising partnership or ad click tracking program. Of the research we have conducted, the overwhelming majority report a strong dislike for the popups and surfers simply click them off without reading them. Software exists to prevent these pop ups from popping up, and AOL offers its users a no pop-ups option.

Question: What are META tags and what is the main purpose of having them in your website's HTML source code?

Answer: A META tag is usually placed between the head tag of your HTML source code. It is read by search engine indexing software to accurately list your website in their large indexing database. An experienced website designer will understand what this means and should take care of this for you when developing your website.

Here are some simple tips in optimizing your META tags:

- When choosing your META tag keywords, try to think of what people could type into the search engine to search for a website of your content.
- When writing your META tag description be sure to include as many as possible of keywords that people would logically use to find your website. For example if your business is a Bed and Breakfast in Victoria, British Columbia, a logical key word description would be as follows:

Bob's Bed and Breakfast in Victoria, BC is ten minutes from the harbour front, close to major Victoria attractions including the Vancouver ferry, the Arch of Peace, and the Mariners Museum. We offer clean, affordable accommodations with your choice of smoking or non-smoking bed and breakfast suites.

Question: I got an offer to have my site submitted to 5,000 search engines. Is that going to get my site top placement in the search engines?

Answer: Sounds like that offer was spam. If so, trash it!

In reality there are only a handful of search engines that people routinely use to search on the Internet. The only surefire way to get top ranking in the MAJOR search engines is to pay for key word listing or advertising. When the Internet was in it's infancy you could get free commercial listings at the major search engines, but now the web is a crowded marketplace and real results will only come from paying real money. If you want to investigate paid search engine listings, consider a service like that offered at google.com or Overture.com or Pay per Click.

Question: I've just completed the design of my site and don't exactly feel like paying \$300 to have it listed with the major search engines. How can I get the maximum amount of search engine exposure free?

Answer: This is a tricky job indeed, as not every search engine out there uses the same method for ranking its pages. Some only read as deep as the META tags, while others analyze the content of the entire page. There are still others that base their results primarily on the popularity of a site - that is, the more sites that link to it, the higher that site will be listed in the search results.

What can you do? First, make sure your site's META tags accurately describe the content of your website. A proper title is an absolute must. In fact, every page on your site should have one; (this is the first thing your visitors will see in the search engine results).

Try to keep the description tag within about 50 words; (you can make it longer, but not every engine will read the entire thing). The keyword tag is the most crucial - improperly handling this one can harm your rankings. If you repeat your keywords too often, or if you use popular words that aren't related to the content of your site, some search engines will consider this to be 'cheating' and your site will be penalized. The result? A plunge to the bottom of the rankings!

Second, make sure your page isn't overloaded with code. Mouse-tracking Javascripts, for example, will not only annoy your visitor, but will also give the 'spider' more code than content. With this, there's the possibility that some of your content won't even be picked up.

Third, make sure the other pages within your site are linked to a centralized navigation area. Most search engines will index the interior pages of a site; if the links to these pages are way at the bottom of your page, there's a chance these pages won't be picked up either.

With these said, here are a few tips for improving your search engine rankings for free:

- As mentioned earlier, some search engines base their results on the popularity of a site. If you want your rankings to improve on Google, for example, get other people to link to your site. Don't bother creating a 'dummy' site on a free web server just to link to your site with, though. A popular site that links to yours will improve your ranking better than a link from an unknown personal home page.
- Submit your site to the search engines more than once, but not too often. Submitting your site every day, for example, will be considered spamming and you will be penalized again.
- Lastly, here are a few places where you can still add your URL for free:

<http://www.google.com/addurl.html>

<http://www.dmoz.org/add.html> (feeder site for many of the major search engines)

<http://addurl.altavista.com/addurl/new>

Bottom line after doing all this though, is this. If you are a commercial business with lots of competition, you will get the BEST results with paid search engine listings. It's not as expensive as you think to buy key word ranking. Inquire at google.com, or payperclick.com

Question: Why is Flash Animation important to website design?

Answer: If you are a business owner, your website is the first impression your potential customers have of your business. It's crucial to maintain the visitor's attention when s/he first visits the site.

Being experienced graphic designers, we understand the functionality of flash animation.

There is no doubt that careful integration of animated graphics can ultimately bring a website to life! Sometimes, a subtle animated flash movie can effortlessly spice up a website.

In most cases, flash animation can be a personal multi-media eye-grabbing presentation of the products or services you are selling.

Conversely, some amateur graphic designers will overuse flash. They overlook the limitation of web space. They will, however, create a flashy animation, which does not serve a purpose for the website. Or the file size of the flash movie will be so large that it takes a long time to download. Unfortunately, people will not stick around and wait for the flash movie to download. As a result, it can be detrimental to your profits!

The key to bringing a site alive with flash is to hire an experienced designer who weaves the design into the selling purposes of the site owner. Strategic design that gets you results can be accomplished with flash ONLY if in the hands of the right designer. Sadly, a number of non-professional designers have used flash poorly on websites to create an effect rather than accomplish the business goals of the site owner.

Question: Can you explain why file size is so important?

Answer: Would you stay for a website if it takes forever to download? Most likely not. Many people have a misconception between bandwidth and data transfer. Bandwidth is specifically meant for how fast the files can be downloaded. The wider the bandwidth, the faster it can send files to you or your visitors or vice versa. On the other hand, data transfer only refers to the files that are used by your visitors.

If you have 10 files to display on the web, it will take much longer time to upload everything that goes to make up the page, including text, images and sound. As a result, experienced graphic designers will keep the size of the files to a minimum as they build their websites, especially since a lot of hosting companies will charge a fee for each unit of space that exceeds the limit. But again, if you are hosted on a free server, don't think that you are off the hook. Why? If your website is popular and gets too many hits, the hosting company will automatically pull your website from their server to free up some resources, or they will simply introduce some banners to recover their costs.

Question: I just spent \$35 and got my own domain name. Why should I pay some company to host it when there are so many FREE web hosts out there?

Answer: When it comes to web hosting, there's really no such thing as a free lunch. Sure, your files will be hosted on somebody's server and people will be able to go to your site, but what they'll see won't be just your site. It'll be your site plus banner ads, popup windows, floating ads - the latest form of advertising is a banner that fills up the entire browser window and displays directly over the content of the page. Honestly, folks, it just doesn't get any more invasive than that.

Let's pretend for a moment, though, that you have an extremely forgiving audience. After pondering the ads for a bit, your visitors figure out how to get them out of the way. Instead of seeing your website, though, they see:

An error message.

How many times have you typed something into a search engine and thought you found the page you were looking for, only to be greeted with an 'Oops! This site has exceeded its data transfer limit!' message? How frustrating is that? Well, fact of the matter is, friends, there isn't a free web host out there that offers unlimited bandwidth. Indeed: if one did exist, it would surely put itself out of business within a month. Invasive advertising and 'Oops!' messages. Obviously, these aren't going to give your business a professional image. If you're not paying a domain host with dollars, they're paying YOU with lost business - it's that simple.

Question: Is a website a wise choice for marketing my product or service?

Answer: Yes, a website is a vital marketing tool. Your website is accessible globally; that means your website can be viewed by anyone, anywhere, anytime, as long as they have Internet access. There are no physical limitations to broadcast areas as in radio, no circulation restrictions as in newspapers or magazines. You can keep your website more current more affordably than any other media can; you can update a website immediately, and as often as you like.

Imagine you sell products whose prices fluctuate. With a website, you can change these prices every time they go up or down, so your marketing materials are always accurate. In addition, with a website small businesses can compete with large corporations since a website is economical and not limited by size. This means a small business can present as large or creative an image on the Internet as a bigger company - with the right design team. A website also allows easy, safe communication between the consumer and you so that anyone who visits your site can contact you at any time by sending an email.

Unlike communications that originate from other forms of advertising, consumers who send emails don't have to deal with many problems of everyday business: pushy salesmen, remembering to call during business hours, having to battle crowds to get to your stores, spending time waiting on voice mail or getting the wrong information. It's convenient, easy, and safe for the consumer. Email is also convenient for you. You can respond to all your customer inquiries at the same time, and do it when you have a free moment - not in the middle of rush hour when someone calls up to ask for product information or directions to your location.

For every second of every day, your website is working for you!

Question: I want to put a picture of myself on the website do you recommend this?

Answer: Yes, putting a photo of yourself or your team on your site is highly recommended. This will give your site a more personal feeling to it but ONLY if you use professional quality photographs. Don't use your high school yearbook picture or one taken at your wedding or your corporate Christmas party. Your photograph should not be the main emphasis of your site, after all your site is about your customers and what you

can offer them. The main page is likely not the best place to add it but adding it to a page about you and your company is ideal!

Make sure any photographs used on your site convey the correct image you want to give to your prospective customers. Your prospective customer can visit your site and put a face to whom they are dealing with. This is especially useful if most of your business is done online through your website. Most people like to put a face to the person they are talking to whether it is through email or on the phone.

Question: My competitors do not have a website. Does this mean my business does not need one either?

Answer: No. In this situation having a website would give you the edge over your completion. In this day and age customers expect your business to have a web page and are often very disappointed when you do not.

Here are just some of the benefits you would receive from having a well-designed website:

- A website is one of the most inexpensive and efficient methods of advertising when compared to traditional methods such as brochures and magazine ads.
- It allows customers instant access to your company's information, products and services.
- Unlike a business card a web page cannot be lost or thrown away. It's always there 24 hours a day promoting your business.
- A web site gives your clients the ability to ask questions or provide immediate feedback on your products and services with the use of an online form.
- Most importantly, a web page helps your business develop leads generating sales and profits.

Taking all of these benefits into consideration, the original question asked should be changed from "Should I have a web site" to "Why don't I already have a site?"

Question: Should I have a professional web designer create a website for my business?

Answer: Yes. Although anyone can create a website there are many reasons why your business should hire a professional.

An inexperienced person trying to design a website from scratch could spend hours and hours of time just learning software. A professional already knows how to use these programs saving you precious time that you could be spending on your business. We've all been to websites so terribly designed that we leave immediately. Poor web design reflects poorly on your business and should be avoided at all costs.

An experienced designer knows that a professionally designed website gives your business credibility and creates your site accordingly.

Also, the software used to create a site can cost hundreds, even thousands of dollars. Hiring a professional saves you money as designers already have the necessary computer programs.

A good professional designer will ensure that you receive the best return for your investment. When it comes to your online business, don't take any chances.

Question: You are always talking about marketing strategy in website design. I thought marketing pertained to advertising?

Answer: Good Question! Yes, marketing is often a term used to describe how one advertises or promotes a product to generate sales. You may have heard that marketing a product is 80% of your efforts. When we are talking about marketing strategy within a website we are talking about using proven design and marketing principles to MOTIVATE site visitors to buy your product or service, or to contact you directly. An effective website presents information in a benefit-oriented manner that compels people to take action now! In this sense "marketing" is really about "motivating!" Accordingly, when we design a website at Worldprofit we focus on integrating ways to help the website owner get sales. We do this by applying both professional copywriting and proven design strategy. If you would like more information about this important topic, review Chapter 7. We also suggest reading the book, "Cash Copy" by Dr. Jeffrey Lant. You can get more details on this book and others at www.jeffreylant.com

Question: Do my visitors require a high speed connection to view the Flash within my website? Will it decrease the visitors to my site by having flash?

Answer: No, this is not true. In fact a lot of the flash design used on websites is a smaller file size than an image. Of course when you have a heavy animation it will take longer to load but this also ties into the way it was made. A lot of heavy flash headers are built to load as they go, so there will only be a split second before it starts to play. When flash was just becoming popular, designers were designing entire sites in flash. This can get to be a very big file size. They had to use a special way of pre-loading the whole site before it will begin to play. This would sometimes take 5 to 10 minutes before the site had finished loading. Experienced professional designers like to use a little bit of flash on their sites to give more flare to a simple site. The "Keep It Simple" principle is alive and well. Some designers are designing website elements such as navigation buttons in flash because they respond quicker than buttons designed in html, and you can even have sounds incorporated within them.

The key to flash design, good flash design, is to only trust your website development to an experienced design professional. Beware of the want-to-be designer who has jumped on the flash in a box type design kits, or has read a Dummies Guide to learning flash in 10 hours. If you want the best website that produces the best results for your business, rely on a design professional.

Question. What is a Splash page, and how would it benefit my website?

Answer: A splash page is the first introductory page that you will find on certain websites. I like to think of it as a cover of a book that you are about to open and read. It is a way that a company can get the viewer to get excited about what they are about to see.

In a lot of cases, splash pages will have animation or something similar to a commercial to go along with it. This effect is again is to get you interested in what you are going to see within the website and get a brief overview of the company. You could consider this similar to a movie trailer or the opening credits to a TV series. Sometimes a splash page can also be very useful to explain important upcoming events or corporate promotions.

The final reason that a company may have a splash page is that they want to explain or offer options to the viewer. The site might have certain elements included that may be important to the viewer such as "this website is best viewed in Internet Explorer 5.0 or higher" or "this site requires Macromedia Flash Player. If you do not have this please click here to download it now."

To see an example of a splash page, go to <http://www.worlddesignservices.com>

Question: If I purchase my own domain address and hosting, is there an easy way to make site edits without going through my designer every time?

Answer: Yes, hosts like Worldprofit.com offer Microsoft™ FrontPage access to your website which allows you to make any edits that you need.

FrontPage is Microsoft's solution for the layperson that wishes to make edits to their website but is not a professional designer. This program was created to be very intuitive with a minuscule learning curve for those of you that may not be Internet savvy but still want to update our website without paying a web-mastering fee. FrontPage makes it easy to make simple edits, like updating your copy or images.

A word to the wise though. If you have paid to have your website professionally created and don't know what you are doing when it comes to making edits to your site, do not for the sake of saving a few dollars, compromise the professionalism of your site by making changes yourself.

Question: What is a database and can it benefit my website?

Answer: An Online Database can be a powerful way to organize and maintain your business. It can assist in tracking your sales, organizing your clients information and keeping a tally on your inventory. Databases can store up-to-the minute information that can be easily obtained 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Databases come in all shapes and sizes and can be customized for almost every business need.

Databases are used frequently in our day to day lives. For example, when we search the web for something specific, we are using a Search engine which is driven

by a database that indexes keywords and phrases. When you are shopping online, the products/services that are displayed are generally inserted into a database and then are tracked by an item/catalog number. This helps the store owner by tracking his sales and inventory quite efficiently.

Databases are also used in conjunction with online banking transactions, something you probably use everyday.

In conclusion, databases are widely used throughout the Internet and our day-to-day lives. Databases are capable of organizing your business 24 hours a day 7 days a week with very little input by the user. Any business with multiple products to sell can benefit from a database.

Question: I know black is not a recommended background color for a business website but I really want to use it for my site. Is there anyway I can use black and still project a professional business 'non-gothic' look?

Answer: Black backgrounds are easy to work with in a web designer's point of view since any font color or graphic will stand out.

The problem with using a black background is that it amplifies bright colors to a point that it irritates the viewers' eyes. Black can be used effectively with the touch and experience of a professional designer to accentuate the products or services offered or match the theme of the site. Nightclubs as an example, often use a lot of black and the theme suits the colour choice.

If you really want to use black as a background on a business website, try these useful tips.

- Lower the intensity of the font color that you want to use to make it more readable.
- Use a light-gray instead of 100% white or baby blue instead of navy blue.
- Use different shades of dark-gray to break the monotone of a dark background.
- Use only a few bright colors in key places. This erases the impression that websites with dark backgrounds are boring if they don't have a big splash of colour in the foreground.
- Balance your design by not having too much black color concentrated on one side of your site.
- Avoid using neon colors on a black background unless you have a Casino/Gambling/Lottery website, and you are after that Las Vegas strip effect.

The trick to using black on a business website is to mask the dark color by breaking up the pattern so the black background is not so overwhelming and doesn't detract from the readability of the site. If created effectively, dark backgrounds can actually enhance the business image of the site and showcase the product.

Final comment is this. Yes, you can use black but make sure you choose it because it will help you showcase and sell your products and or service, not because you think black is cool. Colour choice like all aspects of site design should be based on the sales goals of the site, not the preference of the designer.

Question: Can I use my favorite font for my website?

Answer: Your favorite font may not always be the best choice for your website. Each font carries a set of meanings and associations with it, which can be used to reinforce the message of the page, depending on what look you want to give your website.

Choosing the wrong font can take your site from looking professional to amateur. For example, in general, sans-serif typefaces look modern. Serif typefaces look more old-fashioned or traditional. Fonts carry other associations, however. For example, "Comic Sans" gives an "amateur but friendly" impression which is good for websites geared towards kids.

Also when choosing a font for your main copy, choose a single font face and stick with it throughout your site for all text. Keep in mind that your font choice may not be what a viewer sees on their monitor. This all depends on the browser the viewer is using, as well as the viewer can customize font selections and because not everyone in the world has Trebuchet MS installed on their computer.

Question: I've seen hit counters on web pages but if you don't have a lot of visitors, it doesn't look good. Is there a better way to track visitors to my site?

Answer: Instead of having a web counter on your site that may reveal publicly very little traffic, you could try using a live Statistical Data Software program.

A Statistical Data Tracking program can help you with the marketing of your website. You can find out which pages of your site are low or high in traffic. You can determine how many visitors you've had and to which pages, also which sites visitors were referred by. You'll learn if a visitor reached your site through a search engine and which key words were used to locate your site. For the truly curious, you can even learn which browsers and versions are being used to view your site, if any 404 (page not found) errors are being generated, and also calculate traffic to specific pages that you may be charging for advertising, or are promoting in an ad campaign.

Question: I want to sell products on my site. Is this hard to set up?

Answer: Selling directly from your website is not difficult to set up. If you have actual products that can be bought and shipped, the usual practice is to set up a shopping cart program. A shopping cart program allows site visitors to select items for purchase, tally the cost and shipping, then enter credit card information to a secure order form. In order to be able to accept credit card orders you do need to be a merchant. Many shopping cart programs bundle in to the program, or offer at an extra price, merchant services. When you purchase a shopping cart you may be asked if you want to manually process the orders or if you prefer automated processing of the orders. My advice to new businesses is to select the manual processing option to get started. Overtime as your business grows, and the volume of orders increase, you can then opt for the more expensive and involved automated processing.

Ideally the best type of shopping program is one that allows you, the site owner, unlimited access and unlimited space so that you can add or remove products, change pricing and so forth as required.

Now if you have a service to sell you most likely do not need a shopping cart program. Instead it would be more practical to set up a secure form on your website so that customers can check off the service they are interested in, enter credit card information and "submit" the order. This would also apply to charitable organizations that want to accept donations online. To set this up requires that you have website hosting and a secure server provider offering some type of encryption program. (Verisign is an example). You will also need to be a merchant and may be able to set this up at your local bank.

Question: How important is my logo on my site?

Answer: When dealing with stationary and advertising, your logo is just about the most important thing there is. As people start to recognize your logo and company identity it will start to increase consumer awareness of your products and services.

However, when designing a website for your company, your logo isn't as important and does not need to be the most dominant thing that they see on the page. It is quite often better to have your logo fairly small and tucked away in the top left-hand corner. The reason behind this is the fact that they already know your company identity. If they didn't they would not be visiting your website. Even if they just happened upon your site on the Internet, their main concern is what you have to offer them.

A page on a website is actually very valuable real estate. Your company website will usually be an informative site explaining what it is that your company does and how to contact them. You want as much room on your web page to inform your customer about your products/services as you can. By having a big logo or even a heavy design may take up that valuable real estate that could have been used more effectively.

Question: Why is it that there are not many websites out there that actually fit the size of my web browser?

Answer: To answer this question more effectively I have to first explain what we take in consideration when designing a new website. In most cases studies have shown that most of our customers have their computer resolution (screen size) set to at least 800 x 600 pixels. What this means to us is that we have to design the site to fit that computer. We usually design the website to be 700 pixels wide which is enough for most people to view it at 800 x 600.

There are, to be sure, still some people out there that have their resolution set to 640 x 480. Usually this is because they have troubles reading anything larger or they just don't know how to fix it or didn't know there was anything wrong with it at all.

Here's what you can do to increase your resolution and still be able to see what we are doing. (This only applies if you are using Windows operation system.)

Go to the "start" menu on the bar located at the bottom left hand corner. Then go to "settings" and click on "control panel".

Once you have done this, your control panel window will appear. In this window, double click on the "display" icon. This will bring up a new window called your Display Properties. You will notice that there are different tabs located at the top of the display properties window. The last one of them should be called "settings" so click on that tab. Now you will notice a little slider on this page that should say "screen area". Move this slider over until it says 800 x 600 and then hit "apply" on the bottom right hand corner.

Now if you are having difficulties seeing things then you can go to another tab in the Display properties called "Effects". In this window you will be able to have the option of having larger icon and text.

Question: This isn't really a design how-to question but rather I'd like to know if you offer a Reseller program? I know lots of businesses that need website design. Can I refer people to you and get a cut of the action?

Answer: Thanks for this question! It's a good one. Yes, we do offer a Reseller program and have done so since 1994. We call it our Dealer program. Our dealers earn up to 20% US commission for referring people and business to Worldprofit for hosting and design services. The cost for complete training, support and website is only \$9.95 per year. Sign up at: <https://www.worldprofit.com/secure/dealersignup/default.cfm>

Chapter 7:

The Words You Put On Your Site Will Determine Its Fate: Make Sure You're Working With Someone Who Delivers Web Copy That Sells

By Dr. Jeffrey Lant

Billions of dollars of business are now being done online, either from direct online sales or from sales made to prospects generated from web sites. Are YOU getting your share?

You are if you're using copy that SELLS, copy that snags the attention of the reader and motivates that reader to act, either by completing a prospect questionnaire or by immediately buying one of your products or services.

Problem is, people who can create a web site that SELLS are few and far between. I happen to be one of them. I specialize in creating business marketing communications, including web sites, that get people to act.

Marketing, by definition, is an action sport. On the one hand, we have the seller who needs to make regular sales to stay in business. On the other hand, we have prospects, prospects who are in real life confronted with an overabundance of goods and services on which to spend their limited resources.

The constant, never-ending, daily game is for the seller to motivate the buyer to take immediate action either towards identifying himself as a defined prospect or making an immediate purchase decision. My job, and the job of every good copywriter, is to get the prospect to move faster and buy sooner. Personally, I've been doing this now for over 25 years, and in that time have helped literally thousands of business people get the copy they need to produce the results they want.

Sadly, many business people make the avoidable error of thinking they can write that kind of copy themselves. After all, they reason, they can write -- so surely they can write copy that sells. WRONG! Writing copy is a very specific art form which requires the ability to present a business and its products in a way calculated for maximum, fastest response. You have to learn how to do this.

Other business people, trying to save a penny, make their selection of copywriter based exclusively on price considerations. If copywriter A is cheap and copywriter B is more expensive, then penny-pinchers automatically select A. WRONG AGAIN! The question is not how much a copywriter costs, but his demonstrated ability to deliver results. As with anything else in life, you get what you pay for. People who are better at writing copy that sells know it... and charge accordingly. In short, getting the results you want costs money!

Understanding The Art Of The Copywriter

Although business success online or off rests to a considerable degree on producing and using copy that sells, business people are most uninformed about just what copywriters do. The general feeling seems to be that copywriters just sit down and write

copy off the top of our heads! Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, the actual writing of the copy is the last thing we do; it comes only after significant thought and preparation have gone into the matter. In other words, the creation of the copy is the last thing that happens in a train of necessary actions to produce copy that sells. No good copywriter merely sits down, tosses off the copy, and presents it to his customer.

Here, for example, are the steps I use to produce selling copy:

- 1) Question the site owner about what he wishes that site to accomplish. In other words, we must all be clear on the objective.
- 2) Review the customer's existing marketing materials. This helps to understand the business and what the owner is offering and wants to accomplish.
- 3) Find out where the money is being made in the business. Good copywriters want to maximize the success of their customers. That means knowing how these customers make their money -- and accentuating this in the copy.
- 4) Have the customer complete a Copywriting Questionnaire. This very important questionnaire gets the business person to think about his business, what he's selling and their customer benefits, present information which can be used for customer-motivating offers, give results-oriented testimonials and other information crucial in creating copy that sells. Many of my customers who have completed the Copywriting Questionnaire have told me that just the act of completing the questionnaire has shown them where and how they can strengthen their businesses.
- 5) Review all the information you've received and brainstorm a concept for the site. This concept should present the business in the strongest, most customer-centered manner and be geared to producing maximum results for the business.
- 6) Write a first draft of the copy. Whenever possible this first draft should be written in one sitting and allowed to sit overnight so that the copywriter can read freshly in the morning and make necessary changes.
- 7) Have customer review first draft. Whenever possible customer should review within 24 hours and return with any changes necessary.
- 8) Copywriter should make the necessary edits the day they are received from customer and should then Draft II for the customer's review.
- 9) As above, the customer should review and make any final changes. If there are changes at this point, the customer should send them promptly; equally promptly, the copywriter should incorporate these changes and send back to the customer for FINAL APPROVAL.
- 10) Once the customer provides this final approval, the copywriter can e-mail to the site designer who will then take over and work with the customer to create a design which enhances the selling copy, making sure that design and copy work together to deliver the desired results.

As you can see, writing copy involves a process, a process which at all times focuses on achieving the results the customer wants. What you're paying for with a copywriter is a person who will understand your business and work with you, just as your lawyer and accountant do, to strengthen your business and maximize profitable results.

Crucial Copy Elements Of Your Web Site

We all know the expression that you never get a second chance to make a first impression and no where is that more true than on your business web site. Every person who visits that site will be evaluating you, often with brutal candor. What's more they will be voting: to either become a prospect or a buyer or to disappear and never visit again. Again, the copywriter's job is to produce the arresting copy that gets the visitor to either identify himself as a prospect or buy immediately.

To produce this vital result, home page copy needs to include certain key elements. They are the key building blocks of customer-centered cash copy.

- An offer. Offers motivate people to act. A home page without an offer takes away one of the strongest elements that produces fast, substantial, continuing results.
- A clear indication who you're talking to. Copy that gets results is copy that's strictly focused on the people you want to attract. A web site cannot be all things to all people. To make money for your business it must clearly focus on the people you want to talk to.
- Benefit Modules. People buy benefits. To get these benefits they need to acquire what you're selling. You can tell a good copywriter right away by his ability to turn information about the products and services the business is offering into the benefits the customer actually wants. The best copywriters are always those who transform features into benefits.
- Testimonials. People are looking for results. They want to see what results other people have received by buying your products/services. Testimonials tell them.
- Links to additional pages. A home page is like a shop window. It has to get people to stop in their tracks, look and act. It has to pull them in. Client- centered cash copy does that. It gets people to click on links which direct the viewer to pages where more detailed information about your products and services is presented. Links must be presented in such a way that each of them motivates prospect action.

Now It's Time To See Good Copy At Work

Go to www.worldprofit.com/design and click on the "Before and After Redesign Gallery." It's time to see some of my work, so you see the difference good copy makes, especially when part of a one-two punch including superb design.

What's great about the "Before and After Redesign Gallery" is that you get to see what real-life businesses brought me to work with -- and what I did to turn their sites into customer-centered sites that SELL. Sometimes the changes are subtle; sometimes they

are dramatic. At all times, what I do has a clear objective: increasing the number of prospect leads you get from your site, increasing the number of sales. In other words, my sites, like my copywriting work in general, is 100% results oriented.

Now It's Time For Me To Help YOU!

- To learn how to write copy that sells, get a copy of my well-known book CASH COPY: How to offer your products and services so your prospects buy them... now! See the catalog at www.jeffreylant.com
- For detailed information on the design elements of a web site that sells, go to www.worldprofit.com/design
- To get a free subscription to Design Profit newsletter, produced by the designers at Worldprofit, go to www.worldprofit.com/eazines

Copy That Produces Results Is NEVER An Accident!

If you want to succeed online you MUST have customer centered cash copy working together with customer- centered design. Unless you're a skilled copywriter and a trained designer, you cannot produce this yourself. And using cut-rate writers and designers won't work either. They can't deliver the words and design that generate the results you must have.

You see, on the Internet sites either deliver results or they don't. Sites are either successful or they're not. There's no middle ground here. Do what's necessary to get results... or live with a site that's a dog, which effectively terminates the web being a source of income for you.

It's your choice. I'm standing by right now, with a team of trained web designers. We work together with you to deliver the results-oriented web site you must have for Internet success. Contact me now at <mailto:drjlant@worldprofit.com> with name, business, address, phone and email address and what you've got in mind.

About The Author



Dr. Jeffrey Lant is one of the most respected marketers on earth. He's written some of the best known business-building and marketing resources ever created. See them at www.jeffreylant.com Get a FREE subscription to his "Marketing Hot Tips" newsletter at www.worldprofit.com/eazines.

Chapter 8

Winning Website Check List

If you already have a website, pull it up and go through these points to make sure your site is as effective as it can be!

Does your site load within 30 seconds or less? Try loading your site on both a slower dial up connection and a faster high speed connection.

Reason: Slow sites turn site visitors off. You may have a high speed connection but a percentage of your viewing audience does not. Don't eliminate potential customers with a slow loading site. First impressions are lasting impressions.

Is your contact information clearly visible on your main page and do you offer lots of options for people to contact you including phone, fax, email address?

Reason: Having your contact information in an obvious place on your website is convenient for your prospects and makes your business look more reputable.

Ask a friend who knows little about your business to look at your website for the first time. Ask this person these questions and listen carefully to the answers.

1. Tell me what the site is about.
2. Tell me what stands out most on the page.
3. Tell me or show me how to order a product or service.
4. Tell me how to contact the site owner.

Listen to what your viewer tells you when seeing your site for the first time. Is it obvious to this first time viewer to know what the site is about, can he/she easily find her way around the site and locate critical information like, how to order, and how to contact you?

Reason: You've seen your site, you think it's obvious because you know your business and where to access information. What about someone who has never seen your site? This is a form of testing.

Does your site follow the "2 Click Rule"? Specifically, is critical information about your business/product or service accessible with 2 or fewer clicks off the main page?

Reason: Your website shouldn't be a maze. It should be easy to navigate for the convenience of your site visitors.

Is your site one that will date quickly if it is not updated on a regular basis?

Look for anything on your site that will date it, or make your site look uncared for in the event that you can't update it regularly. Remove "last updated" time stamps, remove specific icons that are seasonal, remove limited time offers that have expired.

Reason: A site that looks out-of-date will make site visitors question if you are still in business!

Have you included on your site some type of offer? What do I mean by an offer?

I mean some directive words that will motivate site visitors to take some kind of action. This action might be to simply request a free report; it may be get them to sign up for your free newsletter; it might be to offer a free consultation on your service, or it might be as obvious as BUY TODAY AND SAVE \$100!

Reason: Offers are proven effective in motivating people to take action and buy today - not tomorrow. Everyone likes to feel like they got a good deal.

Does your site look credible and reputable? Remember you must earn your audience's trust before they will buy anything from you. Look at your site and make sure the wording and offers are believable. If you offer a money-back or customer-satisfaction guarantee, make sure it is clear and obvious. If you are a member of any trade or consumer organizations, add this to your site to boost consumer confidence in your business.

Reason: If you look like a "here today, gone tomorrow" company, you will see no results. To order from you, people need to trust that when they give you money they will get a product. Consumer confidence is increased with the knowledge that a service satisfaction plan exists.

Have you presented any products for sale in an appealing manner that makes people want to buy them?

Reason: People want to buy quality products, they don't want to buy junk. To increase sales you must professionally present your products in an appealing manner. The more products you have for sale, the better organized you must be.

If purchases can be made online, do you offer your customer's secure ordering options and also a phone in order option?

Reason: Some people are not comfortable ordering online even with security assurances. They prefer to speak to a person and place orders via the telephone. Offer online ordering and phone ordering, and you will make both types of customer happy.

If you are offering a service, have you given people all the reasons why they need it and should only get it from you and no one else!

Reason: You must build in value. You've got plenty of competition out there. Make sure site visitors can instantly see why what you are offering is what they need and why they must get it from you! Talk about benefits, benefits, benefits for the buyer.

What method(s) are you using to capture leads? Do you offer an information request form? A newsletter or ezine? A contest entry form? A survey form? A registration form for the download of free products/trial offers? If not why not? Every visitor to your site is a possible customer. Do what you can to motivate visitors to leave you contact information. Forms are ideal as they capture complete contact information for your sales team to use for follow up.

Reason: If you don't capture visitor information you are losing a valuable source of leads and possible sales!

Are you paying attention to your site visitor statistics? Every website owner should have access to a software program for tracking visitor data. This software available from Worldprofit allows you to know:

- how many visitors you have had by day, week, month, year
- what pages they viewed
- what search engines were used to locate your site
- what keyword(s) were used to locate your site through a search engine
- what site(s) referred that visitor to your site
- which browsers are being used to view your site
- which pages returned 404 (page not found errors)
- and much more.

Reason: Knowing your site statistics allows you to be a smart marketer and...

- know if search engine advertising/links are producing results
- know what pages on your site are most popular. Then you can test the effectiveness of ad copy, and promote advertising on your site.
- know what pages need to be updated
- know what pages get no hits at all and take action as necessary
- know which sites are sending traffic to you and make sure that continues.

Chapter 9

Updating Your Website: Top 10 Signs Your Site Needs An Overhaul

by Sandi Hunter

These are the top 10 signs your website needs an overhaul.

10 - The images used on your site include a revolving globe, beveled horizontal line separators, and one of those animated mail box icons that were popular in free image libraries around 1995. If this is you, listen up. If your site looks dated and unprofessional you will not make any sales. The key to generating sales on line is with a professionally designed website. People form an impression of your business and whether or not they will do business with you, within 30 seconds. Cheesy graphics used in an amateurish website will do nothing for gaining the trust of prospective customers.

9 - Your hit counter is of the free variety and after one year reads "You are the 38th visitor to this site." A site that is publicized for all to see that no one has visited is doomed for sure. Remove the counter, and see point number six below for help with this one.

8 - Your site starts with the words "Welcome to our site. Please bookmark our site. Click on the links to find what you are looking for."

If your site starts off like this you need a lesson in marketing and copywriting. When you read a magazine or the newspaper, notice how headlines and powerful copy are used to get your attention and motivate you to do something. Your website should use the same strategies to get people's attention. This starts with an easy-to-read layout and wording that is interesting, motivating, and most importantly is about the reader, and not about you.

7 - There is no easy way to find contact information anywhere on your home page. Contact information on the main page of your site is convenient for your readers and makes you look credible, and accessible. To make a sale, you've got to earn people's trust, and this starts with giving them lots of ways to contact you. If they have a problem with an order they place, they want to make sure you will be there if they need you.

6 - You don't have a way to analyze your website traffic and determine where your traffic is coming from. Without this you are marketing your website wearing a blindfold and simply praying for the best. Website statistics software can reveal valuable information to help you evaluate your marketing efforts. This can include information about search engine traffic, which search engine was used to find your site, what key words did they use to find you, what pages people are looking at when they get to your site, referring URLs, and much more!

5 - You don't have a way of tracking leads or prospective customers when they visit your site. How can you do this? Track visitor information by providing prospects with a form to complete to request additional information, or to find out more about your products and services. The form allows you to request important details including name, address, phone, email address, budget, level of interest and so forth. You get more detailed information for follow up, and your prospective customer gets faster service because you have all of the relevant information before you.

4 - You've not had a lead off your web site for more than 24 hours. Your website should complement your traditional methods of business. Be sure to include your website address on all of your print marketing, business cards, letterhead, shipping inserts and more. The more people who see your website address the more likely you are to get business from your site. If you are not getting leads from your website, or inquiries by email it's time to rethink what you are doing.

3 - You've NEVER sold one thing at your web site either directly or indirectly. If you've had your web site online for a year and not made one shiny nickle then you need to reassess what you are doing. You aren't doing something right. It could be your web site, perhaps it is not professionally designed. Or it could be your traffic, no traffic = no sales. Either of these factors can effect your sales.

2 -Your website address is of the free variety and is so long that you have no hope of ever fitting it on your business cards. If this is you, get a domain address. Domain addresses are cheap, easy to set up and give you instant credibility for your business. Free website addresses make your business look fly by night, a domain address says "I'm a legitimate business because I've paid for an actual address for my business site." and the number one reason your site needs an overhaul....

1 - Your "last updated" time stamp reads March 19, 1996!

Bottom line. Your website is your worldwide storefront. It must be updated on a regular basis to reflect your current offers, products and services. Technological changes, too, necessitate keeping your website up-to-date to account for changes in connection speed, users, and web browsers.

Chapter 10

Website Traffic - How to get it!

There was a time when people thought posting a website to the Internet meant instant traffic and instant sales. It doesn't work like that. With millions of websites and plenty of competitors, you must be prepared to put some thought and money into how to generate website traffic.

When you put your business online, budget for website development and also budget for advertising of your website.

You must also be prepared to accommodate some changes in how you think about advertising to now include your website campaign. In short, you have to get accustomed to doing business online, to encouraging your customers to use your onsite services, to training your staff to promote your website address, and to ask for customer's email addresses when entering customer data.

Aside from that here are some very specific steps you can take as soon as your website is ready for public viewing.

Search Engines

- Register your website address with those search engines offering free listings using tips in the Ask A Design Expert section of this book.
- Decide on your budget for online advertising; then inquire about paid key word advertising at search engine sites offering advertising such as, www.google.com, www.payperclick.com and www.overture.com. Beware of the lesser known sites that will sell you cheaper advertising. This may be pointless because they get so little traffic. The exception would be if the search engine is a very specific one that targets the searches you are after and the product you sell.

Traditional Advertising

A common mistake made by business owners is to invest in a website then not use the obvious vehicles to promote it.

If you are a brick and mortar business you have access to lots of effective methods of site promotion. Consider what you use now to promote your business and simply add your website address to those promotions.

- Flyers
- Instore banners/posters
- Package inserts
- Exterior signs
- Product packaging
- Radio and TV ads
- Delivery trucks
- Yellow page advertising (also inquire about a link to your site in their online version)
- Business Cards
- Letterhead

Get your sales people to start asking your existing customers for their email address. You can then compile a customer email list, and send (on request) valued customers information about new product launches, specials, store hours, new store location, contests, site updates, and more. It is far less expensive and time consuming to send a regular mailing to your customer base by email than by regular post.

Inquire with your accountant about any possible tax benefits of using your own vehicle to promote your business, and then be sure to include your website address!

Networking and Links

Make good use of your business contacts, memberships and connections. For example, find out if your suppliers have websites or your local Chamber of Commerce or trade organizations. If you are a member of the Better Business Bureau they will likely offer members a link on their website. Oftentimes organizations will list members and link to their websites. The more links you have to your site, the more doorways you have to your website. Don't get this confused with adding links on your site to others. Only provide links on your site to other sites if they reciprocate with a link on their site to yours.

Word of Mouth/Site Referral

A number of businesses rely on word of mouth referrals as a method of gaining new customers. On your website you can also do this by having your website designer set up a simple script on your site. The most common links for getting site referrals are known as non-spam referral scripts. Here are two examples.

"Email this site to a friend"

and

"Refer a friend to this site "

In both cases, your site designer adds a script to your site. Visitors can enter email information of another interested party. An automated message is sent to that person that says something like this.

" Hello Bob,

*Mary Smith thought you might be interested in this site. You can check it out at:
<http://www.YOURWEBSITEADDRESSGOESHERE.com>*

This is a very useful tool, inexpensive and can help generate targeted traffic to your site as it is based on a referral from a known party.

Banner Exchanges

A variety of banner exchange sites exist that are a good way for low-budget advertisers to promote their site. The idea behind a banner exchange is simply that a number of sites participate in the exchange and earn credits for displaying banners on their site. When credits are earned by that site owner, in turn his banner appears on other sites participating. Credits are tracked by inserting a banner and corresponding code on your website. You can read more about how this system works by looking at Worldprofit's own banner exchange program (it's free to join) at www.worldbannerexchange.com

Ezines/Newsletters

If you are not offering a free newsletter (also called an ezine) on your site you are missing out on one of the most powerful ways to generate sales and traffic to your site.

The key to getting subscribers to your newsletter is to offer it at no charge. Visitors come to your site, read about your newsletter, then enter their email address voluntarily. You can then email your subscribers with details on new products, special events, current offers, industry reports and more. Stay in regular contact with interested prospects on a regular basis, and you will dramatically increase your sales!

Offering a newsletter or ezine on your site is a powerful way to:

- stay in contact with prospective customers and current customers to keep them informed of special offers, exclusive internet discounts, new inventory and so forth.
- promote your website address, your company and your products and services.
- save on the cost of mailing a flyer or printed promotional materials to your prospects and customers
- you can send a daily newsletter or a monthly newsletter for the exact same cost!
- The software used to email a newsletter or ezine offers you unlimited use!
- subscribers voluntarily sign up to receive your ezine on your website, so no worries about spamming, and you enjoy far better response rates.
- for additional sources of revenue you can run small ads in your ezine and charge an advertising fee, or barter that ad space with other non-competing businesses.
- the software that manages the mailing of your list automatically removes bad addresses so you don't have to manage your list manually.

- when you have developed a substantial list of interested subscribers, it is easy to turn an email offer into INSTANT sales !

If you decide to offer a newsletter on your site, the next question to ask is how you will motivate people to subscribe.

Due to privacy concerns or fears that an email address will be sold, some Internet users are hesitant to sign up for a newsletter. To overcome this it's a good idea to reassure site visitors that their email address will NOT be sold. Also be sure to convey that you are offering something of value! If people are convinced that what you offer is something they can benefit from they will be more willing to provide an email address.

For example depending on the type of business you have, your ezine could offer *Weekly Health and Wellness Tips*, or *Sure Fire Tax Strategies*, or *Proven Money Saving Tips Gazette*, or *Beauty Secrets of the Hollywood Stars*. In the case of our own business we offer Website Design Tips in our ezine! The key is convincing site visitors that what you offer in your ezine is something they won't find anywhere else, and that they will truly be missing out if they don't get a subscription.

Offering the ezine for free is a must, but sometimes people mistakenly "free" means of little value, so be sure to pump up the benefits of what they will receive in your mailing.

If you want to see some examples of newsletters in action go to:

www.wal-mart.com www.eddiebauer.com www.gap.com
www.worldprofit.com/ezines

Get your FREE Website Design Consult now - here's how!

Our designers are standing by to talk to you about your business and what Worldprofit can offer you to meet your online goals.

To speak to one of our representatives, [complete this form](#).

We are eager to help you but will not respond to any forms not completed in entirety.