



Web Site Design: Easy as 1-2-3?

According to some internet advertising, web site design is as easy as pie. Although it is not rocket science, it does take thought and attention to detail.

Spend time planning your site's navigation and content before doing anything else following these steps:

- Think about the purpose of your site. As a service professional, there are several web site options:
 - A one page site that gives an over view of the benefits of your services and offers a bonus report or other information of value to the visitor in exchange for their name and email address;
 - A brochure type site is usually 3-7 pages. The purpose of this site is to provide enough information for a potential client to get to know you prior to contacting you. In addition to the home page, typical pages may include: About Us, Contact Us, FAQ, Products and/or Services, Resources, Media;
 - An Ecommerce site adds the ability to buy products and services and requires additional software and programming. Even if you don't think you will be selling anything immediately, ask your website designer if it will be easy to add this functionality later.
- Find a minimum of ten sites that you like, and ten sites you don't like. Print out the home pages and mark them up with your positive and negative comments. Be specific about what you like and don't like. Look at sites within and outside your industry in order to get a good overview of options.
- Decide what content and graphics you want on your site. Take a piece of paper and map out the pages you want on your site. Think about content you may have to offer from your site such as articles, transcripts of teleseminars or speeches. The quality and professionalism of the content on your site is critical to the image you wish to project.
- Decide who is going to build your site. Unless you have prior experience designing and building web sites, hire a professional to ensure a quality product. A simple 3-5 page web site will cost between \$750 and \$1500. Cost depends on the number of pages, graphics and how complicated you want the design. This cost is an investment in your company that will pay off in the long run.
- Determine how you will keep your site updated. Although it is not necessary to update your web site frequently, you will want to make simple changes or add content over time. Make sure you know how to access your site so you or your assistant can update it.

WANT TO USE THIS ARTICLE IN YOUR EZINE OR WEB SITE?

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Your web site will become a very important part of your marketing arsenal. It will represent the image you want to present. It can be fun to develop, but you want to make sure that you manage it as a project. Building a website can get out of control, if not managed properly. If you don't have the time or skills, and your designer is not a project manager, consider hiring someone to oversee the project for you.

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