



There's a Better Way to Do Business on the Internet!

Are you a business owner who can't wait to take advantage of the Internet?

This free guide offers some real-world website advice for small to medium-sized business owners. Inside we'll reveal:

How to launch a great website at an affordable price!

The best way to promote your business website!

The benefits of owning an online business!

The truths and myths about search engines!

How to choose a great website name!

Why you shouldn't create your own website!

...and much more!

The Quick Guide to Marketing Your Business on the Internet

Website Benefits

*This guide
provided courtesy
of Stone Rose Design*

*Visit our website at
www.StoneRoseDesign.com*

Copyright © 2001 Randy M. Zeitman

CHAPTER 3—WEBSITE BENEFITS

The ever growing number of businesses that have embraced the Internet as a powerful advertising venue speaks for itself. But even so, perhaps many business owners aren't aware of the variety of advantages a website offers.

♦ Make Your Message Accessible

Suppose you'd like to find some new customers. If you place a print advertisement it's likely the only folks to phone are those who have definite interest in securing your services.

But how many others might be swayed if they could learn a little more about you, your company, your products, etc., without having to phone or taking the time to meet you in person? A website provides that opportunity by allowing you to publish the Who, What, Why, Where, and Hows of your business in a powerful and attractive manner.

A website makes it easy for folks to learn more about your business in their own time.

♦ Reduce Publishing Costs

Designing, printing, and delivering marketing materials can be expensive. It's often one of the largest expenses a business can incur.

With a website you can instantly publish that same information: new product announcements, employment opportunities, contact information, job openings, surveys, coupons, investor information, almost anything, without material or delivery costs. Folks can learn about it instantly just by visiting your website.

♦ Reduce Marketing Costs

Buying advertising space, whether it's a newspaper ad, billboard, or radio spot, can be expensive. Adding to the burden are the hours spent trying to figure out the perfect set of words to say everything you want within the constraints of your ad.

A website is an unlimited number of full-page ads that you can change at will!

By advertising your website in addition to your product, you give folks the opportunity to learn far more about your product than you can ever place in an ad.

SUPERIOR HARDWARE!

**Plumbing, Houshold, Auto,
Painting, Cleaning Supplies!**

**Visit us at 5th & Cherry!
CALL 610-555-6325**

BEFORE – This ad offers only two ways to learn about the business, by phone or by visiting the store.

SUPERIOR HARDWARE!

**Plumbing, Houshold, Auto, Painting,
Cleaning Supplies! 610-555-6325**

**Coupons, Specials, and tips at
www.SuperiorHardware.com**

AFTER – This ad offers many more options for the same price. Visitors can learn about products, see what's on sale, find out directions, hours of operation, etc.

♦ **Test and Expand your Marketplace**

Come up with a new advertising campaign and want to try it? Just update your website and tell your customers. Want to see if you can expand your marketing reach? Try placing a few small ads promoting the website in other regions to gauge the interest before you commit to a larger campaign.

♦ **Reduce Communication Costs**

A website can do far more than sell products, it can supply your staff and business partners with pertinent and timely information. Practically any printed matter can be converted to a webpage and distributed by email at far less cost and time than by fax, mail, or courier.

♦ **Increase Sales**

An online store might be a wise and inexpensive investment. You can sell to your existing customers 24/7 and expand your reach to a market that may have been difficult or expensive to reach through traditional advertising. (You'd be amazed how much shopping occurs on the 'Net overnight!)

♦ **Reduce Support Costs While Improving Quality**

How much time does your support staff spend repeatedly answering the same questions by phone? What are the costs to track down and deliver solutions to clients?

A website lets you publish support information with up-to-the-minute accuracy. In fact some companies, software companies in particular, *only* offer support through their website. If the website doesn't offer the answer an online feedback form is provided. This is perhaps the most underrated usage for business websites.

♦ **Enhance Your Image**

Since every website starts as a blank slate the Internet offers the opportunity for a small-business "David" to portray itself as a big-business "Goliath". (Or, for the Goliath to fall flat by having a website that poorly represents its true stature.)

With an online store you can sell and service your clients all day and night!

CHAPTER 4—PUBLISHING YOUR WEBSITE

If you can visualize how a website can open new markets, cut costs, provide better customer support, and pay for itself in a variety of ways, you're in good company—according to Network Solutions (the folks who sell domain names) there are now over 36 million website names registered (22 million are dot-com names).

If you'd like to join them you'll find it can be painless and far less costly than you might think. In fact the whole process can be broken down to perhaps four basic steps. We explored the first step in the previous chapter, *Website Benefits*, and we'll explore the remaining steps in the following chapters.

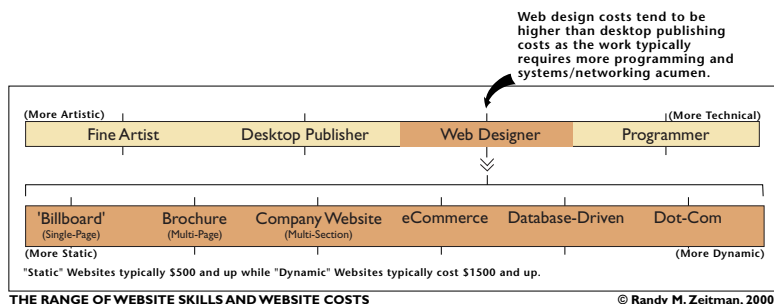
There are over 36 million website names.

1. Clarify Your Goals

Of course the purpose of your website is to generate revenue, but by what means?

- ♦ **By finding new customers?**
- ♦ **By making it easier for existing customers to order?**
- ♦ **To sell online?**
- ♦ **To reduce travel and communication costs by publishing company information online?**
- ♦ **To act as a temporary website while you research what it really should be?**
- ♦ **To look bigger than you really are? To scare your competition?**

All are worthy goals but the time and cost to implement each certainly isn't the same—there's no "one size fits all" website that can address every possible intention. So in addition to thinking about your website goals you'll also benefit from thinking about a budget for your website.



2. Secure Website Hosting Services

Your website needs to be "hosted" by an Internet Service Provider in order for others to be able to view it on the WWW. A commercial hosting account typically includes email addresses and other website development tools to help make your website a powerful marketing tool.

3. Create an Informative and Easy to Use Website

Unless you're a seasoned website designer it's probably best to not create your own website. You'll find yourself spending excessive time and money to create a website that won't powerfully represent the quality of product or service you want to promote.

4. Secure an Online Identity

Your domain name is the the address folks enter into website browser software to view your website. Examples you probably know include Yahoo, eBay, and Amazon. It's easy and inexpensive to buy a domain name. What's not always easy is choosing a *good* domain name.

Even in this infancy of the Internet the domain name you want may not be available.

In the Choosing a Domain Name chapter we'll reveal some of the tricks for choosing a great domain name (and how to avoid choosing a bad one).

BANDWIDTH

The transmission capacity, usually measured in bits per second, of a network connection.

HOST

Any network computer that is a repository for services available to other computers on the network.

BROWSER

An application used to access the world wide web such as Netscape Navigator or Microsoft Internet Explorer.

WEBMASTER

An individual who operates the website, akin to a Station Manager at a television station.

WEB SERVER

Software that provides services used by other computers.

An ISP uses various server software to support mail, WWW, and other features to its clients.