



THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW WHEN PLANNING A COMPANY WEBSITE

Planning and creating a company web presence can be an overwhelming task. This article will help you with some basic facts and concepts that should make it a little easier. First of all we need to define what a website is and what the minimum requirements are:

Definition:

A website is a group of publicly accessible digital files that can be read, interpreted and displayed by a computer program commonly referred to as a web browser.

Requirements:

- 1) Unique web address usually defined by a domain name
- 2) The website files
- 3) An Internet accessible computer (web server) to serve the files

Options:

When it comes to websites, the options are only limited by one's imagination and budget. Pictures, sound, music, movies, animations, database functions, dynamic functions such as chat rooms, forums, calendars, sign up forms, member areas, and web stores are just a few of the possibilities.

How it Works:

When you click a link or type a web address in a web browser an electronic request is sent from your computer through your Internet connection (Internet Service Provider or ISP) over the Internet to a particular computer (web server) defined by the web address or URL. The web server responds and sends the information you requested back over the Internet to your computer. This information is then interpreted by your web browser and the results are displayed on your computer screen.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER

Appearance:

Your website represents your business online. The appearance should reflect your business's image. Whether you choose a very simple or complex design, the important thing is that it broadcasts a professional image and works properly.

Function:

Define what functions your website will be performing. The most basic function being to display company information to allow prospective clients to locate you online. Past this, the sky is the limit and careful planning here will save you time and money.

Content:

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The first step is to decide how your site will be organized. This can be as simple as displaying goods and services offered on the home page or as complex as this site, which is divided into sections. Each section then displaying volumes of information spread over numerous pages. If you plan on selling or displaying products you will of course need complete and accurate product information as well as product pictures. A very good way to organize your site is to simply sketch the structure starting with the home page, then under that the subordinate pages, then for each subordinate page add a page with a summary of the information for that page.

Tip: Get started early collecting and organizing your content. The number one hold up in completing a website project is waiting for the submission of content. Press releases, brochures, flyers, and any company publication are great sources. Pictures of what your company does are important tools in creating the look and feel of your site. The more images that you supply to the web designer, the better the final result will be.

CHOOSING A WEBSITE COMPANY

The choice of a website company is an important one.

Support:

Choose a company that takes the time to talk to you, answers your questions, and makes you feel comfortable. Make sure they post complete contact information and can be easily reached.

Services:

Verify that the company you select can supply services needed: design, creation, hosting, programming, search engine registration, etc. If these services are secured from different companies no one company is responsible.

Pricing:

Pricing should be competitive but not a main consideration. In the world of technology pricing on items such as hosting range from free on up. In most cases the price directly reflects the level of service you will receive in the future.

Before committing any funds to the project make sure you understand exactly what the cost is and what it includes. For a custom project insist on a written itemized proposal. Website packages will list all the features included. Design, creation, domain registration, and hosting are the bare minimum requirements, make sure you fully understand the cost on each.

Credibility:

Check the company's track record. Internet companies come and go. Any reputable company should be proud of its work and display examples of it on its website. Take a look at their work before making a decisions. Find out how long the company has been in business. Keep in mind if the company that has been in business for less than a year has a 90 percent probability of failure.

We hope this brief overview will help in the planning stage of your website project. The more thorough you are and the more planning you do up front, the smoother production will be and the better the results.

If we can be of any further assistance feel free to call us at 1.888.601.4638.

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