

# WebsitesForPeople.com

## Website Planning Checklist

### A) Purpose and goals of a website:

Identify the objectives that apply to your situation from the list below:

- To gain recognition of my/our company, agency or organization.
- To develop a qualified list of sales prospects or potential customers.
- To sell products directly to potential customers using secure ordering for credit cards.
- To encourage visitors to contact me/us by phone, fax, e-mail, or postal mail to complete a sale.
- To make available product information, price lists and literature to potential customers.
- To make available product information, price lists and literature to distributors and resellers.
- To strengthen unique brand name or company name recognition.

### B) Brochure or informational website:

These small sites include:

A “Home Page”, with images and text content to promote your business and the products and services you sell.

A “Contact Us” page, where all means of reaching you and your staff are listed. An email form is also included so visitors can send you a message. Also, a map would be included in a “How to Find Us” section, if your brick and mortar location is suitable for visiting and shopping.

An About Us or Company History page that may feature photos of staff and business or manufacturing locations.

Several pages devoted to featuring your products and services with both images and text descriptions, along with pricing and ordering information, where appropriate. Alternatively, we can provide your website with a full eCommerce system so that customers may purchase products online.

### C) The major components of the website creation process:

#### 1) Domain name registration:

Domain names are like getting a personalized license plate. Make the name simple, yet catchy. Try to keep it short, as this will ensure that visitors will remember it easily. Choose from a variety of extensions like .com, .net, .org, .biz, .TV and more. A search will need to be made to determine if the name you’ve chosen for your website is currently not being used by anyone else.

The cost to register your domain ranges from \$8 to \$35 per year depending on the service that is chosen. You also have the flexibility to register your domain name of choice for 2, 5 or 10-year terms at reduced rates. It is strongly recommended that you choose a domain name registry service separate from the Website Hosting Company (described below). This “ala carte” approach preserves necessary flexibility and control of critical aspects of your website ownership.

## 2) Website hosting:

There are thousands of companies connected to the Internet that host websites. Hosting a website simply means that there is a “hosting server” somewhere in the world that has a connection to the Internet. The files that make up a website reside on this server, which is nothing more than a specially designed computer with a two-way Internet connection. When your browser is looking at a website, the browser is displaying the website on your PC, but the actual site is on the hosting server that may be at a hosting company’s location across town or in another country. The hosting company that Websites For People uses and recommends offers discounted hosting. A typical website can be hosted for under \$100 per year, and the customer is billed quarterly using an email reminder.

## 3) Design and content considerations:

**If you choose us to create a new site for you and your business, the following items and issues will be a part of this process:**

- Simple and accessible design, focusing on components that convey your corporate image and personality.
- Easy to use navigation and information links compatible with graphics, font selection and colors.
- Use of existing information from brochures, original and/or copyrighted artwork, logos or photographic images in order to continue consistency in branding of your organization to the Internet medium.
- Proper sizing of site pages and font size compatible with a standard 15-inch monitor set to 800x600 resolution.
- Proper sizing of all images to minimize loading time.
- Testing of all internal and external links.
- Testing of all HTML code and compatibility comparison with accepted W3C industry standards.
- Complete HTML syntax review and correction and general code cleanup.

## 4) Interaction with visitors through the use of forms:

**Forms are a means to communicate with your visitors. Here are examples of form use:**

- Inquiry Form. This allows current and potential customers and clients the ability to ask you questions and request services from you. This would include requests for quotes of your services or availability of products similar to what you may currently offer to the public.
- Feedback Form. New and returning customers may find it convenient to with you through an online form where specific text areas or checkboxes better address their needs and concerns, and where sending an email may be too time-consuming for them. Anything that keeps customers coming back adds value to your business, and online forms are just another form of business-to-client and business-to-business communication.
- Newsletter Signup Form. If your business develops regular updates to a specific industry, or is a contributor of white papers to professional organizations whose members are your employees, newsletters and online information subscriptions are another example of how a website can keep both staff and clients informed of trends affecting corporate decision-making, industry-wide market analysis, and stockholder interests.
- Site Update Notification. Getting repeat visitors is key to your success on the Internet. You want to keep your name in front of your target market at all times. Offer a site update notification that will allow you to e-mail your visitors when you've made a change to the site.
- Registration Form. Building a prospecting list is essential to the success of your company. It will allow you to see the type of visitors that your website is attracting and where they are coming from. A registration form should have the following: name, company, address, phone, fax, e-mail address. In addition, you should ask three to five key questions that will give you the information you need to approach your potential customer on your product and/or service.

## **D) eCommerce features to sell your products and services from your website:**

### **1) Online ordering form:**

If you are planning to sell products and/or services directly from your web site, it is important to have an order form that submits information directly to your e-mail box from your web site. People prefer to order from the website rather than call or fax a form to you. If you have explored the Internet yourself, you know how inconvenient it is to jot down information from a website for later use. Remember, there are many impulse buyers on the Internet and giving your visitors every convenience for ordering your products/services will ensure the maximum profit dollars to you.

### **2) Secure online ordering:**

If you are planning to accept credit cards, it is important that you provide secure on-line ordering for your customers. This will allow the credit card information to be encrypted so hackers will not be able to access the information.

### **3) Shopping carts:**

If your website will be used to sell multiple products or catalog items, you may want to consider installing a shopping cart program. A virtual shopping cart works similar to a shopping cart in a department store. As visitors browse through your products on-line they can place each item they wish to purchase in their virtual "cart". The program will keep a running total of products ordered and pricing. Your customer can review their shopping cart items at any time. When they are ready to "check out", the program will total their charges including tax, shipping and handling. Depending on the level of programming, additional shopping cart features may include sending the orders to your vendors for direct shipment, inventory processing, and offering customers information on their previous orders.

## **E) Search marketing:**

### **1) "Organic" search engine optimization:**

We perform a rigorous analysis of the content of your site to determine the best keywords and phrases to use in areas most often scanned by search engines. We pay particular attention to those elements that are significantly advantageous for your site to include and prominently feature. These include page titles, page headings, keywords and site descriptions, site maps and alt text for images as well as relevant use of text content and linking, both inbound and outbound.

### **2) Paying for traffic to your website:**

The most widely used method currently available is Google Adwords. This is a specialization that WebsitesForPeople.com currently does not offer, but we can provide you referrals to development firms whose methods in this area are proven and obtain the greatest results for your investment.

## **Thank you for considering WebsitesForPeople.**

We hope the above information is useful to you. It is intended to better help us serve your website needs. Thank you for your interest and we look forward to working with you to improve your Internet presence.

Thomas J. Urbom  
WebsitesForPeople.com

314.361.0555  
Tom@WebsitesForPeople.com