

Common Website Questions



A website represents a critical business tool. Having a company website is as important as having a telephone line, business cards and brochures.

Unfortunately, there are still a large number of businesses that do not have a website and perhaps do not understand how essential it is to their company image. Below we answer common questions business owners have about websites.

Why should a small company that has minimal resources want to invest in web technology?

In today's global marketplace, a website can give your company additional credibility. In fact, having website presence is becoming part of an expectation for being in business. Your customer looks for a business to have a telephone and business cards. Now customers are expecting to see a website address as a normal part of being in business. And the move to needing a company website is only going to increase in the coming years.

Having a company website can also bring additional business opportunities. One of our clients recently advised us that he obtained a job from his website from a customer he was not familiar with and had not pursued in the past. Using his traditional marketing strategy, this new customer would not have been uncovered.

Can I save any money using a website?

Utilization of the Internet, including website presence and e-mails, can reduce a company's overall expenses. It can also increase productivity and customer satisfaction.

Consider the use of e-mail. Obviously, sending and receiving e-mail is much quicker than traditional postal mail (affectionately called "snail mail" by the technology community). Imagine the competitive advantages you can gain. You can respond to your current and potential customers in a matter of hours using e-mail versus days using snail mail. You can gain a customer who is delighted to receive a prompt response, and you receive a reduction of postal expenses that affect your bottom line.

How can I afford to invest in a website?

The real question is, "How can you afford not to?"

Just about every company can benefit from having a website. At the very least, a good website can strengthen your company image and credibility. At the very best, it can help you gain additional business and encourage repeat business with existing customers.

All websites do not need to be big and elaborate in order to be effective. A company can start out with a basic website with four or five pages. Later the website can be enhanced to include more information.

Large companies with bigger websites should periodically review their website and make changes as needed. User functionality and the user's ability to find information quickly become increasingly challenging in a larger website. Large companies should ensure their technology experts are skilled in website usability process flows.

Can a website help attract global companies to my business?

Websites expose your business to global clients you may not traditionally market to. For example, after creating a website, one of our clients called us because she received inquiries from companies located outside of the United States. While the existing marketing budget for this company didn't support international marketing efforts, her company was able to gain exposure in markets it had not considered pursuing and could not afford to pursue using traditional marketing techniques, via its website.

What are some differences between traditional marketing and using a website as a marketing vehicle?

One difference between using a website for exposure and traditional marketing is that the Internet is available 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. It never sleeps. It is also

accessible around the world. And it doesn't cost additional money to have your business visible to international customers.

A website has 'staying power'. Compare it to running an ad in a daily newspaper. Once the newspaper is discarded, that information is no longer accessible. The website has constant presence. Current or potential customers can come back and visit as often as they like.

“ . . . the best websites give you a reason to return.”

A website also provides flexibility. If you are launching a new product or services, it can be fairly simple to quickly update the information on your website. Printed materials, however, have to be discarded and reprinted. This flexibility is also helpful if a company is running a special promotion. The information can be easily removed from the website once the special has expired.

It is important to note that having a website doesn't eliminate the need for advertising, marketing brochures, business cards, etc. Instead, your website address should be incorporated into your business materials whenever possible. It is important to include your website address on your business cards, letter-head, fax cover sheets, and marketing materials. The more visible your website address is – the more successful your site will be.

Once I create a website, can I just forget about it?

No. Just as your business requires you to stay current with industry changes and improvements, your website must also stay current with your image and the message you wish to send to your customers.

Your website represents your company. It is helpful to ask others to review it to get their opinion and feedback. If the message they get from visiting your site is different than the one you hope to send, it is time for revisions.

In addition, you should also periodically review your own website to see if there are enhancements which should be made. You could update your site with press releases, new products, additions to your service offerings and more. Keep in mind that most of the best websites give you a reason to return.