

Building an Effective Small Business Website

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Why Do You Need a Website?

- Contact information
- Product line, catalog, photos of product
- Provide information to remote staff
- Online sales transactions
- Portfolio of your work
- Maps to your location
- Links to Affiliates

Need more information?

Phone: 321-622-5041

or email:
info@graphic-mac.com

See our portfolio at: <http://www.graphic-mac.com>

Where To Begin...

- Know what you want - organize your thoughts with a worksheet
- Choose a web designer
- Choose your domain name
- Choose a server to host your site
- Plan to maintain your site

Use a Worksheet to Organize

- What do you want your website to show?
- Who do you want to reach?
- How many pages will you need? What images will you use?
- What do you want your site to look like?
- What is your timeframe to get it built?

Choose a Web Designer

- Professional vs. amateur designers
- Decide what level service you need -and choose a designer who can provide it
- Where do you find a designer?
- Can the designer project your image?

Your Domain Name

- Check name availability at <http://www.godaddy.com>
- Have several options in case the name you want has already been taken. (up to 63 char)
- Choose a name that can be easily remembered.
- Register the name and either park it or transfer it to the hosting server.

Hosting Server

- The hosting server is the computer that “Serves” your website up to the internet
- Cost of monthly hosting will vary depending on the size of your site, traffic, and functions required
- Coordinate your choice of server with your web designer

Now You Are Done...

- You have a web designer, a domain name, and a website live on the internet...now the customers will start rolling in! Right?
- Wrong. Having an office does not guarantee customers, neither does having a website. Now you must market and promote your site.

Search Engine Positioning

- Everyone wants their website to come up “first” in the search engines. With the millions of sites out there that is nearly impossible, but these things will affect your ranking:
 - Text content on pages
 - A service, product or subject that is unique
 - Use of alt tags, meta data, titles and headlines
 - Links from other sites to yours

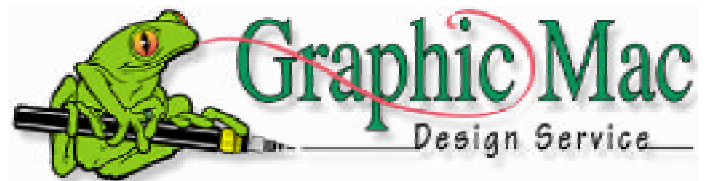
Worksheet for a Small Business Website

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This 20-question worksheet is to help you and your web designer create an effective website by understanding your specific goals.

- 1.) A brief description of your company/organization.
- 2.) Name and contact information for the person in your company who will be working on the project:
- 3.) Where will content come from? Will it be new, repurposed, or both?
- 4.) How often will you add new content?
- 5.) What types of visitors do you want to attract?
- 6.) What is the basic goal for your Web site? (e.g., branding/identity reinforcement, information to the public, direct sales, corporate communication, etc.)
- 7.) Will the web site reinforce an existing branding or marketing strategy? How? Do you already have a logo/business identity that you are satisfied with?
- 8.) Keeping in mind the character of your company and your intended audience, should your website look Elegant or Casual, Traditional or High Tech, Conservative or Wild?
- 9.) What functional requirements do you believe to be necessary? (e.g., download areas, database-driven webpages, commerce, catalog, applications, etc.)
- 10.) Have you arranged for hosting and maintenance of the site?
- 11.) Has your domain name already been registered?
- 12.) Are there databases already in place?
- 13.) Describe any work that has been done toward designing/redesigning a new web site.
- 14.) What is your long-term plan for the site?
- 15.) What is your schedule?
- 16.) What is the budget for this project? Is there an acceptable budget range, depending on the level and comprehensiveness of services provided?
- 17.) If budget is a major issue, would you prefer to have the site constructed in phases?
- 18.) Rank the following according to importance: (Use a scale of 1-10, with 1 being most important)
 - A web strategy that fits our existing image
 - Repurposing existing content
 - Creating a community of dedicated visitors
 - Quality execution (graphics, writing, navigation, etc.)
 - Time schedule
 - Ease of maintenance
 - Doing better than our competition on the Web
 - Site is accessible to disabled viewers
 - Site is accessible to all browsers /platforms
 - Staying within the budget
- 19.) Find several high quality sites (more is better) on the Web that relate to your project in some of the following categories:
 - Appeal to same target group of customers
 - Colors, look-and-feel, user interface, layout
 - Size of site
 - Your competitors' sites
 - Quality of content
 - Quality of graphics
 - Functionality (things sites do for people)
 - Overall favorite sites (for whatever reasons)
- 20.) Gather together the material that will appear in the site: text, photos, logo (if one already exists).

Once you're ready, please contact:



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