



EPSILON CONCEPTS

BE REMARKABLE

The Benefits Of A Business Website

A website can reach out to new markets or it can help retain your current customers. It can act as a multi-page advertisement or it can be an online business that generates its own income. It can act as a meeting place, a resource center or even entertain. If you need to advertise, inform, sell, communicate or entertain then a website can be built to fit the bill.

It's long been the belief that having a big yellow page ad was a sure-fire way of saying to your clients "look at us, we're better than our competition". This may have been true, but then along came the Internet and an amazingly cost-effective way of increasing your visibility, not only locally but globally.

Why should your business have a website? The best short reply is, "A website can connect you with your prospects, customers, associates, suppliers, etc... in ways never before possible." And isn't that what your business is all about? Connecting with potential customers who eventually buy your product or service?

Here are some additional few benefits of an effective business website:

Wider Reach – Quickly And Affordably

Tens of millions of people worldwide have access to the Internet. A recent study found that 75 million people used the Internet, and 45 million used the web in the three months preceding the survey in USA & Canada.

The Internet is extremely different from print advertising in that space is cheap, your advertisement is accessible for a longer period of time, the content can be changed without having to ask someone to do it for you (that is if you use a content management system) and you can potentially reach a wider audience.

Generally, the population on the Internet is better educated and affluent. Most own a computer; others have access to one. Internet users, like most people, are interested in convenience. Many prefer the ease of finding services or shopping and ordering directly from their computer screens.

Websites are powerful because they connect your advertisement to your order or inquiry form. This is also the greatest distinction between electronic and other advertising channels. Users can have direct communication with your company as they see your ad. With the click of a mouse, they will transmit their inquiry or order directly to you. This, the entire process will be faster and more cost effective. Your website also can begin a relationship with the user through a relationship oriented website.

Better And More Cost Effective Advertising

There is a limited amount of information that can be stuffed into a radio, TV or print ad. These mediums are expensive. However, include your company's URL in a small print ad or 30 second spot and you have now directed your customers to your website which contains enough sales information, company background, and calls to action to make the sale. Many times when you run an ad, your customers hear, see or read it and have to wait until business hours to contact your company. They might remember to contact you, or they might get busy. If your company's website is mentioned in your ad, customers will be able to look at your website and buy your products or learn about your services as soon as the urge hits them. The time has come to create a 24/7 website presence!

Companies can save hundreds of thousands of dollars in printing and mailing costs by putting their catalogs on the Internet. Gone are the days when E-Commerce (selling online) is unattainable and impractical. Painlessly and affordably, you can setup an E-Commerce website to act as a 24/7 storefront.

Websites can be updated as often as you like. No other advertising medium is so quickly and economically changeable and the dynamic sites are those that get the hits. You can see what works and what doesn't and then make adjustments within minutes instead of committing to rigid modes of communication that can't be measured and changed.

Your website can also bring people into your stores! Your website is particularly helpful in this area for those running TV or radio ads. Your customers can look at your website in order to get all of the information

that they need before coming to your brick and mortar presence. Wholesalers also benefit greatly by having a website. They can include on their site a search engine for all of their retailers. Therefore, when customers see a product advertised, they can look at the wholesalers website to find out where they can purchase it.

A website enables you to display photos, sound and short movie clips with less expense. Guitarist Jeff Smith for example, gets over 200 hits a day and markets his band's CDs on-line.

Another great benefit of having a website is opportunity to engage in search engine optimization. By building your website in a content oriented, optimized manner, you can open your doors to people that are specifically looking for you have to offer! And from an advertising perspective, you can invest just dollars into "Pay Per Click" programs with Google and/or Yahoo! and benefit from the most targeted, cost effective advertising means possible.

Measurability

You can use features on your website such as visitor polls, online surveys and your website statistics to find out what your customers like more and how they feel about certain aspects of your business to determine how you can improve your product and the way you do business. Website statistics show you how much traffic your website receives, how the visitor got to your website and where, geographically, the visitor is from.

Market Share

Today, there are hundreds of thousands of companies with websites. You can be certain that a few of your competitors already have a presence online. However, it is still possible to become the dominant online influence in your industry. It is the way to gain a decent market share of Cyber shoppers and people searching for commercial and informational purposes. In just a few years, I predict that gone will be the days of Yellow Pages and print advertising as we know it. People will find what they need through search engines and programs like Google Local. You still have time to gain an effective web presence!

Lower Costs Of Customer Service

You will find many ways to serve your customers using your website and related technology. For example, you can make forms available to pre-qualify for loans, or have your staff do a search for that classic rock record your customer is requesting. Give your clients valuable camping

tips or "The 10 Best Ways to Pay Less Taxes." All this can be done, simply and quickly, on the web.

You can save phone calls and your staff members' time by just posting basic business information on your website. Posting the upgrade information on your site will save you money and keep your customers informed of every reason why they should do business with you.

A lot of your staff's time is probably spent answering the same questions over and over again. These are the questions customers and potential customers will ask before they deal with you. Display the answers on your website and you will have freed up a lot of time for your office staff.

With a website, you can ask for feedback from your customers and get it instantaneously. E-mail can be built into web pages and will give you the answers while they are fresh in your customers' mind, for a fraction of the cost. Another benefit is that you can respond to your customers when you choose to and not necessarily at the exact moment that they call.

If you have ever remembered too late or too early to call the opposite coast, you know the hassle. We are not all on the same schedule. Business is worldwide but your office hours are not. Trying to reach America or Europe is even more frustrating. Your website can serve your customers 24 hours a day, seven days a week without adding to your costs.

Public Relations

This is becoming an exceedingly important reason to have your company online. Your presence on the Internet is like passing out your business card to thousands, even millions of potential clients and partners. It is virtually a worldwide announcement saying, "This is what I do. If you are ever in need of my services, you can, 24 hours a day, inexpensively and simply, reach me on the web."

Information can be made available on your website at the time you specify, with all related materials such as photographs, biographies, etc.

Every kind of business needs the exposure that the media can bring. With the Internet hype at the eclipse of its power, an innovative website will almost certainly get written up in one publication or another.

Inter-Company Communication

A website is the fastest, most economical way to disseminate information

within your organization. Instead of relying on the haphazard distribution of memos, employees can visit their company's website at their convenience. You can also password protect an employee-only website so that sensitive information remains within the company.

If you send employees abroad or have offices around the world, having a website is an expedient way to communicate. It costs no more than a local phone call to access the site and the web is available in over 150 countries.

Your employees on the road may need up-to-the-minute information. A quick local phone call can keep your staff supplied with the most detailed information, without long distance phone bills and tying up the staff at the home office. Additionally, salesmen on the road can enter orders on-line so that the company can immediately begin working on them.

International Markets

There is a whole new high-tech world out there, populated by millions of people on all parts of the globe, and marketing on the web is the easiest way to begin doing business internationally. With a website, you can open up dialogues in international markets as easily as with the company across the street.

Testing

If you demonstrate your new product on the web, you will know what your customers think in a fast, economical manner. For a low cost, you can gain insight into where to position your product or service in the marketplace.

Specialized Markets

There are thousands of newsgroups representing every sport, hobby or interest imaginable. No matter what your niche, your customers are probably online. Furthermore, it has been found that some of the most successful businesses on the web are those that target niche markets.

The power to serve the world with a website is clear. What about your local markets? In most cities today there are probably enough local customers with Internet access to make it beneficial to market through the web.