

**WEB SITE PLANNER WORKBOOK**



## Introduction

After much thought and consideration, you finally took the plunge and decided it was time to enhance your presence online. That's a great accomplishment in itself. However, now it's time to actually plan your web site. This can be a tricky process, but don't worry; we've made it easy with this Web Site Planner Workbook. We will take you step by step by taking your planning to new levels from the beginning to the end. We wrote this planner for you, our clients, because successful web sites are built on strategy and planning. Whether you're building a web site for your business or your organization, you need to start with a plan. An effective plan starts with quality information, and to get quality information you need the right questions. Use this planner to help nail down your web site goals and collect the materials necessary for web development. The more time and effort your organization devotes to this information gathering process, the more likely you are to build an effective, customer-driven, and well-staffed web presence.

Be prepared for a little writing; this is quite a hefty planner. Remember, successful web sites are built on strategy and planning.

To find out what to do after you have completed this planner, go to the page titled "What to do next".

Warm Regards,

Rob Riggs  
Principal, Your Design Online  
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## Need Assistance?

If you need assistance with this Web Site Planner Workbook, you can take advantage of one of our web site specialists. Your web specialist will guide you through your planner and help you work out a plan of action to get your web site on-line quickly and easily. To contact one of our web specialists, just go to our web site at **[www.yourdesignonline.com](http://www.yourdesignonline.com)** and click on the "Contact Us" link.

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### PLAN YOUR WEBSITE

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## **Getting Started: The Process**

We try to make the process of getting your web site finished as quick as possible. But planning and strategy comes first. That's where this web site planner comes in handy. Without planning first, your web site can become a disaster, wasting your time and hard earned money. There are several steps we can go through in the process of completing your web site:

### **1.) Planning & Strategy**

We start the process by having you fill out this Web Site Planner Workbook. This book gathers information about your company, services, audience, purpose, site goals and more. This planner will also give you a full outlook of how you see your web site, and how we find out your objectives and goals for your project. We will give you as much time as you need to review the planner and answer all of the questions asked. We use this information to help us deliver an accurate final quote.

### **2.) Web Site Design Proposal**

After you have finished with this Web Site Planner Workbook, we will gather the information and draw up a proposal for your approval.

### **3.) Agreements / Deposits**

If our proposal for your web site development is accepted, we will require half the full amount as a deposit. Along with an invoice, we will send you a contract. The contract will state the project amount, terms and agreement, and other miscellaneous items.

### **4.) Domain Name Registration**

If you have chosen a domain name to register for your web site, we will register it at this time. If your domain is already registered, we will make any technical modifications in order to direct Internet traffic to your new site.

### **5.) Collecting Your Materials**

Now is the time to start collecting materials for your web site. Anything that you can provide to help us design your web site will help. This includes, but is not limited to; brochures, business cards, and photos of your business. If you're selling products, we will probably need photos, product details, and cost. The more information and materials with which you provide us, the quicker your project will be completed and the better the overall results.

### **6.) Mockup Sites and Sample Layouts**

We will put together some mock web sites and designs for your company to critique and discuss. If you have requested a logo design, this should come before anything else. At this point we're trying to narrow down exactly what you're looking for in terms of design and layout. Your feedback is essential in the web design process and is welcome at any time.

### **7.) Working with Materials**

Resizing photos, photo optimization, color sampling (for those who want to match a corporate

color to their site design), product details & pictures, and similar tasks are all done during this phase of the web design process.

### **8.) Establishing Project Design / Look & Feel**

Based on your feedback from the mockup site(s) and your planner, a design is established and used for your web site.

### **9.) Content**

Starting with your home page, we will start building your web site. After this is completed and approved we will move on and start placing content into your web site.

### **10.) Scripting & Databases**

If you requested any special scripting (contact forms, feedback forms, databases, reservation systems, etc.) then we will integrate the scripting into your web site.

### **11.) Web Site Completion and Debugging**

After you have reviewed the web site, and everything is in correct order, we will start by reviewing the site ourselves. We will check web site load time, browser testing, resolution testing and the overall optimal performance of your site.

### **12.) Site goes "Live"**

Your site is published for the world to see! You can now start advertising your web site: tell friends, business acquaintances and publish print materials with your web site address.

### **13.) Site Optimization & Online Marketing**

Your site is optimized so that we can correctly market your web site. We will use the keywords and descriptions of your site that you gave us in your planner. We can then further your marketing efforts by submitting your web site to search engines, as well as perform any other web site promotion services that you requested.

### **Getting Started: Organizing and Gathering Information**

Gathering information for your web site can be confusing. Questions arise such as “Where do I put this information?”, “What do I put on this page?”, etc. Here are a few ideas of what to use to get you on your way:

- Logos you have gathered (on disk or otherwise)
- Text you have prepared yourself
- Information regarding your Company or Organization
- Catalogs
- Brochures
- Manuals
- Photographs you have taken or gathered related to your Company or Organization

## **Getting Started: E-Commerce and Online Shopping**

The following information is to help give you a brief idea of what is needed in order to start the development of your online store. If we are not building a E-commerce web site for you, you may skip this section.

What do you need in an e-commerce web site?

- Online Credit Card Acceptance
- Secure Server to Accept Credit Cards
- Merchant Account
- Internet Gateway
- Shopping Cart

### **E-commerce Facts:**

The worldwide internet population is 580 million people in 2002. 55% are comfortable with online credit card transactions and more than 50 billion dollars will come from annual revenue from e-commerce web sites.

### **1.) Tell us about your product and/or service**

How many products do you have? Do your products have a code associated with them? Do they have attributes such as different sizes and colors? We want to follow your existing business model as closely as possible in order to maintain a brand online that is consistent with your real-life business.

### **2.) Shipping Costs**

How do you calculate your shipping costs? Some people do by range, others by weight. If you have an existing system to calculate your shipping we'll need to know all about it in order to incorporate it into your online shopping cart.

### **3.) Weight**

If the weight of your product determines shipping cost, then we'll need the weight of each product going into your online store.

### **4.) Pictures**

Do you have pictures of your products? If so, do they need to be optimized and/or resized for proper Web viewing? We'll need to know about the pictures and artwork you have about your product/service.

### **5.) Product Description**

For every product we'll need a description. Concise and eye catching copy that is full of adjectives is usually the best for attracting the attention of potential shoppers.

## **Getting Started: Web site Hosting**

Web Site hosting is how your web site is stored 24 hours 7 days a week so it is always accessible by internet users. If you're not sure on where to host your web site, then we can host your web site on our servers for you. Please reference our web site for fees for our business-tier hosting services.

### **Customer Support**

- Free Technical Support
- 99% Uptime Guarantee
- 30 Day Money Back Guarantee
- Free setup of all email features

### **Email Features**

- Unlimited POP3 Accounts
- SMTP Outgoing Mail Server
- Unlimited Auto Responders
- Unlimited Forwarders & Catch-All E-Mail
- Webmail
- Spam Assassin (block SPAM)
- Unlimited Customizable Mail Blockers

### **Access Features**

- Unlimited Subdomains
- Unlimited FTP Accounts
- Unlimited Parked Domain
- Unlimited MySQL Databases
- Customizable Error Pages
- Access to Raw Access Logs
- Web Based File Manager
- Cron Jobs
- Graphical Web Statistics (AWStats & Webalizer)
- Error Logs

### **Development Features**

- Latest Versions of PHP, RedHat 7.3 OS, Apache 1.3.27, MySQL 4.0.12, PERL and CGI
- PhpMyAdmin access
- Macromedia Shockwave & Flash
- Modify Mail Exchanger (MX Entry)
- Online Database Management
- Web Based File Manager
- Password Protect Directories

## **Getting Started: Domain Name Registration**

A domain name is simply a system for providing a human-memorable name for a particular computer on the Internet. Properly speaking, computers have numerical addresses similar to phone numbers. The domain name system provides a translation from a name to the appropriate number (similar to a directory assistance for the Internet). For example, [www.super8.com](http://www.super8.com) is much easier to remember than 198.178.89.226.

### **Why you need a domain name**

There are several advantages to a domain name:

- Your web service and e-mail addresses can be consistent (e.g., [www.yourcompany.com](http://www.yourcompany.com) and [info@yourcompany.com](mailto:info@yourcompany.com)).
- A domain name is shorter and more memorable than a URL under your ISP's domain name (e.g., [www.yourcompany.com](http://www.yourcompany.com) vs. [www.verizon.net/yourcompanyname](http://www.verizon.net/yourcompanyname)).
- Most importantly: You have the freedom to move your web hosting and e-mail at will from one Internet Service Provider to another without having to change your URL and email addresses. If your URL is [www.verizon.net/yourcompanyname](http://www.verizon.net/yourcompanyname), you have to be a customer of Verizon. If you become unhappy with the service you are getting and want to switch, you'll have to change your URL and email, throwing away all the work you did to publicize the first web site. If you have your own domain name, you're not stuck.

The 3 top level domain names are .com, .net, & .org. There are also several domain extensions such as .us, .edu, .gov, .info, and more. Dot Com domains are usually the best choice, if available. Organizations should use .org, while commercial businesses should use .com, .net or .us, depending on the availability of .com's.

## **Planning Your Web site: Things to Think About**

Here are some things to think about when planning your web site:

### **Planning:**

- What advantages would you like to gain from your web site?
- What disadvantages do you think you may encounter?
- How do you plan to overcome those disadvantages?

### **Target Market:**

- Who is your primary target market?
- Who are the main customers you wish to reach?
- Who is your secondary target market? (If any)
- To whom do you sell or want to reach primarily? Other businesses or to the general public?
- How will your web site compare to the way your business / organization currently operates?
- Are you planning an online brochure to enhance your marketing or showcase your product / service?
- Would you like to receive orders and sell merchandise over the internet?

### **Setup:**

- Have you selected a domain name for your web site? Is it currently registered?
- Will your site need a security certificate?
- Will you be processing credit card transactions?

### **Advertising and Promotion:**

- How will you generate demand for your product or service?
- Will you offer banner ad space?
- Will you offer referrer bonuses?
- Will you offer contest-based promotions?
- Will you offer coupons for using the web site?
- Will you be participating in email marketing?
- On what other media will you be advertising your business?
- Will you be adding your web site information to that media?

### **Customer Service:**

- Who will be answering email generated by the web site?
- Will your customers have a phone number at which you can be reached on the web site?

**Functionality:**

Which functional features should your web site offer? Consider:

- e-commerce/shopping cart
- site search
- customer service/support
- tech support
- discussion forums
- newsletter
- catalog/information
- order forms
- feedback form
- member logon
- password protected areas
- SSL-encrypted areas

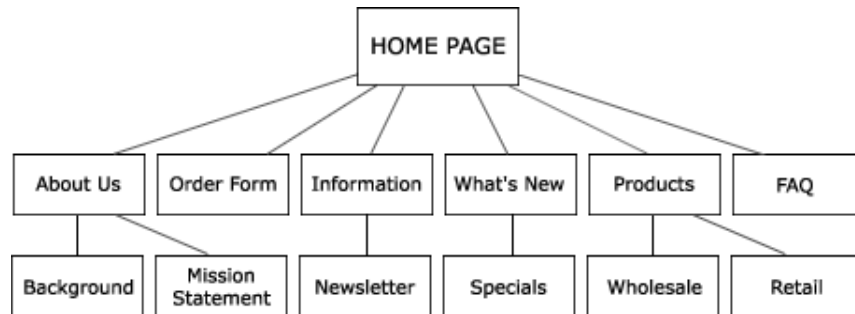
**Information:**

Which informational elements should your site contain? Consider:

- about us page
- contact us page
- copyright notice
- privacy statement
- disclaimer
- sitemap

## **Planning Your Web site: Planning Your Navigation**

Here is an example of a site navigation tree. Review it, as you'll be making one of these for your own site later in this planner. Each box shows a single page from your web site. In this example, there are 13 boxes all together, therefore there would be 13 separate pages within the web site.



### **Planning Your Web site: Content to Include on Your Web site**

The possibilities of items that you can include in your web site are endless. Here are some examples:

- The main five pages we recommend are *Home Page, About Us, Services or Products, Resources, and Contact Us*. Most of these are self-explanatory. Under *Resources*, you could include articles, press releases, tools, downloads, and other miscellaneous items that might benefit your readers. Keeping this page fresh is a great way to entice visitors to return to your site often.
- Testimonials from satisfied customers. If you have letters or emails with praise, be sure to get your customer's permission before placing them on your web site.
- A Privacy Policy if you are collecting information or addresses for an opt in email list.
- Copies of any logos, business cards and letterhead so the web site can be designed consistent with your other marketing tools.
- A brief history of the company and the key employees and owners. Include pictures of the owners or founders if you would like those on the web site.
- Any other published brochures and other typed material that you feel would be helpful and informative for people visiting your web site.
- Pictures of products you are selling. Before and after pictures are also helpful when working with home improvement type products and services.
- A return policy if you are selling a product.
- For attorneys and medical practitioners: a disclaimer advising the visitor that there is no client relationship and any advice given or construed in the web site is not meant to take the place of seeking actual counsel by a professional in the field.

Other ideas include *Links* page (links to outside web sites), *What's New* page, *Partners* page, *Affiliates* page, *Tips, Hints, or Useful Information* page, etc.

## **Marketing and Developing: Advantages of Having a Web Site**

This is a big topic with a multitude of answers; here are the main key point advantages of having a web site:

### **Development & distribution costs are extremely low when compared with traditional media.**

When you compare the cost of establishing a web site to what it costs to promote your business in print or on the air, you'll see that a web site is the cheapest form of marketing. A radio campaign featuring several 30-second spots per week for three months could run you \$5,000 - \$10,000. That gets you five minutes per week of exposure for three months in the local area only. Newspaper and magazine ads are similarly highly priced, and they only last for the life span of that particular publication. A web site has virtually limitless space.

You could put up a web site with dozens of photographs and several thousand words for under \$3,000 for the first year, and keep it up and running for a few hundred dollars per year after that. What would it cost to run a newspaper ad of this size for a year? Imagine how much it would cost to produce a catalog for 200 different products, and keep it in consumers' hands for an entire year. You can accomplish this with a web site very easily, with low development cost and almost no distribution cost. Web Sites are in full color - a palette of 16.7 million colors for your photographs alone.

### **A web site is accessible worldwide.**

There are no physical limitations to broadcast areas as in radio and no circulation region restrictions as in newspapers or magazines. You can keep your web site more current more affordably than any other media; you can update a web site immediately, and as often as you like. Imagine you sell products whose prices fluctuate. With a web site, you can change these prices every time they go up or down, so your marketing materials are always accurate.

### **Web Sites are economical and not limited by size.**

This means a small business can present as large or creative of an image on the Internet as a bigger company - with the right design team. A web site also allows easy and safe communication between the consumer and you so that anyone who visits your site can contact you at any time by sending an email. Unlike communications that originate from other forms of advertising, consumers who send emails don't have to deal with many problems of everyday business: pushy salesmen, remembering to call during business hours, having to battle crowds to get to your stores, spending time waiting on voice mail or getting the wrong information. It's convenient, easy, and safe for the consumer. Email is also convenient for you.

You can respond to all your customer inquiries at the same time, and do it when you have a free moment - not in the middle of rush hour when someone calls up to ask for product information or directions to your location. You can save money on tech support and answering questions. If your employees spend a lot of time answering the same questions and sending out the same material, you can reduce that labor cost significantly by providing the information on the web site. For instance, a client can avoid having to mail or fax information for over 1,000

phone call solicitations in a one-year period simply by providing the information on their site. That improves on labor costs and provides a real cost savings in reduced long distance phone bills (for faxes) and postage. Your web site can also take orders while you sleep as people can place orders on a web site at any time, day or night. But most importantly, no salesmen manning the store, no utilities, no insurance, no payroll...computers don't need a benefit package or overtime. For every second of every day, your web site is working for you! As to your choice for web site design, if a designer can't tell you why a web site is a unique marketing tool as we have here, how successful will their web site be? Are they helping you to develop a marketing mechanism or are they selling special effects? Is it an intelligent tool for driving business or an overpriced, turbo-charged business card? Make sure you choose a designer with marketing expertise, experience and skills.

## **Marketing and Developing: Making Your Web Site Effective**

Clients often ask how they can make their web site more effective. Here are some key points that you should focus on in order to be more successful on the Internet and with your web site.

### **1. Find A Role For Your Web Site**

The single most important tip is to decide on what role of your web site should play in your marketing program before you order it. Do you want to educate the market about your products? Provide a 24-hour information resource for current customers? Showcase your products? Generate requests for literature and leads? If you set objectives and stick to them, your web site will be a success.

### **2. Offer The Reader A Compelling Reason To Contact You**

Turning a web site visitor into a customer is the most-overlooked aspect of web-based marketing, even on the biggest commercial sites. You want those who visit your web site to buy. The easiest way to accomplish this is to engage them in a two way dialog, so you can market to them on your own terms. Get them to volunteer their name so that you can inform them of specials, product upgrades, events, and new products via e-mail or regular mail. How do you get them to volunteer their name? Offer them something! A free catalog, a free quote, a free analysis, a free reprint of an editorial article -- anything your buyers might find of value. Other methods might include weekly drawings for free gifts (T-shirts, free product, etc.), or other promotional giveaways.

### **3. Get Right To The Point**

People are not patient. Studies have proven that people will read long ads and marketing materials, but only if it's clear there's "something in it" for them. Be concise. Be quick. Be interesting. Don't beat around the bush with long introductions or unrelated information. Tell your customer what they want to know and they'll stick around for more!

### **4. Focus On Your Audience**

Remember, your web site should appeal to the interests of your audience, no one else matters! Focus on your target audience and put yourself in their shoes. If they're interested in your product because it saves them time, then focus on convenience, don't start your pitch with a laundry list of less-important features. Focus on the key benefits of your product and leave the details for later.

### **5. Market Your Web Site**

Would you open a sales office in a distant city and then not tell your clients in the area that it had opened? Of course not. Think of your web site as an automated sales or service office on the Internet and let your "universe" of potential buyers know that it's available to them. Put your web address on your stationery, business cards, ads, brochures, and other sales materials, use a rubber stamp if necessary. Be creative! For example, send out an "birth" announcement on a postcard. You should also remember to keep your domain name easy to remember. There shouldn't be any dashes or numbers if it isn't necessary. The general rule of thumb is the name

should either be the company name or something that will be so easy to remember that if you gave your business card to someone and they lost it, they should still be able to find the web site.

### **6. Make Your Web Site Useful**

Make sure the information your prospects or customers want is available. For example, web sites are ideal ways to disseminate the latest information about your product. You can include specifications, case studies, success stories, white papers, or testimonials. And don't forget to include important contact information like your toll-free ordering line, customer service number, or how to get technical support. Make people want to come back to your web site, make it "sticky". It should be updated continuously, with events and news. Your site should also give them the incentive of coming back (e-mailed newsletter, product specials, contests, etc.).

### **7. Make It Easy For Viewers To Respond**

You'd think this was obvious, but it's overlooked far too often. You absolutely must make it easy for a reader to express their interest in your web site. Plaster your 1-800 number across it, make sure there's a link to your e-mail system, and treat visitors with the care you show any other prospective buyer. I have seen sales-oriented web sites that never once listed a phone number or a "click to send e-mail" button.

## **Marketing and Developing: Marketing Your Web Site Offline**

You should not always rely on search engines for heavy traffic. It is much harder to get your web site highly ranked in search engines than it was years ago, because there are so many more web sites than there were then. Actually, many more people are visiting web sites for which they have seen the web address in writing. Why do you think so many television commercials these days always include the web address of the product they are promoting? The key thing to remember is: Anywhere you post your company name, post your web site address along with it.

### **Some other ideas to advertise your web site offline:**

- Letterhead AND envelopes
- Personal brochures about you and your company
- Your resume
- Newsletters sent to your clients (either email or in print)
- Signature tag of all email messages (no matter to whom they are sent... friends, family, colleagues, etc.)
- At the end of your voice mail/answering machine message (i.e., .... “and be sure to visit my web site at [www.yourbusiness.com](http://www.yourbusiness.com)”.
- Fax cover sheets (many people forget this one!)
- Flyer on free local bulletin boards (grocery stores, discount chain stores, shopping malls, dry cleaners, etc.) – print a flyer on bright yellow paper detailing your web address and your company. BE SURE to include your email address as well as your telephone number! Tack the flyer to bulletin boards all over your town. Keep a supply in your car for handy access.
- Magnetic car signs (many office supply companies will make these for you at a very reasonable rate)
- Neighborhood directories
- Bus stop benches
- Printed on mouse pads (give one to your clients at Christmas or on their birthday instead of sending flowers)
- T-shirts (white T-shirts can be imprinted with a one-color design for a nominal price). Think about how great it will make you feel to see YOUR web address “walking around town”.
- Business card (As simple as this sounds, it is often overlooked)
- Your business sign

### **Plan Your Web Site: Customer Profile**

So, are you ready to get started? We realize this is a rather lengthy document, so please complete as much information as you can without driving yourself absolutely batty. The more information you provide, the better we will be able to service you, but we usually provide this document to clients in addition to discussing details in person and via phone.

**Your Name (or our main contact in your organization):**

**Your Title:**

**Your Email Address:**

**Organization Address:**

**City, State, Zip:**

**Organization Phone:**

**Organization Fax:**

**A) Are you in charge of every aspect of the web site, including content gathering?**

Yes  No

If No, please describe the process (board, management team, copywriter, etc.)

**B) Have you planned a web site before?**

Yes  No

**Plan Your Web Site: Business / Organization Profile**

**A)** Do you have access to the internet at your office?

Yes  No

**B)** Please briefly describe your company or organization so we can learn more about it.

**C)** What is your mission statement?

**D)** What is the type of industry of your business?

**E)** How does your company currently market?

**F)** How is business generated?

**G)** How many employees does your business have?

**H)** How long has your company been in business?

**I)** Who are your customers or target web site visitors?

**J)** What is your current corporate identity?

**H)** Do you have any trademarks or service marks? If so, please list them here and indicate which are registered trademarks.

**Plan Your Web Site: Current Web Site Analysis**

A) Will this project be a redesign or a new web site?

New  Redesign

*If you selected redesign, please answer questions A1 – A7. If new, just skip these questions.*

**A1)** If you selected redesign, what is your current URL?

http://

**A2)** If your web site is currently up, who is your current web host?

**A3)** If you gave an answer for A2, how much are you currently paying per month for your hosting?

**A4)** What are your reasons for a redesign of your current site?

**A5)** What features of the current site would you like to keep?

**A6)** What features of the current site don't you like?

**A7)** What feedback have you had about the current site?

**B) Do you already have a domain name registered?**

Yes  No

**B1) If you selected that you do have a domain name registered, what is the domain?**

**B2) If you already have a domain registered, how much are you paying per year for the domain?**

**B3) Do you plan on registering additional domains to point to your web site?**

Yes  No

**Plan Your Web Site: Your Budget**

We ask you your budget because it helps us determine what technologies will be available that are within the scope of your budget. (The following two questions are optional)

**A)** How much do you have budgeted for your web site now?

**B)** How much do you have budgeted for your web site presence annually?

### **Plan Your Web Site: Purpose / Objectives / Goals**

Let's talk about your long-range goals. If you want your web site to make money or get leads, or whatever, let us know. Dream big. You may have to start out small and build up to what you really want, but you still need to keep in mind where you want to eventually get.

**A) What is the intended purpose of your web site?**

- Online store, selling things directly from your web site
- Online brochure for your company / services, advertising your company to the world
- Online community, allowing site visitors to connect with each other
- Educational, providing resources for reading or downloading
- Other (Please explain below)

**B) What is your main objective for your web site?**

**C) What are your immediate (short term) goals for the site?**

**D) What are your long term goals for the site?**

**E) How will you measure the success of the site? *Examples: Number of visitors to the site? Number of sales? Number of people who sign up for your newsletter? Number of people who contact you to work for them? Other?***

### **Plan Your Web Site: Questionnaire for Objectives and Purposes**

Rate the importance of each of the following reasons for having a web site. Be sure to rate every item.

#### **Rating System:**

**1** = No or Irrelevant    **2** = Nice but Not Necessary    **3** = Average    **4** = Important    **5** = Very Important

#### **Customer Service:**

- To improve overall customer service
- To provide support info online for customers
- To provide additional info online for customers
- To answer frequently asked questions

#### **Reduce Costs:**

- To reduce printing costs by putting info online
- To reduce printing costs by putting forms online
- To save on postage costs by using email
- To lower support costs

#### **Other Income Sources:**

- To sell advertising space on my web site
- To sell newsletter subscriptions
- To sell ad space to others in my newsletters
- To resell additional product lines

#### **Communications:**

- To put up a calendar of events
- To provide a forum for customers
- To improve internal communications
- To help form relationships with other companies

#### **Community Resources:**

- Provide a community service
- Build a resource site to attract visitors
- Provide a portal or a gateway to the Internet

**Ongoing Promotion:**

- Promote special offers to customers
- Promote items on sale to customers
- Send follow-up email to customers
- Send email newsletters to customers

**Overall Objectives:**

- To create a good impression of my company
- Establish a web presence and credibility
- To provide contact info and directions

**Advertising and Marketing:**

- To supplement my traditional advertising methods
- Get free advertising from link exchanges
- So my info is available online all of the time
- To test for potential new market niches
- Experiment and look for market demand
- To promote my business location

**Prospect or Lead Generation:**

- To encourage prospects to request info
- To promote to possible prospects
- To develop qualified prospects
- To develop an opt-in email list

**Product or Services Sales:**

- To sell products directly on the Internet
- To sell services directly on the Internet
- To increase my customer base
- Sell a product or service without a middleman

**Product or Service Information:**

- To provide an online catalog for customers
- To provide detailed product or service info
- To inform customers of product updates
- To list product and service price lists for employees

### **Plan Your Web Site: Competitors, or Organizations Doing It Well**

Seeing what your competitors have done is a great way to improve your image over theirs. Let us study what they've done, and together we can improve your image over theirs. Please name the companies that you are in competition with, if they have a webpage, please list it within, and tell us what you think of their webpage. If you would like to list more than 3 of your competitors, you can use a separate sheet of paper or photocopy this one.

**A) Competitor #1**

Name of Competitor:

Competitor's Web Site: http://

Review their web site, what do you like about it? What do you dislike about it? How can we make a better site?

**B) Competitor #2**

Name of Competitor:

Competitor's Web Site: http://

Review their web site, what do you like about it? What do you dislike about it? How can we make a better site?

**C) Competitor #3**

Name of Competitor:

Competitor's Web Site: http://

Review their web site, what do you like about it? What do you dislike about it? How can we make a better site?

What can you offer that your competitors don't? *For example, a legal firm might answer, "Ability to provide in depth answers to legal questions for \$20 in 24 hours via online charge form." Or a cookie company might answer, "Ability to get cookies delivered anywhere in a personalized ornamental box in 48 hours." Make a list of the important reasons for potential customers to choose your business.*

**Plan Your Web Site: Site Maintenance**

**A)** On average, how often will new content be added and/or updated to your web site?

**B)** Who will be maintaining your site after it goes live?

YDO     Employee     Other

*If YDO will not be maintaining your web site, please answer questions B2-B3.*

**B2)** If other, please explain:

**B3)** How web-savvy is/are the person(s) that will be maintaining your web site?

**C1)** Who will monitor and respond to e-mails? What email address will need to be used?

*Example: info@yourdomain.com*

**Plan Your Web Site: Web site Hosting**

Web hosting is how your web site is stored 24 hours 7 days a week so it is always accessible by internet users. YDO has unbeatable hosting prices. We can discuss with you our prices, and the difference in hosting packages, and help you decide which package is best for you. Additional fees may be required if YDO must upload content to another web host. Hosting with us includes free email at you@yourdomain.com, web stats, support, free setup and more. For current web site hosting prices, go to [www.yourdesignonline.com](http://www.yourdesignonline.com).

Yes, I'd like YDO to host my site

No, I already have a web host who will host my web site

### **Plan Your Web Site: Domain Registration**

The main reason for using a Domain Name (i.e. yahoo.com or disney.com), beside the appearance of having your own network system, is because they are easy for your visitors or customers to remember. If you visit a dentist's web site and his domain was www.dentist.com, odds are you will remember how to find it again more easily than if it was at http://www.verizonwebhosting.com/~drdentist. Another advantage of having a domain name is that you will most likely never lose it, and that it will also give you lifetime email (accessyou@yourdomain.com). You may check the availability of your domain name through www.yourdesignonline.com. If you do not have a domain, we can give you a list of currently available domain names so you may choose which one you like.

I have an existing domain name

I intend to buy a domain name from YDO

I intend to buy a domain from another company

If you would like to purchase a domain through YDO, what are your preferences? Again, you can check at [www.yourdesignonline.com](http://www.yourdesignonline.com) for domain name availability. If you don't have access to the internet at the moment, just think of some domains that you may be interested in.

1st Choice: \_\_\_\_\_ Available?  Yes  Not Sure

2nd Choice: \_\_\_\_\_ Available?  Yes  Not Sure

3rd Choice: \_\_\_\_\_ Available?  Yes  Not Sure

## **Plan Your Web Site: Elements**

Please check all that will apply to your site, if you're not sure about something, leave it blank and explain at the bottom of this page with your questions. Place an "x" next to the elements that you will be needing, and place a "?" next to the elements about which you are unsure.

### **Forms and Escalation**

- Contact Us form
- Surveys or questionnaires
- Newsletter/ Mailing List
- Contest or Giveaways
- Guest Book
- Customer Feedback
- Other Forms (please describe below)

### **Resources**

- PDF downloads
- Press Releases
- Blog, Articles, Reports, Writings, Manuals
- Email Newsletter Archives
- Automatic news or article feeds
- FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)
- Specialized Calculators
- Site Search
- Classified Ad Directory
- Live Online Support
- Other Resources (Please explain below)

### **Social Networking**

- Chat
- Membership Area
- User Profile Pages
- Discussion Board / Forum
- Other Social Networking (Please explain below)

**E-Commerce / Shopping / Conversion**

- Shopping Cart (e-commerce)
- Online Product Catalogues
- Special or Limited Time Offers
- Accept Credit Cards
- Secure Server
- Other E-Commerce (Please explain below)

**Media**

- Audio / Sound
- Streaming Video or Audio
- Art, Photo, or Graphics Gallery
- Flash Animations
- Games
- Banner ads (Sites sponsoring on your site)
- Other Media (Please explain below)

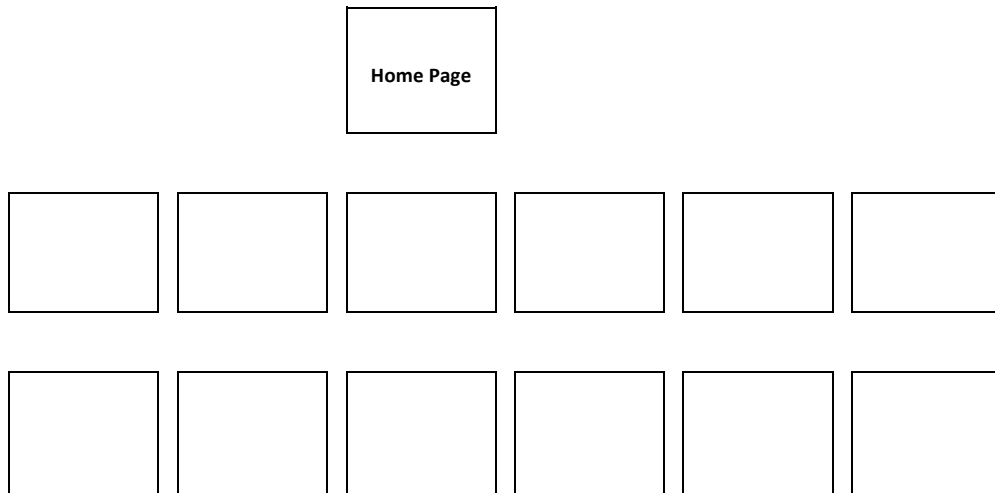
**Miscellaneous**

- Custom Function ("We want it to do this...)
- Other (Please explain below)

**Plan Your Web Site: Site Navigation**

Below is a flowchart diagram. Your main page to your web site is where “Home Page” is written on the top box. In the boxes below write the pages that your web site will contain. If this is a redesign of a web site, place the pages you currently have on your existing web site, then cross out the pages that you would like removed and add any additional pages. (If you have more pages than spaces available, write them below, or write them on a separate sheet of paper). If you’re artistic, you can always make your flowchart diagram on a separate piece of paper and attach it with this web site planner workbook.

If you need ideas on pages for your web site, we suggest that you review pages 10-12 and read the articles “Things to Think About When Planning Your Web Site”, “Planning the Navigation of Your Web Site” and most of all “Things You Can Include in Your Web Site” in this planner.



**B) Total number of pages decided upon \_\_\_\_**

*\*With our Content Management System, you can always add more pages later*

**Plan Your Web Site: Site Content**

**A)** From where will the content for your web site come? Will you be providing it? Will we need to provide it?

**B)** Will the content be completely new, repurposed from an existing site, or both? Explain:

**Plan Your Web Site: Color and Accents**

**A)** What are your color preferences? Should they blend in with the company/organization logo?  
*For the most part, we recommend a white background for best readability and contrast. We can also provide sample designs available for inspiration, if needed.*

**B)** If you'd like, feel free to give a URL to a web site, where you like the coloring and explain why.

**Plan Your Web Site: Marketing Your Web Site**

A) Is being in directories & search engines is important for your organization / web site?

Yes  No  Not Sure

B) Would you like us to undertake promotion of your site to promote and optimize for search engines?

Yes  No  Not Sure

C) Keywords

If you were your own customer, what words would you use to find you in a search engine?  
*For example, a training company might answer "teamwork training, management training, executive coaching, communications training, train the trainer, conflict resolution, managing change, training, strategic planning, facilitation skills, meetings, risk and empowerment"*

Pinpointing these accurately is VERY important to the success of your site, as they are used in your web pages as key words. People looking for what you have to offer will search for key words on the Internet. If you have good keywords that reflect what you offer, you improve your chances of being found by people who are using search engines. Keywords can also include your location such as city, state, country, etc. If you had a dentist office in Sebring, FL some of your keywords would be "Sebring Florida Dentist " Sebring FL Dentist", etc.

In priority order, list the 15 most important keywords from your answer above. If you would rather us find the best keywords for your web site, check here: .

- |     |     |      |
|-----|-----|------|
| 1.) | 5.) | 9.)  |
| 2.) | 6.) | 10.) |
| 3.) | 7.) | 11.) |
| 4.) | 8.) | 12.) |

D) Site Description. Please write a carefully constructed 25-word sentence containing the most important keywords describing your business / web site.

### **Plan Your Web Site: Your Target Audience**

**A) Who is your target audience? Teenagers? Women 18- 25? If there is more than one, list them:**

**B) What types of visitors do you wish to attract?**

*Examples: Men? Women? Locals? National? International?*

**C) If you were your own customer or target audience, why would you visit your web site? What would you be looking for?**

*This is a really important question. Think about your target audience - when they use the Internet to find information about your product or service, what do they want to know? What are they looking for? What do you want them to do?*

*For example, a realtor might answer, "My visitors will want to find local listings." A tax practitioner might answer, "My visitors will want to know when the next estimated tax payment comes due or what to do if the IRS sends them a notice that they are being audited." This list will be your guideline for the kind of content you will place on your web site, which will make or break your site. Look at this question from various angles, such as what makes my product or service attractive, why should they buy from me? What's unique or special about what I have to offer?*

**Plan Your Web Site: Your Identity**

**A) What Type of Image Would You Like to Project? (You may select more than one)**

- Content driven
- Conservative
- Corporate
- Artistic
- Feminine
- Friendly
- Children
- High technology
- Family
- Academic
- Fun
- International
- Rustic
- Nature
- Other (If other, describe below.)

**Plan Your Web Site: Your Web Site Design**

**A)** Specify as many web sites as you like that show color combinations you like.

http://

http://

http://

**B)** List as many web sites as you like with a "look and feel" that you want for your site. If a web site communicates the desired response you'd like your web site to provide to users, list it here.

http://

http://

http://

**C)** List as many web sites as you like that come closest in functionality to the one you want to develop. *Example: Video Gallery, Multi-User Blog, Subscription Form*

http://

http://

http://

**E)** List as many web sites as you like that you do not like, explain why.

http://

Reason:

http://

Reason:

http://

Reason:

### **Plan Your Web Site: Photos / Media / Sound**

You must own the copyright to, or have permission from, the copyright owner to use any photos, sound, or media you send us. If you have photos of your own that you would like to place on your web site, you may send them to us by mailing the photos so that we may scan and return them, or by sending the digitized images on a diskette, CD , or via email.

Stock photos can also be obtained from multiple web sites (Some free, some for which you must pay).

Some of these web sites include:

Getty Images (<http://www.gettyimages.com>)  
iStockPhoto (<http://www.istockphoto.com>)  
Inmagine (<http://www.inmagine.com>)  
Stock.xchang (<http://www.sxc.hu>)  
PictureQuest (<http://www.picturequest.com>)

**A)** The following is a list of possible items that you will need for your web site. Check the items on the list that apply to your needs:

- I need assistance in choosing graphics and artwork
- I need a new custom graphics and/or artwork design
- I currently have videos that need transferred onto my web site
- I would like sound played on my web site.
- I need a staff member at YDO to take photography of our business

**Plan Your Web Site: Feedback**

**A)** Is there anything else you feel we need to know to better serve you in your web development needs?

**B)** Do you think this planner helped you with planning out your web site? If not, what can we add to make it better?

**C)** Do you think this planner asks all of the necessary items for us to design your web site? If not, why?

**D)** Was there anything that confused you while using this planner? If so, what?

**E)** Did you learn anything by using this planner? Anything we could have done to expand your knowledge even more?

**F)** Additional Comments:

### **Plan Your Web Site: Next Steps**

Now that you're finished, send this planner back to us so that we can review it and give you an accurate web site proposal.

If you typed your answers into the document instead of printing it and writing your answers, then you can either email this planner to us as an attachment, or print it and mail it to us.

If you are emailing it to us, please do so as an attachment to [websites@yourdesignonline.com](mailto:websites@yourdesignonline.com) and put in the subject line "Web Site Planner Attached".

If you are printing this, or you have already printed it and wrote your answers, please send this planner to us either via fax, email or snail mail at:

#### **Your Design Online**

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**Note:** If printing, you can save ink and paper by just printing out and sending us pages 19 – 41.