

### **Tool to gain new customers**

A Website gives a business more exposure. It enables them to reach markets that traditionally could only be reached by larger companies who have large networks of resources spanning many states. Even for larger companies, a website is a tool to enter new markets, whether it be within the US or internationally.

### **Lower Staffing Costs**

Whoever answers the phones in your organization can tell you, their time is usually spent answering the same questions over and over again. By posting much of your business information online, you are able to free up your staff to process the more important transactions of your business. For some this is the difference between having one secretary or two. For others, it makes their current staff a lot more productive. For businesses that provide customer service, having FAQ sections and other online forms of help can greatly reduce customer service costs. Instead of having to hire a human being to answer each and every question that customers ask, online help provides fast and economical help to customers and is available 24/7.

### **Your competitors have websites**

Chances are that all or at least a few of your competitors have websites. By not having a website, you are placing yourself at a disadvantage.

### **Display your Products or Samples of your work online**

No longer do you have to wait for snail mail to deliver your samples or hope that the fax comes out nicely. By displaying your work online, you instantaneously give prospective clients the ability to fall in love with your work and purchase your products and/or services. At a minimum, a well designed website will peak viewer's interest and lead them to contact you.

### **Sell Your Products**

Selling in a traditional brick and mortar store has high overhead. By contrast, selling in cyberspace is much cheaper and can either be a full time business or a good way to supplement your offline business. Providing secure online ordering is very affordable for even the smallest businesses.

### **Promote Your Services**

The web provides service professionals with a unique opportunity. A well

designed website can convince potential clients to do business with you or at least give you a call in order to request more information. Many service professionals include testimonials on their websites, information regarding company policies, pricing, list of services offered, staff information, office hours, and contact information. Oftentimes this can add up to enough information for a decision maker to decide whether or not they would like to do business with you.

### **Enable Customers to Purchase Goods or Services 24/7 365**

Your office is probably open Monday thru Friday from 9am to 5pm give or take. These are the only hours when you can process orders and earn revenues. Websites are open 24/7 and by extension can therefore generate revenues 24/7. You can now serve customers regardless of what time zones they are in. Whether it be making sales or providing customer service, your company is now effectively open 24/7.

### **Educate the Public About your Organization and Keep Them Updated**

Before a company will do business with you, they often want to know a little about you and your company. A website is a great place to supply this information. Who are the owners of your company? Who are the employees of your company? Who are your clients? What do you specialize in? Do you serve any specific industry? Where is your company located? Supplying this information enables potential clients to do research without having to call you for every little tidbit of information that they need to know.

Websites also enable companies to keep their clients and prospects abreast of the latest developments. Many clients devote a section of their websites to Company News. This is where they publicize new product launches, new clients, new partnership and any other newsworthy items. Other companies consistently update their portfolios or photo galleries to insure that the public always has the latest information.

### **Present a Professional Image**

A professional website, that is both well designed and has the proper copy, enables small businesses to create a company image that is larger than life. Larger companies can also benefit because a well done website will reinforce their brand name and increase awareness of their company.

### **Gather Information and Generate Valuable Leads**

You can gather information about your customers and potential customers by using forms and surveys. Rather than going out and getting leads, let them come to you. This is a great tool for prospecting targeted customers looking to use your products and services. Here are some tools that clients use:

- Contact forms

- Request for more information
- Before a prospect can download a trial, they must enter in certain information. This information is then used as leads for the sales teams.

### **A Tool for Instant Gratification**

Your prospective clients are very busy and have large amounts of information constantly coming their way. When your prospects are looking for your products or services, they want information about your company without having to wait for it. In order to provide adequate information, many companies offer the following:

- Online demos or video tours
- Free trials
- Product pictures
- Free samples

### **Great Recruiting Tool**

Whether you are looking for talent or posting job opportunities with your company, your website is a great recruiting tool for building your business.

### **Highly Targeted Marketing**

When you take out an ad in a newspaper or magazine, you will never know how many people read it. Online advertising has the advantage that you can pay per click or per view – you only pay for the number of people who actually see your ad. Additionally, you can target your ads based on age groups, gender, geographic location, homeownership status, and a large assortment of other demographics.

### **To make basic business information available**

What are your hours of operation? What is your address? How can people get to your office or store? How can people contact you? What method of payments do you accept? What are today's specials? A website is a great place to provide all of this routine information.

### **To allow feedback from customers**

Websites create a very efficient way to hear what your customers have to say about topics ranging from your products and services to how you can improve your customer support. Examples include:

- Post a customer service survey
- Ask for feedback on a new product or service
- Ask customers if there is any new product or service that they would like you to offer

### **To reach a specialized market**

Do you have a business that targets a specialized niche market? Do you sell antique cars, Harley Davidson accessories, art reproductions, or any other product/service that has a niche market? The internet is the perfect place to

find customers who are interested in your specific product or service. Throughout the internet there are interest groups based on hundreds of extremely specialized interests and hobbies. Your website can enable you to gain access to these interest groups who can then become your clients.

### **Improved Customer Service**

A website can be an extremely powerful and economical customer service tool. Without a website, your customer service hours are limited to your office hours. Once you have a website, you can provide many customer service functions 24/7 via the customer support section of your website. Many companies offer answers to frequently asked questions. A well architected FAQ section can answer most questions that customers will ask. Other companies use more sophisticated systems that allow customers to ask specific questions and search for answers. These tools provide a great enhancement to any customer support system.

### **Economical Customer Service Solution**

A customer service section of your website can greatly reduce the cost of providing customer service. Instead of hiring people to answer customer inquiries most of the process can be automated via your website.