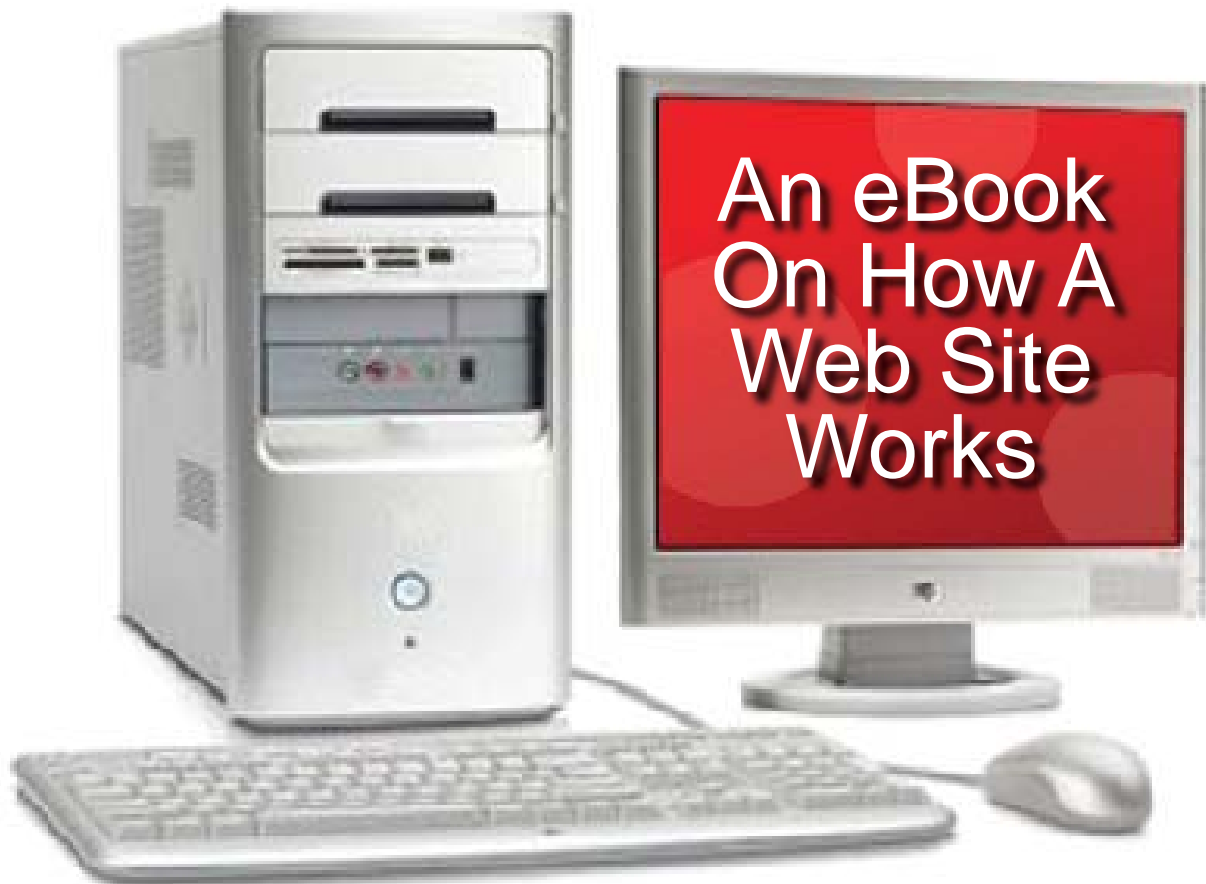


Inside The Web Site World

eBOOK



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Introduction

It is a common fact today, that if your corporation does not have a web site, then you are behind the times. A web site is your “brochure” to the world for all to see, read and interact with. It has now become the face of your brand and image. The business of interacting online with customers is vital in today’s global economy. There is so much to be said on the benefits of a web site, but suffice to say, that if you do not have a web site... then you need to get one now!

Well, you may be saying to yourself, “Okay, so how and where do I begin this web site adventure?” The answers are found below as we outline the things needed in understanding how it all works. The subjects covered in this ebook are; Web Technology Overview, Assessing Your Needs, You Need A Domain Name, You Need A Web Host Provider, Designing Your Web Site, Web Site Standards, It’s About Content, Search Engine Optimization, Uploading Your Site, Marketing Your Web Site and the Conclusion.

It is easy to understand how clicking a link brings you to a web site, however have you ever stopped to consider how the entire process works?

It all begins with the backbone of the internet, or what is commonly referred to as the WWW (World Wide Web). The “www” is basically a network of computers that link together. Within this network are server hubs that control web traffic.

Web sites are stored on what is called “web host servers” or web providers. Companies or individuals can provide their own hosting servers. Each hosting provider or server can maintain IP addresses.

A company called ICANN maintains a database of DNS (Domain Name Servers) addresses that point to individual web servers all over the world. Anybody can have a domain name (.com etc..) that can point to any web server or email server.

When you type or click on a link such as “www.technipixel.com,” it goes to this database, looks up the DNS pointer and then redirects your request to the server where the web pages are stored. Thus... you see a web site.

Web Site Technology

Assessing Your Needs

One of the biggest challenges of wanting to have a web site is deciding what you really need. Do you want to run the site yourself, or have someone else run it for you? If you run it yourself, where do you begin?

The first hurdle to face is deciding what will your site be used for. Will it be used as a personal site, business site? Do you need a database? Are you serving up audio-video? And where do you store your web pages? All these questions can be broken down below.

Personal or Business Type Sites:

Personal sites are sites just for your own interests such as; family, friends, personal info or hobbies. Business sites are anything from selling, services, non-profit, company information and communications.

Special Features On My Site:

If you are needing special features such as; databases, audio, video, blogs, forums, scripting programs or Flash, then you will need more knowledge in running a web site. You may even need professional services to accomplish your goal. Basic web sites that only require text and graphics can be done by most individuals fairly easily.

You Must Have A Domain Name:

If you are going to run a site, you must have a domain name (.com, .net etc..) You can get domain names from places like goDaddy.com for around \$10 a year.

Tools Needed In Building Web Sites:

If you are just wanting to run a basic web site, you will need just a few tools; An Html Editor such as a WYSIWYG (What you see is what you get), an FTP program (used to upload pages to server) and a graphic program to create graphics. If you need audio-video and scripting, you will need many more tools not covered in this report.

Web Hosting Providers:

Depending on your needs, finding a place to store your pages can be tedious. There are several things to consider when choosing a provider. 1) How much disk space is needed, 2) How much bandwidth is provided per month, 3) What technology is offered for your site and 4) Do they offer tech support that is accessible.

Web Site Design:

When it comes to your site, presentation is important. You can learn to do it yourself or if you need more than a basic site that requires bells and whistles, you may need to hire a professional web site developer to get you up and running.

Place Your Ad
In This ebook
For A One
Time Fee

You Need A Domain Name

Your domain name is your brand (image) name that everyone will remember you by. Picking a domain name of course should go by the actual name of your business or service. If you want to run a perfume site, you do not want to have a domain name like "www.maryshome.com." Why? Because the domain doesn't really describe what you are selling. You could name it something like this; "www.marysperfumes.com."

Which Domain Extension? You have several choices for the extension of your domain such as; .com (commercial), .net (network), .org (non-profit), .info (anything), .us (United States), .ws (Web site) and several others.

Tips In Choosing Domain Name: Keep it as short as possible, Keep it easy to remember, Make sure it matches you site's purpose, Try not to use "-" characters as much as possible, Try not to abbreviate if possible

Finding a place to store your site may be tedious at first because you will have to do some research which may take some time. Below are some things you need to consider.

Free vs Paid Hosting Providers:

Most of the time, anyone just starting out with web sites usually start with "free services." As most of them can testify to; the "free services" come with some unwanted issues. Usually you have to display ads on your site, you get limited options and your site can be slow. Take my advice... you should find a hosting provider that you pay for.

Not all web hosting providers are the same. Some offer many different features. Some have different fees which range from \$3 to \$100 a month. You can run a fairly good size site for under \$7 a month (\$90 a year). And most importantly, find a web host that offers free telephone support.

You Need A Web Host Provider

Server Technology Needed:

There are two server based technologies out there that you can store your site on; a Windows or Unix (or Linux) server. You should always use a Unix server unless you are using ASP.NET or MsSql technology. Unix servers are more secure and there are a lot more options available.

The best place to look for hosting providers is on Google. Just type in the words “web host providers” or “web hosts.” You will get a lot of results. You want to find hosting providers that offer these options (in this order of priority).

Tech Support (Phone and online chat that is easily accessible)

Bandwidth of 1 to 5 GB per month

Diskspace no less then 500 MB

Email accounts (minimum of 10)

FTP access

Control Panel (used to modify your site’s important features)

PHP, PERL and CGI script compatibility (used to run many scripting programs)

MySQL databases (minimum of 5 - need databases for scripting programs)

Rich Media (flash, audio and video)

Web Stats (AWStats or Webalizer)

After Signing Up:

After signing up for a hosting provider, you then have to go back to where you bought your domain name and change the DNS information to what your new hosting provider provides you in their email. Then you will need to set up your emails on your new web host Once that is done, build your web site and upload it to your new server. You are up and running!

Designing Your Web Site

Now the fun begins, you are ready to design your site! However, before you get started, there are a few things you need to know about web design. You will need to have a basic understanding of HTML code, page layout and design and some good tools to help you design.

Two Design Options:

One option is to design your site manually using various tools listed below. You have more control of your site if you build it from scratch. This is the way to go. Or, You can use an online html editor if your web host

provides this option. If your html knowledge is next to nothing, you may want to start off with this. However, you will have less options and may not get as good of a site as you expect.

Tools Needed:

- WYSIWYG Html editor such as Dreamweaver or a code-based (only) html editor.
- FTP Program (File transfer protocol) is used to upload your content to your web host provider.
- Graphic Program to create graphics for your site. If you are not artistically inclined, then you can find free images to use online.
- Image Viewer - You will need an image viewer such as Ifran View (it’s free) to resize and convert images for your site.
- Other - if you need more options you can use tools such as; Flash, 3D Graphics, Audio-Video encoders.

Other Options:

If you find that designing your site to be way above your head, then hiring somebody else may be the way to go. Web designers can get anywhere from \$10 to \$60 an hour depending on what you need done. And, depending on how large your site will be, a basic 5 page site, with html and graphics would roughly take about 3-7 hours.

The web industry doesn't have a "real qualified" web standard that dictates how a web site should be made. However, there is an organization called W3C (www.w3.org) that is trying to maintain a "web standard." In designing your site, there are some things that you need to do to make sure you are implementing technology that will make your users experience a good one.

There is another site to help you code properly in Html that meets web standards that is called W3 School (www.w3schools.com). This site has many html code tags and examples for html, css, php and javascript.

Web Page Technologies:

There are a few technologies that can be used in making your site, such as; html, flash, asp.net, java and javascript (aka Ajax). The web standard is Html.

Web Standards You Should Consider:

- Screen Resolution - The standard is now 1024 x 768. Sites should be made in either "stretch to fit" (or called fluid) or with the width of 960 (or 980) pixels.
- Images - The standard is jpg, gif and png. File size of each image should be 30kb and smaller. Animated gifs are also acceptable, but do not use too many frames.
- Flash - Using flash is debatable as a web standard. However, if used properly, it can be a big asset to your site.
- Page Colors - The graphic standard for color on a site is that you should use three colors for the main colors of your interface.
- Text Formatting - The standard to be used in text formatting is to use html tags in conjunction with CSS. CSS (Cascading Style Sheet) - Is the web standard of formatting your entire web site. CSS allows you to set formatting standards then reference them in your html code using "div" tags. This will make your site consistent looking.
- SEO (Search Engine Optimization) - Is the standard used to setting up your site content so that it can be read by search engine bots. You make your site compliant by setting keywords into your content.
- Web Servers - The standard for web server technology is to use Unix servers to host your page.
- Frames - Framesets are not accepted as a standard. However, they can be used if used properly. Search engines and bookmarking features have a hard time with framesets.
- Menu Navigation - There doesn't seem to be a standard, however we at TechniPixel use either top or right side. We often use the right side so we can have more content space to make our site more printer friendly.
- Rich Media - The standard now is to use Flash video and audio. However, it is not standard to have them play as soon as a page loads. Users like the choice of whether they play it or not.

It's About Content

You have finally built a beautiful web site that has fancy graphics and animation using flash. But, you do not seem to be getting any traffic to your site; what happened you may ask? The answer is very simple... no content! It is not enough to develop a pretty site. You must provide three things to get people to your site; 1) Plenty of content, 2) A site that can be found on search engines, and 3) You must advertise your site.

Content, Content and Content: For a web site to be successful you must provide plenty of content that users will want to look at. Adding graphics to a site is visually appealing as long as you do not overload the page with them.

Keep your content fresh and new. Depending on your site, you should add new content at the minimum of once a week. This will keep the user interested in your site. Using Blogs and Forums on your site will help keep users coming to your site. This allows them to also interact with you.

Web Site Standards

Search Engine Optimization

Your greatest joy in running a web site is of course having people come and visit your site. Your site is no good if no one can find you. Search Engine Optimization (called SEO) is the method used to optimize your site so that search engine bots can index your site.

Each search engine such as Google, Yahoo, Msn etc., use a technology to crawl web sites on the internet that is referred to as a “search bot.” The search bots visit each site, say once a week and check each link and page that it finds using it’s own rules of inclusion.

It is important to study each search engine’s web site requirements so that you can be included in their index of sites. There are things that can cause your site to be rejected if your site doesn’t match their requirements. Not to worry though... most sites make their listings. There are a few things to keep in mind when designing your site so that search engines include you in their index of pages.

- Use The <Title> Tag - Be sure that the title of your site is set so that it describes your site name.
- Use the <Description> Tag - Be sure to enter in a good description using your best keys words for that page.
- Use the <Keyword> Tag - This is where you enter all kinds of keywords that is relevant to your site. Your keywords are text that people will try to find you with in the search engines.
- Your Content - This is where the strength of your search engine lies. Use plenty of keywords on each page. Do not put just put “Click Here”; rather put something like, “Click Here For Perfume That Smells Lavishly Tempting.”
- Links - Another key factor is link to and from your site. The more links of your site that is on other peoples site, the higher you will rank in the search engines.

What About Flash Sites?

Flash is a great tool for animation and interactive content. We at TechniPixel use Flash often. However, Flash is not a good with search engines as well as text based web sites. That is why it is better to have an html site that inserts Flash rather than having an all flash site. Flash can be seen be search engines, but you have to do a few more tricks (not discussed here).

Uploading Your Site

You have your site done, now what? Well, first you need to proof read all your content and click on every link to make sure that it goes where it is suppose to go.

After that, now you can think about “uploading” it to your web host. To do this you need an FTP program such as FileZilla (it’s free). Once you get the program, you will need to know your domain name, account name and password. You will enter this information in the FTP Program.

Once that is done, then you connect to your web host and copy your files from your hard drive to the web host server location inside of the FTP program. Most all pages reside in the “public_html” location of a Unix server.

You will see the progress of the files copying over to the web host in the queue area. Once they are done the queue area will be clear.

Going forward, any time you need to make changes to your site you will only need to re-upload the changed files or additional files. There is not much to it. It kind of works like Windows Explore on your PC.

Just like a brick and mortar business, you have to advertise your site if you want the best results. Although you can get traffic to your site with just search engines, getting traffic to your site by direct marketing will pay off even better.

Marketing Your Web Site

There are lots of ways to market a site. However, you will have to decide which works best for you. Marketing a site of course needs to be targeted to specific audiences. Keying on these markets will be the key to successful campaigns. Here are some ideas to help promote your site;

- Banner Advertising - There are free and paid banner organizations online. These methods are the web standard of advertising.
- Standard Advertising - Of course using radio, magazines, television and newspapers are always in order.
- Blogs and Forums - Using blogs and forums is a great place to get your name out there. Some will not let you advertise directly, but forums allow you to have a signature that can contain a link to your site.
- Link Exchanges - On the same line as banner advertising, however you can exchange links with other web sites.
- Direct Advertising - You can contact sites directly to advertise on their site.
- Social Sites - Some use YouTube and Facebook to advertise their sites.

Conclusion

We have not even begun to scratch the surface in all that it takes for a web site to run. We have not covered script programs, databases, live streaming media and various other technologies.

Many web sites that you see online use databases to help maintain large amounts of content. Some are used for membership log-ins and some use their web site for business purposes. Web sites come in many designs and uses. Only you can really envision what yours will be.

Though running a web site may seem like a daunting task (which it can be at times), it also can generate income if it is automated enough. You can reach people across the globe that would never even visit your local storefront.

So, you have to ask yourself one important question. "Can I run the site myself or do I need someone to help me?" If you desire to run it yourself, there is plenty of information online to teach you. However, there will be a lot of road blocks along the way that you must overcome. But, once you are past them things will began to pay off.

If designing a site on your own seems to much to handle, then take a class or two, find a friend or hire somebody who knows what to do. You will be glad you did! So, enjoy your web site journey!