

# Why should I put my company on the Web?

## 1. Establishing a Presence

Approximately 148 million people worldwide have access to the World Wide Web. No matter what your business, you can't ignore 148 million people. To be a part of that community and show that you are interested in serving them, you need to be on the Web for them. You know your competitors will.

## 2. Selling Products

Many people think that this is the only thing to do with the Web, but we think you should consider selling things on the Internet and the World Wide Web after you have done a lot of the other things on this list. Why? Well, the answer is complex but the best way to put it is: "Before people decide to become customers, they want to know about you, what you do and what you can do for them." This you can do easily and inexpensively on the Web. Then you might be able to turn them into customers.

## 3. Networking

Much of what passes for business is simply nothing more than making connections with other people. Every smart business person knows "it's not what you know, it's who you know." Passing out your business card is a part of every good meeting. Every business person can tell more than one story of how a chance meeting turned into the big deal. Well, what if you could pass out your business card to thousands of potential clients and partners, saying "This is what I do. If you are ever in need of my services, this is how you can reach me." You can, 24 hours a day, inexpensively and simply, on the Web.

## 4. Making Your Business Information Available

What is basic business information? Think of a Yellow Pages ad. What are your hours? What do you do? How can someone contact you? What are your terms and what methods of payment do you take? Where are you located? Now think of a Yellow Pages ad where you have instant communication. What is today's special? Today's interest rate? Next week's parking lot sale information? If you could keep your customer informed of every reason why they should do business with you, don't you think you could do more business? You can on the Web.

## 5. Serving Your Customers

Making business information available is one of the most important ways to serve your customers. But if you look at serving the customer, you'll find even more ways to use Web technology. How about making forms available to pre-qualify for loans, or have your staff do a search for that classic jazz record your customer needs, without tying up your staff on the phone? Allow your customer to punch in sizes and check it against a database that tells him what color of jacket is available in your store? All this can be done, simply and quickly, on the Web.

## 6. Increasing Public Interest

You won't get a magazine like Newsweek to write up your local store opening, but you might get them to write up your Web Page address if it is something new and interesting. Even if Newsweek would write about your local store opening, you wouldn't benefit from someone in a distant city reading about it, unless of course, they were coming to your town sometime soon. With Web page information, anybody anywhere who can access the Web and hears about you is a potential visitor to your Web site and a potential customer for your information there.

## 7. Reaching a Highly Desirable Demographic Market

The demographic of the Web user is probably the highest mass-market demographic available. They are usually college-educated or being college educated, making a high salary or soon to make a high salary. It's no wonder that "Wired" magazine, the magazine of choice to the Internet community, has no problem getting Lexus and other high-end marketer's advertising. Even with the addition of the commercial on-line community, the demographic will remain high for many years to come.

## 8. Answering Frequently Asked Questions

Whoever answers the phones in your company can tell you, their time is usually spent answering the same questions over and over again. These are the questions customers and potential customers want to have the answered before

they deal with you. Post them on a Web page and you will have removed another barrier to doing business with you and freed up some time for that harried phone operator.

## 9. Recruiting & Recognizing Top Employees

The Web has become a very popular mode of recruiting top employees from all over the country. By posting job openings on the Web you can draw from a huge group of qualified people. And why not have a page that recognizes and highlights the achievements of your top employees?

## 10. Staying in Contact with Salespeople

Your employees on the road may need up-to-the-minute information that will help them make the sale or pull together the deal. If you know what that information is, you can keep it posted in complete privacy on the Web. 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.

## 11. Opening Global Markets

You may not be able to make sense of the mail, phone and regulation systems in all your potential international markets, but with a Web page, you can open up a dialogue with international markets as easily as with the company across the street. As a matter-of-fact, before you go onto the Web, you should decide how you want to handle the international business that will come your way, because your postings are certain to bring international opportunities your way, whether or not it is part of your plan. Another added benefit; if your company has offices overseas, they can access the home offices information for the price of a local phone call.

## 12. Creating a 24 Hour Service

If you've ever remembered too late or too early to call the opposite coast, you know the hassle. We're not all on the same schedule. While business is worldwide, your office hours aren't. Trying to reach Asia or Europe is even more frustrating. But Web pages serve the client, customer and partner 24 hours a day, seven days a week. No overtime either. It can customize information to match needs and collect important information that will put you ahead of the competition, even before they get into the office.

## 13. Making Changing Information Available

Sometimes, information changes before it gets off the press, leaving you with a pile of expensive, worthless brochures. Electronic publishing changes with your needs. No paper, no ink, no printer's bill. You can even attach your Web page to a database which customizes the page's output to a database you can change as many times in a day as you need. No printed piece can match that flexibility.

## 14. Allowing Feedback from your Customers

You pass out the brochure, the catalog, the booklet. But it doesn't work. No sales, no calls, no leads. What went wrong? Wrong color, wrong price, wrong market? Keep testing, the marketing books say, and you'll eventually find out what went wrong. That's great for the big boys with deep pockets, but who is paying the bills? You are and you don't have the time or the money to wait for the answer. With a Web page, you can ask for feedback and get it instantaneously with no extra cost. An instant e-mail response can be built into Web pages and can get the answer while it's fresh in your customers mind, without the cost and lack of response of business reply mail.

## 15. Reaching the Education & Youth Market

If your market is education, consider that most universities already offer Internet access to their students and most K-12's will be on the Internet within the next few years. Books, athletic shoes, study courses, youth fashion and anything else that would want to reach these overlapping markets needs to be on the Web. Even with the coming of the commercial on-line services and their somewhat older populations there will be nothing but growth in the percentage of the under 25 market that will be on-line.

## 16. Reaching the Specialized Market

Sell fish tanks, art reproductions, flying lessons? You may think that the Internet is not a good place to be. Well, think again. The Internet isn't just computer science students anymore. With the soon-to-be 7 million and growing users of the Web, even the most narrowly defined interest group will be represented in large numbers. Since the Web

has several very good search programs, your interest group will be able to find you, or your competitors.

## 17. Serving your Local Market

We've talked about the power to serve the world with a Web page. How about your neighborhood? No matter where you are located, there are probably enough local customers with Web access to make it worth your while to consider Web marketing. We know of a restaurant that even takes lunch orders through the Internet! But no matter where you are, if the big client has Web access, you should be there too.