Eklipse Design

personalized web design for individuals & small business

Web Site Planning Guide

Nowadays it's simply not enough to just get your name out on the internet or put up an online version of your brochure. Your web site speaks differently to your customers than printed information does. It's much more interactive and is always there to provide up-to-date information about you, your business or products. To help you get focused on how you would like your new web site to work for you, we've developed a simple guide to help you start the crucial planning process. **Of course, we're here to help you with every step!**

Whether you need to showcase yourself, your work, your products/services or set up an online shop, our planning guide will help you get started. Things you should be clear about and address are:

1. **What is the Objective of your Site?:** Is it to generate more income? Develop name recognition? Enhance company image? Sell products or services? Showcase your work? Online marketing? Building a customer database?

2. **Know your Audience:** You need to know who your average customer or visitor is when you plan your web site. Think expansively. Design your web site from the perspective of your target audience; not necessarily your organization. Imagine scenarios in which different types of visitors come to your site and try to think about how you would address each of their needs.

3. **Pinpoint a Unique Concept:** What sets you apart from others in your field? What is your competitive edge? What can you do or offer that others are missing in their online presence? Think about it and plan your site with these things in mind.

4. **Research Similar Sites:** Know what's out there. Look at similar organizations, artistic or businesses sites. Review your competitors' sites that deal with similar services or products. Make lists of content, features, and design elements you like and don't like.

5. **Consider Site Features:** This could include special forms, navigation layout, special graphic elements or functionality, such as photo galleries.

6. **Determine a Budget for your Site:** A web site should be integrated into your existing and long-term business goals and <u>not</u> considered a one-time marketing expense. Budget for the initial cost of site design and development, but also keep in mind that you'll want to periodically update your site to keep it current, just like you make changes and updates to your business.

7. **Consider your Marketing Strategy:** Will you utilize Google's AdWords pay-per-click advertising to direct traffic to your site? Other search engine advertising? Online business directory listings? Will you be using print advertising to advertise your site? Sending targeted emails (eblasts), ezines or newsletters? Will you have downloadable brochures/pamphlets?

8. **Decide on and Register a Domain Name:** You'll need to find a Domain Name that is available and pay the annual fee. We suggest using a service such as GoDaddy.com to search for and register your domain and set up hosting services. Questions to keep in mind are: Is it easy to spell? Does it fit with your company product, service or name? If it's a long name, will it show up well when used in printed advertising? We can take care of registering your domain for you if you are not the technical type. If you already have a domain, we can take care of the transfer for you if necessary, as well as set up and manage your hosting account.

9. **Assemble Site Content:** Inventory the content you already have in printed brochures, flyers or newsletters. Collect graphics or photos you have for logos, signs, posters, business cards, products, staff or personnel. Get your product database or other materials together that you want on your web site and we'll help arrange it for you. We can also design graphics, compose and/or edit the content, and create other materials for you.

10. **Set a Target Date:** Set up a schedule of when you plan to review, write or provide site content and contact who it is you have to meet with to make decisions to move forward with a target date of when you want the site to be up and running.

If you have any questions, feel free to call or email us at any time. We are always available to help you with your project...every step of the way.

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