



Programming, Electronic Engineering  
and Design Consulting, System Support

# Look Before You Web

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## So... you are going to get a website, The “Shoulds” and the “Shouldn’ts” (Web Marketing Outline for Businesses)

What’s so hard about making a website anyway ? A little Java, some fancy borders, lots of pretty graphics, you’re done ! Right ? ..... **Wrong !**

As fast as businesses realized the reach of the Internet, the novelty was gone. Having a web presence today has become almost as commonplace as having a telephone and fax. With very few exceptions, any business dealing with the open market, needs to be visible on the web. The Internet is the equivalent of having a giant magazine that covers almost every interest imaginable. This is a huge magazine, that is published hourly, and has over 1 billion pages! Unlike any other medium, it makes very little, or no distinction between the big boys and the startups!”

The time for fancy Web pages with pretty pictures came and went like a flash! Remember when color print advertising made you the big boy on the block? Well fancy graphics are everywhere and it does not tell anyone anything about who your are on the Internet. Companies big and small are finding out that having a website is not a sure fire way to make a fortune. Today, almost every single web business is finding that making a web business successful requires the same old marketing tools as any other business. A product on the shelf and a website does not mean “they will come!”. Further, it takes more to build a good website than hiring a good programmer. Many companies are finding out the hard way it is more important to design their website based on **good marketing** and worry about technical “stuff” later.

So, “What’s so hard about making a website anyway?” A website is no different than any other marketing tool. Getting the point across has always been paramount. The Internet is no different! Many web designers are marketing themselves as being able to build in all the “bells and whistles” you could dream of. I guess if you are selling Internet bells and whistles, this is great. But for the rest of us, this can be a disaster. It is the same as asking a carpenter to build you a house. All carpenters can nail boards together. But unless you start with a clear marketing goal, and a good plan to fill a specific need, you mainly get a pile of boards nailed together.

### 1. Internet Background – Rapid Expansion - High Points In History.

Time Line Info courtesy <http://info.isoc.org/guest/zakon/Internet/History/HIT.html>

**1957** US forms the Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA)

**1961** Leonard Kleinrock First paper on packet-switching (PS) theory

**1967** First design paper on ARPANET published by Larry Roberts: “Multiple Computer Networks and Intercomputer Communication

**1969** ARPANET commissioned by DoD for research into networking

Node 1: UCLA (30 August, hooked up 2 September)

Network Information Center (NIC)

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**1972** Ray Tomlinson (BBN) modifies e-mail program for ARPANET where it becomes a quick hit. The @ sign was chosen from the punctuation keys on Tomlinson's Model 33 Teletype for its "at" meaning (March)

Larry Roberts writes first e-mail management program (RD) to list, selectively read, file, forward, and respond to messages (July)

First computer-to-computer chat takes place at UCLA, and is repeated during ICCG, as psychotic PARRY (at Stanford) discusses its problems with the Doctor (at BBN).

**1973** First international connections to the ARPANET: University College of London (England) via (Norway)

**1974** Vint Cerf and Bob Kahn publish "A Protocol for Packet Network Interconnection" which specified in detail the design of a Transmission Control Program (TCP). [IEEE Trans Comm] (:amk:)

BBN opens Telenet, the first public packet data service (a commercial version of ARPANET)

**1978** TCP split into TCP and IP (March)

**1980** ARPANET grinds to a complete halt on 27 October because of an accidentally-propagated status-message virus

**1983** Name server developed at Univ of Wisconsin, no longer requiring users to know the exact path to other systems

**1986** NSFNET created (backbone speed of 56Kbps)

NSF establishes 5 super-computing centers to provide high-computing power for all. This allows an explosion of connections, especially from universities.

**1987** Number of hosts breaks 10,000

**1988** 2 November - Internet worm burrows through the Net, affecting ~6,000 of the 60,000 hosts on the Internet (:ph1:)

**1989** Number of hosts breaks 100,000

**1990** ARPANET ceases to exist

**1991** Gopher released by Paul Lindner and Mark P. McCahill from the Univ of Minnesota

World-Wide Web (WWW) released by CERN; Tim Berners-Lee developer (:pb1:)

**1992** Number of hosts breaks 1,000,000

**1993** InterNIC created by NSF to provide specific Internet services

directory and database services (AT&T)

registration services (Network Solutions Inc.)

information services (General Atomics/CERFnet)

Worms of a new kind find their way around the Net - WWW Worms (W4), joined by Spiders, Wanderers, Crawlers, and Snakes .

Businesses and media begin taking notice of the Internet



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Mosaic takes the Internet by storm; WWW proliferates at a 341,634% annual growth rate of service traffic. Gopher's growth is 997%.

**1994** ARPANET/Internet celebrates 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary

Commercial companies start advertising and sales on internet

NSFNET traffic passes 10 trillion bytes/month

Top 10 Domains by Host #: com, edu, uk, gov, de, ca, mil, au, org, net

**1995** Sun launches JAVA on May 23

RealAudio, an audio streaming technology, lets the Net hear in near real-time

Radio HK, the first commercial 24 hr., Internet-only radio station starts broadcasting

Traditional online dial-up systems (CompuServe, America Online, Prodigy) begin to provide Internet access

A number of Net related companies go public, with Netscape leading the pack with the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest ever NASDAQ IPO share value (9 August)

Registration of domain names is no longer free. Beginning 14 September, a \$50 annual fee has been imposed, which up until now was subsidized by NSF. NSF continues to pay for .edu registration, and on an interim basis for .gov

**1996** Internet phones catch the attention of US telecommunication companies who ask the US Congress to ban the technology (which has been around for years)

**1997** 71,618 mailing lists registered at Liszt, a mailing list directory

Longest hostname registered with InterNIC: CHALLENGER.MED.SYNAPSE.UAH.UALBERTA.CA  
101,803 Name Servers in whois database

**1998** Network Solutions registers its 2 millionth domain on 4 May

Electronic postal stamps become a reality, with the US Postal Service allowing stamps to be purchased and downloaded for printing from the Web.

**1999** Free computers are all the rage (as long as you sign a long term contract for Net service)

**2000** The US timekeeper (USNO) and a few other time services around the world report the new year as 19100 on 1 Jan

A massive denial of service attack is launched against major websites, including Yahoo, Amazon, and eBay in early February

Web size estimates by NEC-RI and Inktomi surpass 1 billion indexable pages

Needless to say, the current explosion has led to almost every facet of business selling every conceivable product and service imaginable.

## **2. All the Hype aside, What is the Internet in practical terms?**

A. Many things for many people. http, Gopher, etc.

B. For most business and consumer users: Web Pages & E-mail.



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- C. The “Web”: Essentially a single big book, with portions stored in computers around the world that are all linked together. The book is unique in that almost anyone can publish in it for free or very little, and almost anyone can view the pages for free.
- D. This particular book happens to be over 65 to 100 miles thick with big pages.
- E. Many pages, many indexing and search facilities. Over 1000 search engines to do the looking for you, 10 to 15 top rated ones.

### **3. Domains, Names, Addresses, E-mail Names, what are these?**

The reality is that like every phone in the world, every website or e-mail addressee has a numeric address. When the web started, users sent information to individuals by using their numeric address. Addresses look something like: 127.13.111.211. As more people started using the net, a naming system was added. Unlike the current phone companies who will look up a name and give you the phone number for a charge, the Internet has full time “directory assistance” called DNS or Dynamic Name Servers. These servers look up the name you enter and convert it into a numeric address. This is all done behind the scenes, automatically and without charge (at least for now).

There are several types of names used on the Internet. Names starting with “HTTP:” are used to address individual websites viewable through a web browser. Names starting with “FTP:” are addresses used to move blocks of data. There are actually several other types of names used for various purposes that are not used by the public in general. A domain name is the name people call your address. It is really your address name. The DNS servers actually convert it into an address (in the background) that people will use to locate you on the Internet.

Every single website on the internet has a unique name and unique address. The use of the internet is growing far more rapidly than the founders ever imagined available. Addresses are starting to run out using the current system. You can purchase your own domain name for \$72 (plus a few dollars if you need some help) for two years. It can also be renewed for \$35 per year. You will also need a “host” (an Internet Host) to “host” your website. Your website is transferred to your “host” for the public to access, not directly from your computer that you build it on. Once you have an Internet Host, you must have your domain name “terminated” at your host. Most hosting companies will perform this task for you, usually without charge.

**Free Hosting.** Most people do not realize that with their internet access account, many Internet service providers (ISP) provide an e-mail box and a certain amount of web page space for no additional charge. There are usually some restrictions. The major restriction is that you can not use your own domain name. For example, if your e-mail box with your ISP is something like: “myname@earthlink.net”, then your web page address would most likely end up being something like “www.earthlink.net/myname”. This usually works fine for personal sites, but it is less than desirable for a business sites. There are usually some other restrictions on these free sites such as limited utility support, limits on the amount of space, etc.

### **4. How does someone use the Internet?**

There are three (3) essential items required to use the Internet for the average person.

- A. Some form of computer.



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- B. Some type of connection to the Internet.
- C. The correct software (Browser and/or E-mail agent).

The different types of computers are almost unlimited. Even older computers that do not have graphics can get onto the internet. PCs and Macs are probably the most common.

There are several forms of connection to the Internet. Almost all of them require the cooperation of an ISP to actually make the connection to the Internet Backbone (main Internet data channel). Most individuals make a connection from their local computer to their ISP through a phone line and some form of modem (dialup, ISDN, or DSL).

There are many forms of software available that perform many different functions. The two most common are a Browser and E-mail client/agent.

1. The Browser creates a window on your local computer to view web pages. Web pages are actually computer programs. They are written in HTML (Hypertext Markup Language). The browser program is responsible for converting HTML commands into a picture that you can view on your computer. A browser is also responsible for converting your keyboard or mouse input into something the web page can understand. When a person enters a web address, the browser sends the address out to the host and requests a DNS lookup. The DNS server looks up the address of the website and then directs the browser to that site where a request is made for a page. The host at the site then sends the program for that page back to the browser, where hopefully it can be viewed. Within the web page there may be type, pictures, links to other pages, tables to be filled in by the visitor, etc.

“A browser is not a browser is not a browser!” Not every browser (even different versions of the same browser, and even the same browser on different computers) converts the web page HTML commands the same way. The same web page may look very different on one computer as compared to another. This is especially important to keep in mind when creating your web pages. More on this later.

2. The e-mail agent or client is a program that follows at least one of a number of set criteria for retrieving e-mail from your box (POP3 mail boxes, not MSN HOT MAIL, or AOL mail, etc. mail). When e-mail is sent to you, your ISP stores that message in a mail box at the ISP’s post office for you. When you start your e-mail client or agent program, it effectively sends a messenger from your computer to the ISP’s post office. The messenger looks in your mail box and makes a copy of any messages there and returns the copies to your computer. **EVEN IF YOU DO NOT OPEN THE INDIVIDUAL MESSAGES**, you still have received your mail and it is on your computer. Depending on the settings of your e-mail client/agent, once the messenger has returned with the copied mail, it may send a message back to the post office to delete any mail in your box.

What is opened and unopened mail seems to be a little confusing. Most of the e-mail agents/clients have what they call a preview window. Just highlighting a message will cause the e-mail program to display the message in a preview window. In some programs, this counts as opening your message and in others it does not. In some programs, you must actually select the message and open it into it’s own window to officially open the message. So who cares?

Who cares? Everyone who reads e-mail should care. E-mail is the most common way to spread a computer virus. There are two common methods used to spread a virus via e-mail. One way is to attach a program as an “attachment” that is activated by the user when the attachment is opened. The second way is via something called “embedded macros”. An embedded macro is a little program that is entered as part of the actual message. It is essentially a program that runs



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when the message is viewed. **BOTH OF THESE METHODS CAN PUT A VIRUS ON YOUR COMPUTER!** The preview window almost never actually opens an attachment unless it is a known format picture. However, macros can be run by your program just by putting it in the preview window. You can start turning various functions off, thereby preventing things like macros from running. However, this may also prevent you from viewing parts of your message. If you are going to get e-mail, you should check out some form of virus protection software packages. These packages are not perfect, but they help!

Just a note. Recently, a Internet security company was looking for weaknesses to viruses in various programs. They found a really neat one in Microsoft Outlook and Outlook Express 5.0 (later, similar weakness were found in Netscape 4.x). This weakness allowed a virus to be downloaded to your computer simply by having the messenger go and get a copy of your mail and return it to your computer. **THE VIRUS WOULD TAKE HOLD EVEN IF YOU NEVER OPENED OR EVEN VIEWED YOUR MAIL!** Version 5.5 fixed this problem (free upgrade to everyone, but a long download!. "<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/ie/default.htm>" and follow directions)

## 5. What can the Internet do for a business.

You have started your business, you have a great idea for a website, now what are you planning to have the website do for you? Many people are a little confused on just what a website can do for them. There are four (4) basic types of websites:

### Websites Are:

1. The personal website. - anything goes.
2. The information support site. This is usually either a professional or business site, that is strictly concerned with supplying information to visitors. This is usually not a big money maker, BUT IT CAN BE A TREMENDOUS MONEY SAVER! For many stores that get a substantial amount of customer support calls (customers calling with problems or questions), a website can be an incredible money saver and an incredible support tool for your customers. Many companies have a large catalog with high reproduction and distribution costs. A website can cut these costs by over 90% in some cases.
3. Cooperative sales support site. This type of site is usually a secondary sales site. Typically, this site allows visitors to purchase repair parts, accessories, etc. Usually these sales are tied to the sale of a primary product. Additionally as with the information support site, stores that get a substantial amount of customer support calls, a website can be an incredible money saver and a 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, support center for your customers. Companies with a large catalog with high reproduction and distribution costs can save over 90% in some cases.
4. Front line sales store. This type of store is often referred to as an E-Commerce front line store. E-Toys and Amazon are examples of this type of store/site. These stores do not typically have traditional retail stores, and they serve as the primary (usually only) customer contact point. Currently, this is turning out to be a failing proposition. Some of these stores are actually extensions of the typical "brick and mortar" retail stores and seem to be doing better than the "e only" stores.

**Websites Are** (with some exceptions)...

1. Not good front line advertising tools.



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2. Not good front line marketing tools.
3. Not good customer relations tools (although this can be turned around)

Think of it this way. When a retail store sends an advertisement to your home, they do not drop the entire store on your house in an attempt to get you to purchase everything! Instead they send a small piece of paper in your mailbox telling you that they have great stuff and you should come to their store and see what they have. Just being physically located somewhere, does not produce advertising or marketing that draws customers in. All the traditional tools used for advertising and marketing are used to draw customers to any retail store and the Internet is no different. For the most part, the saying, "build it and they will come" is not true for retail stores and it is not true for a website! For both retail stores and websites, build it, advertise it, market it, promote it, involve it, and generate referrals to it, etc. apply equally to retail stores AND WEBSITES!

There are exceptions to these statements, but as a general rule, most customers have spent time looking in the retail stores and reading publications or the phone book prior to finding your site through a search engine. If you are relying on just search engines to bring in customers, then think about this. Your customers have probably already seen your competitor's adds and products, they have probably already considered purchasing your competitor's products, and they have probably already been to your competitor's website (or worse their retail store) they found from your competitor's advertisement, and your competitor is probably listed in the search engine before you so your potential customer may have never even made it down to your listing. **Relying on a website as front line marketing and advertising means that you are almost always going to be playing catch up to get customers to purchase from you, rather than your competitor!**

Some people claim that there is an exception to these above statements. The one industry that is making excellent front line marketing use of the Internet is the pornography industry. There is very little off-line promotion of these companies. Don't be fooled. The two major marketers of pornography (at least to the American public) are Playboy and Penthouse. For both of these companies, the Internet represents a very small portion of their revenue. Much of their website revenue that is produced is a direct reflection of promotion in their own magazines and ads. ALMOST NONE of the web front end pornography sites are making money and most are failing.

## 6. Reference or hype.

There is a new class of websites emerging, and a new sales approach that web developers are using. It goes something like: "*We will make you a really flashy site with all the bells, pops, sound effects, animation, and every other effect that you can put into a website.*" They are claiming that they will produce superior graphics and animation that will really dazzle your visitors. That may be wonderful if you are entering your website in a "dazzle me" competition. But before you start adding all this hype to your site, ask yourself some basic questions. Put yourself in your visitor's place. Forget that it is your site. Then ask yourself, "Why did this person come to my site?" "Will making this visitor wait for additional download time of the dazzling graphics fulfill the reason that they came to my site any better than a simple picture and some limited text?" If the answer is yes, then by all means, make it scream!, otherwise **STAY IN REALITY!** For business purposes, your website is not to make you feel good about your site. Its' purpose is to make your customers feel good about doing business with you! Leave your pride and vanity somewhere else when you design your site.



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## 7. Can you say it in 10 seconds – words and pictures.

Okay, so a new visitor is at your site, they probably got there because they found your site listed with about 100 other similar websites and they are at your home page to check you out. Great! Unless that visitor already knows something about your site and is looking for something specific, **you have about 10 seconds to tell them what you are about and get them to read more. GET TO THE POINT FAST!** This 10 second assumption is based on two basic assumptions, neither of which is very sound. Assumption 1. These visitors are educated and can read the descriptions. Assumption 2. They are willing to give my site enough of their time to read my introduction. If you are counting on these assumptions, you are probably dead! In the early 70's, magazines, newspapers and advertisers were targeting the 5<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> grade levels. By the mid 90s, this target level dropped to the second grade level. The young adult generation of today has been subjected to more effortless bombardment of information than any other generation in the history of mankind. These viewers are quite used to having the information shown or read to them. Very few are used to, or willing to put forth the effort to extract it. You better give your new visitors something they are interested in within about 10 seconds, **OR THEY ARE GONE!** If you can get your opening message across with a photo and just a few words, great! Remember, a picture is worth a 1000 words. If you can put something in front of that visitor that they will readily recognize and attract them enough to make them stay longer. then USE IT!

For new visitors, you have to make the **opening page count!** Make sure that the opening page loads quickly (a good rule of thumb is to limit a page size to approximately 100K bytes) and has the right information that a new visitor is looking for. Use “buzz” words your visitors are looking for and will recognize on that page. If the home page is for a large company with many subsidiary divisions, then make sure the visitor can easily figure out where they have to go to get what they are looking for. If the visitor finds something in the key items of the opening pages, then they will make a conscious decision to give your company more of their precious time to go further. As the visitor gets more targeted on your pages, this is the time to present those beautiful photos of your products and the nitty gritty details. If you have what they are looking for, they will give you the time to download details and examine them extensively. Don't force large photos and slow loading effects on a visitor. Making a viewer wait for extended downloads, only for them to find that it is not what they are looking for will not only NOT get their business, but will make an enemy of that viewer. The Internet provides the opportunity to present the equivalent of hundreds of magazine pages to a viewer like no other media ever in history, BUT YOU CAN NOT FORCE THE VIEWER TO READ THEM ALL AT ONCE, and they will not read anything if they do not find a reason to stay in the first place!

Once they are hooked on the opening page, your job is not over... it has just begun. Remember, the other 99 websites listed in the search engine where they found you? It is incredibly easy to press the BACK button and go on to one of the other sites listed. You have to make sure that whatever your visitor is looking for:

- A. you have made an understandable way that they can get to it,
- B. they have to put out minimal effort to find it,
- C. they don't accidentally find the wrong thing and think your site is really messed up or you really don't have what they want,
- D. you give them as much of what they came for as possible, the information that they need and want.

Sounds easy, right? Don't answer that question! You should never be the one answering these questions as you produce your own website. If this is your company, there is NO WAY for you to



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separate yourself sufficiently to make any of these judgements. Ask someone who has minimal knowledge of your product, and has never seen your website to test it, and someone else to do more testing on each revision. A tester should not be told what errors or problems they are looking for. Just watch as they test your site to make sure that the next tester does not have the same problems. If you absolutely have to make assumptions about how well your site works, then make this one. If the visitor can screw it up, draw the wrong conclusion, simply get the wrong idea, get mixed up, assume that one statement is linked to another even though they are on separate pages, get you mixed up with someone else, or any one of a hundred other really incredibly hard to believe mistakes, then you can safely assume that **THEY WILL MAKE THEM ALL!!!** And maybe a few more that you would not have thought of in a million years!

## 8. Who should I make my website for?

Sounds obvious, doesn't it? Well, you too can make the same mistake made with many first round websites. And yes there is an extra charge, and it can be expensive! First and possibly the biggest mistake made when planning and developing a website is making it satisfy the ego of the owner or official of the company. Sound ridiculous? Ask yourself: Is the owner of the company going to be the primary visitor to the site?

When planning your website, remember to put yourself in the place of a typical visitor. If part of your business is going to be generated by visitors from a search engine, you had better have an opening site to get their attention and keep it. If yours is a reference site, then you should, as quickly as possible, get your visitor to the information they seek. You are probably the worst person in the world to grade or evaluate your own site. You may not be objective enough when it comes to designing it either. Ask your customers what they want. Then don't ignore them. Look at what your competition is doing. Ask others what they do and do not like about the competition's site and your's (once it is up). Don't ask general questions like "what do think of my site?" Ask specific questions like: "What was the one or two key features of my home page that made you stay and read more? Did you use the XYZ feature? Did it do .....for you? What would you have rather seen instead of the XYZ feature? What are the nasty comments you mutter under your breath about the way the site works? Make your evaluators feel comfortable telling you your site stinks! If you do not make them feel this level of comfort first, they will be polite and tell you it is wonderful. This is absolutely useless and probably harmful information.

Unlike a printed ad, web pages are living and dynamic. You should be prepared to constantly make changes and upgrades to your site. If you budget and plan to make one big development effort on your site, then maybe you should save your money and put it into other marketing efforts. Once your site is up, get some feedback. Do not be offended when visitors start telling you that something is really bad with your site. This is free feedback from the most important people, enjoy it and USE IT!

If you really want to develop a website that customers like, then try this. Run a contest on your website. Ask visitors to name the worst part and the best part of your website. Advertise the contest and giveaway some decent prizes. People can't resist the chance to kick someone in the rear. Visitors will visit your site to possibly win for kicking some anonymous sucker. They enter the contest, give you firsthand feedback, they also give you their e-mail and phone number and address to enter. And if you design your site with some thought, they see your product line and maybe some enticements to purchase along the way to enter your contest.



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## 9. What should not go into a Website.

- A. Unless you have some particular motive in mind, don't make a "downer" site. Be positive. Use bright, contrasting (not necessarily gaudy), perhaps unsettling colors to wake up your visitor. Your site should be energizing, not a place that someone should feel comfortable and relaxed in.
- B. Don't try to dazzle your visitor with your command of the English language. Use simple words that everyone can understand or you run the risk that everyone will not understand anything at all.
- C. Don't talk down to your visitor or make them feel stupid or small either. Remember, they can click off your site as easy as they clicked onto your site.
- D. Don't offend anyone. Remember, when you publish your website, you instantly become an international company. You will make your visitors feel much better about dealing with you if you use positive language about them along with your own site and company rather than negative words about the competition.
- E. Things that don't work. Links that don't link, special effects that don't always work, etc. Visitors are going to catch every mistake on your site. If more than one or two items do not work, they will start to wonder if your products or services work any better.
- F. Do not try to use common symbols and highlighting for other uses. For example, PCs commonly use blue underlined text as hyperlinks. Do not use either for highlighting. If you use either as highlighting, visitors will attempt to click on it. Before they read the sentence to discover it is just highlighting, they will think your page does not work correctly and will go elsewhere to a site that does work.
- G. Don't use anything that looks like a button image as highlighting or part of your graphics! If it looks like it might be something that a user will confuse with a button, then make sure it is a button that does something! Using images that look like common selectable buttons will only serve to add confusion and irritation to the viewer.
- H. Do not use pictures or text in background combinations that make it difficult to view. Example: yellow text on almost anything but a black or blue background is impossible to read. Even on a black background, many monitors can not resolve the yellow from the black. Do not make it a contest just to read your page.
- I. Avoid using extremely small type. While some people still use 640 x 480, many are now using higher resolutions of 1024 x 768 or even 1280 x 1024! This makes text that was small at 640 x 480, into microscopic text at 1280 x 1024. The visitor is not doing something wrong by using high resolution, nor is it his responsibility to ensure the readability of your page! Be realistic, technology is moving forward, not backwards. A good design compromise seems to be targeted towards the 800 x 600 viewer minus 50 pixels for the slider bar.
- J. DO NOT, DO NOT, DO NOT play any tricks to keep a visitor locked into your website. Some web designers attempt to put in code that prevents a visitor from leaving their site. This is a terrific way to really anger a visitor. DO NOT do other tricks like making your home page the visitor's home page or adding your page to their favorites list. Nothing makes a visitor madder than someone who is not authorized or invited to make changes to their computer.
- K. Collecting statistical data about the people using your website is a great idea, especially if the reader does not have to take special steps just to satisfy your desire to extract information from them. **DO NOT MAKE THE VISITOR WORK TO GET TO YOUR INFORMATION!** The visitor should not have to pay a price to get to your stuff. Whatever the price (even if you think it is



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minimal), **IT IS TOO HIGH** for most visitors! Some Web Pages make a visitor fill out an information form to get in. Even worse, some companies go to great pains providing a tremendous amount of useful information on their web pages, then ask users to sign in with an assigned user name and password. There are millions of web pages online today, can you remember millions of login names and passwords? THEN DON'T MAKE YOUR VISITOR DO IT EITHER ! (You don't ask for a history to let potential customers read your magazine ad, so don't do it on your web page either.) If a customer is nice enough to take the time to tell you about him/herself, great. But you have to decide which is more important to you regarding a visitor: using force to extract some background data, or an order for your product (or at least some additional contact regarding your products/services)?

## 10. What should go into a Website.

Have a purpose when starting a website design. Just like the design of a brochure has a specific purpose, so should every page of your website. An architect does not design an elaborate building, then try to figure out what someone might do with it. Locating a great programmer who knows how to make HTML sing, but knows nothing about ad design is a step in the wrong direction. Remember, a simple, easy to follow and understandable text screen with lots of information and a few reasonable sized photos of your products will do more for the reader than any first place flash design award on your wall.

As much as it may hurt your pride, however great you think your website might be is almost irrelevant. What is important is what the customer thinks of it! The programmer who designs your web page is not going to live with the inquiries, or lack thereof. **YOU AND YOUR REPUTATION ARE!** If you need help separating the flash from the detail, a few dollars paid to an advertising and marketing consultant can save many headaches in the future. Keep in mind: If you make a good brochure, customers **MAY** mention how they liked it. However, you will never hear from the customers who read a bad brochure and threw it away. They won't call you for anything! Your website is no different.

Pointers:

- A. ALWAYS, ALWAYS, ALWAYS put a phone number on EVERY page at least once. A marketing expert once said that it not necessary to put a phone number on every page. If a customer really wants to contact you, they will tear apart your site to find a phone number. Well, maybe he was right, but in the process, the visitor will lose track of where they were when they found what they were looking for. They will be very frustrated. They will also start to wonder if they want to deal with a company who wants to hide their phone number. People don't buy from computers, they don't buy from stores, they buy from people. Home Depot is a perfect example. They do not have the lowest prices, but they do have the best service. Home Depot is killing all of the competition with the exception of those other stores that also offer outstanding service at similar prices. If a visitor has found information that they are interested in, you do not want them to lose track of it just to get your phone number. If you are serious about your website, do not isolate yourself from your customer. Either you want customer contact or you do not.

A note about acronyms and phone numbers. Some of the acronyms that companies are using to remember their phone numbers are really neat, and in many cases helpful. Especially the type where a phone number can be replaced by a catchy word or phrase. But when it comes to your web page, after the acronym, **SPELL OUT ALL OF THE DIGITS!** Don't make your visitor stumble around on a phone dial to figure out your phone number. They may get it wrong, get frustrated and go to another competitor's web page that has a working number!



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An e-mail address is also very good, if the visitor can find it and wants to use it. Would anyone ever design a brochure with only an e-mail address to respond to ? No! Then why put only an e-mail address on your web page! A terrible thing to do in any web page design is to make some button or hard to find location that the reader has to go to in order to contact you. Put your e-mail, address, fax number, and yes, PHONE NUMBER!, on the bottom of EVERY PAGE IN YOUR WEBSITE!!!! When a customer finds something they are looking for, don't make them go searching to some other page to call you! If the customer is looking at one of your products that has his attention, YOU DON'T WANT HIM TO CHANGE PAGES! You would not place an ad in a magazine and then make the reader close the magazine and look somewhere else for your phone number. DON'T GET PHONE AND FAX NUMBERS MIXED UP! Potential customers don't like calling a phone number to hear a FAX tone in their ear! Make contacting you easy, put the contact information right in front of them AT THE SAME LOCATION ON EVERY PAGE!

If you want to look like one of the "Big Boys", then 800 or (other toll free numbers) make life really easy for your customers. The additional cost today for this type of service is usually free and the toll rates in many cases are the same or similar to outgoing calls. If you are going to use 800 numbers, then make sure EVERYONE (even local calls) can use that number. Most callers do not realize how close you are to them, or your regular phone number is a local call for them. All they know is that they can not reach you at the number you provided. Remember your potential customers are people. Making your 800 number only accessible to callers beyond a certain range can make the local ones feel cheated or less important! How much do you really save by disallowing those local 800 calls? You can always give new callers your local number on their first call.

Another word about e-mail. E-mail is great especially for the viewer who has a specific request or requirement. They can spell out all of those requirements in their own words and e-mail them directly to you in a flash. Don't make the classic mistake of putting an e-mail address to only the WEB MASTER! Make mail boxes to departments that are appropriate for various questions or topics that a visitor might be addressing (marketing, sales, support, etc.). There are really only three messages that a visitor might leave, and you are really only interested in two of these. These are: "I like your product, and how do I get it ?", or "I think your product might be right, but I need more information". These two comments should not go to the WEB MASTER, they should go to CUSTOMER SERVICE or SALES, or TECHNICAL SUPPORT! You don't have the carpenter who built the building you work in handle your sales leads, then why have your web page publisher (or MIS) collect your sales leads! Get the leads going the right direction FAST from the start! Oh yes, the third comment the viewer might send would appropriately be sent to the WEB MASTER. It might read something like: "What a horrible web page, I can't find anything in this mess!" Do you really want your sales leads mixed in with these?

- B. Always put in a "contact us page". Putting a picture of the managing people lends a more personal feel to your site. If you have an actual commercial place of business, pictures of your facility may lend credibility to your company.
- C. Make your information easy to access. You may have to list what is available on your site in several different formats and indexes. Remember, not every visitor to your website is there with the same purpose. Accommodate as many as you can in the easiest way for them.
- D. For many websites, a list of commonly asked questions and answers can be a time saver for both you and your visitor. In many industries, consumers have similar problems and questions. Providing these questions and answers not only provides solutions to your visitors, but also lets them know that their question is not unique and other people have had the same question.



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- E. Pictures can be a great way to say a 1000 words. But remember, pictures take a long time to download. Don't put in a huge picture that is not worth waiting for. There is nothing worse than making a visitor wait for a long download just to find out you are trying to make a fancy background.
- F. Watch what you layer on top of each other. One good way to really drive visitors AWAY from your site is to present a partial page to them, make them wait to download some big background image, only to realize that it suddenly makes everything else on the page unreadable! If you are going to use one of these images for a background, make it small, low resolution, stretch it out if necessary, and screen (or gray) it WAY BACK! Just this side of visible.
- G. Big solid black or colored backgrounds can also be too flashy. While these may look eye grabbing or bold, they can make reading a Web Page difficult. Black or colored areas tastefully used on a limited basis can add nicely to any design. But remember, while a few well placed brush strokes of paint may look good, pouring in the whole gallon won't necessarily look great !

## **11. Who are you – should you tell a visitor?**

Without any question, YES! If a visitor can not tell who you are, how to reach you (not just by e-mail), why should they do business with you? E-mail is a good way for a visitor to deliver some detailed information, but not much else. When a visitor is faced with the final conclusion that the only way to reach you is by e-mail, they generally start making some assumptions about your company. Assumptions like, you are a one-man-show operating out of your home after your regular job, and you do not want to give out your phone number. This completely blows away one of the unique benefits of being on the web - there is no way for a visitor to know how big any company is on the net. If you attempt to hide, then your visitor will start to make the assumptions.

Never lose track of the fact that you want the visitor to your website to become your customer. You want that visitor to feel warm and cozy about working with your company. When you are designing your website, put yourself in the place of a visitor. Don't do anything you would not want someone to do to you when you visit them. Do everything for your visitors that you would want someone else to do for you. If you are contemplating doing something on your site, ask yourself this question: "Would the bigger competitor do this?", or "What should I do to look like the big boys?", "What is my real purpose of putting this item on my site?".

## **12. How the Internet does NOT advertise.**

As was stated above, except for some special exceptions, the Internet is not a good advertising medium. It is a much better secondary contact or support tool (in the form of a resource provider or information provider) that other more traditional advertising mediums can refer visitors to. Keep in mind, there are usually only three ways for a visitor to get to your website. 1. They already have your address and they deliberately entered it. 2. They were sent to your page via a hyperlink from someone else's page. 3. They found you in a search engine. As you can see based on these three access methods, the Internet makes a better secondary resource rather than a front line, first contact advertising medium. Front line advertising would be more the medium that got your website address to the visitor in the first place.

There is one major exception to this above paragraph and what has been mentioned about this subject. Since this outline started discussing the Internet as both websites and e-mail, the Internet can



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be a very good source of advertising at rates that can not be touched by any other source on cost-per-contact basis. E-mail advertising, like advertising in magazines, newspapers, and other similar media, e-mail advertising goes to your customer instead of waiting for your potential customer to come to you. This does not help with designing your website, however, it does lend considerable thought to designing a good e-mail advertising message.

### **13. Links.**

Put very simply, a link is an object on your web pages (pictures, words, titles, almost anything visible) that allows a visitor to click on it with a mouse and redirect themselves to another location. That location may be somewhere on one of your pages, or to another website. Links are a great way to categorize your web information, and allow your visitors to navigate through what otherwise could be a real mess.

Some common examples of links are:

- a. separating products, services, contacts, and other departmental functions that your company offers.
- b. redirecting selected customers to pages with specific information that they are looking for.
- c. connections to other complimentary products and services offered by other companies.

Links are one of the most commonly used methods for categorizing and arranging information on your web pages. They can be a great way to break up overwhelming amounts of information down into manageable chunks for your visitors. However, remember that while several visitors to your website may end up at the same location, they are not always looking with the same motivation or from the same perspective. Each visitor may even have completely different motivations for being at your site. Do not be afraid to duplicate a particular link in different arrangements. Do not be afraid to place links both on your home pages and on other internal pages. It is much easier for a visitor to see another regrouping of related links on an internal page rather than forcing them back to your home page. There is nothing worse than making it difficult or impossible for a visitor to get "there" from "here".

Another concept that rarely seems to be used is using a hyperlink to open a whole new browser window. This has some minor drawbacks and some major benefits. One drawback is that the visitor may become confused and not realize that you have opened a second browser window for them. This can be partially overcome by making sure that the secondary new browser is opened in a smaller window than the current window they selected from. This will show the visitor that the window they started from is still there. A second drawback to this process is that the visitor may lose track of the browser window open to your page. There are some simple rebuttals to this concern. Not opening a separate browser window assures that the visitor is going to close your page and go to another. Even if the visitor loses track of the window open to your page, and it becomes buried, the user will eventually start closing windows and miraculously find your page still open on their desktop. Your page is the last page the visitor sees.

There are several benefits to this method. One, your page never really gets closed. When the visitor starts closing windows, they will eventually come across yours again. Essentially, this at least gives you one more chance that the visitor is going to return to your open page. In most cases, this is more likely than the visitor accidentally reopening your window by entering your address. Second, if your link is opening a new browser window to somewhere on one of your own pages, this allows your visitor to view several of your pages simultaneously. Third, if you are using links to competitor's pages to



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compare products, leaving your page open increases the likelihood that your visitor will not go to your competitor's page and stay there, not returning to yours.

### Why should I link to other websites?

Many companies are deathly afraid of putting links to other company websites. Some are even convinced that it is just plain wrong. They even have a strong argument against it that goes something like: "I would not put a page from some other company in my ad or brochure, so why should I do it on my website?" This probably sounds like a very valid argument, and in some cases it may be true. However, for the majority of companies with websites, this is a mistaken thought process.

If your company is selling a product online, the odds are that you will NOT be selling everything the consumer needs to either purchase or use your product. In the vast majority of cases, your customer needs something else to use or buy your product that you don't supply. You have two choices. Attempt to sell them your product as it is and then let them fend for themselves for the rest of the puzzle, or help your customer with every aspect of the purchase. Business owners putting up websites need to get past the thought process of: "I only care about what I sell, the other stuff is someone else's concern", or "I only get one shot at a customer, I have to sell them my widget immediately the first time they see my site, or I don't care about them". This is a very short sighted view of how to run a website and a business. There are always going to be those customers that simply look for the best price and do not care about service. If you want to dig to the bottom of the barrel and compete for that customer, simply put your incredible deal on your home page and wait 10 minutes for the next guy to beat your price. The fact is most of these types of customers have very little money to spend with your company in the first place.

For the rest of you who plan to be here tomorrow, you need to endear your customers to you. Look at companies like Home Depot. You can go in and ask questions all day long and not buy a single item. They are glad to help you anyway they can. They want you to feel good about coming into their store. They know you may not buy today, but you will tomorrow. If they make you feel so secure that someone is going to hold your hand, they know you will buy from them, even if it is not at rock bottom pricing. In a recently opened Home Depot, I was told that they had a new policy. If a customer asked where something is, DO NOT TELL THEM, SHOW THEM TO IT! (yes, I do shop at Home Depot and yes, I do own stock in that company). I refer to that company not because I own stock in it, but I purchased stock in that company for the same reasons that I refer to it, they seem to know something about marketing themselves to their customers and it is paying off. I assist many of my clients with their various computer problems (not necessarily web related). I also advise them on purchasing the proper computer from some other source (99% of the time, this would be my competition). I almost NEVER charge for this advice. I also tell them that they could get a better price from many other sources. Better than 90% of the time, customers get such a comfortable feeling that I am not attempting to sell them a bill-of-goods just to make a buck, they insist that I sell the equipment and/or do the installation and configuration work for them.

Linking with other companies can also go two ways. Find complimentary companies that provide services and/or products that go with yours. CALL THEM ON THE PHONE and talk to a marketing person. In many cases, they have the same problems as you. They can not sell their product or service until someone purchases yours. Make an agreement for mutual links. You may even want to exchange some website material with each other and put their information onto your website directly. They will do the same. This is called a **mutual link**. You have to be a little careful about this. There may be several



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complementary companies out there. Putting links to just one or two on your page may alienate others. This usually can be overcome by adding mutual links to these other companies.

There are a number of companies that actually go out of their way to get links to both complementary sites and even competitive sites. While these "link happy sites" tend to be for consulting type services, they apply equally to product oriented companies. If you can get enough links to other companies, you may be able to become known as a resource center that people looking for a particular product type will always go to first. They know that they can find information about their particular subject at your site. Of course, your products and services are always prominently listed at the top of the links. This can work especially well if your product or service is one small part of a larger overall product or service or if you are the "little guy" in the middle of a big cog. Information and links can make you look like the expert.

There is another huge reason to get linked to other sites and get them to link to yours. As I discuss in the section titled: "Search Engines: Good, Bad, 10 or 10,000?", search engines are a great source of new referrals to your website. With over 1 billion (and exploding) indexable pages on the Internet, the demand to get a high ranking or listing in a search engine is becoming incredible. One thing that the major search engines are currently looking for is the continued flow of traffic over the Internet. One of the grading parameters (search engine use a grading system to rank how websites will be listed in searches) search engines use is: "how willing are you to link to other pages?". In essence, they want to know if you are going to hold people at your site, or are you willing to share the referral with others via links. Links to other sites can give you a big boost in the rankings.

#### **14. Search Engines: Good, Bad, 10 or 10,000?**

What is a search engine and what does it do? While everyone refers to all of the search resources on the Internet as "Search Engines", there are actually different types. There are true search engines such as AltaVista and Excite, directory search services such as About and Yahoo, metasearch (or top level search) services such as Dogpile and Momma, weighted search services such as DirectHit and Google, meaning-based search services such as Ask Jeeve and RaginSearch, pay-per-click search services such as GoTo and Sprink, there are pay-for-placement search engines such as NetPower Search (meta search), and about half-a-dozen other search services. (A good place to find these is at [www.searchengine.com](http://www.searchengine.com)). Each of these search services has its' own advantages and disadvantages. Because of the time delay in getting listed, and the fierce competition for top ranking, relying on search engines to push traffic to your website does not always work or work quickly. However, in the long run, unless you have the resources (\$) to back some form of large area marketing and advertising program, you may be faced with the fact that getting a high listing in the search engines is going to be your number one source of web leads.

Clients call and tell me "I got an e-mail ad for a program that will list my pages with thousands of search engines." I tell my clients to file all of them appropriately in the recycle bin. If you have been using the Internet for more than 3 months, ask yourself this question, "Can I name even 10 different search engines?" If you are like most, you will rattle off maybe three or four top search engines and then stop. YOU ARE NO DIFFERENT FROM YOUR POTENTIAL CUSTOMERS! Yes there are thousands of these search engines. However, there are only about 10 to 15 top engines, and they know it! If you think that any one search engine is going to index over 1 billion pages, think again. Each of these top search services picks the top 10% to 30% of the submitted websites to list (where they rank the site is another subject). These top engines are getting very selective. They have more submissions than they have space. One of the first things they look at is: "Is this site already listed with those other little search



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engines?" When you submit your site to the top 10 or 15, they will dismiss your request to get listed outright if they find you are listed with those little guys. Most of the major search engines will consider your site not valuable enough to get listed in their directory. It is like looking for a job. If you start your job interviews off telling a potential employer that you have only been able to find companies willing to hire you at minimum wage, do you think he is likely to give you the executive job with perks? Once one of the big search engines bans you from their site, you may find your site is banned from all of the major services. It can be very difficult to get these top search engines to reconsider your site once banned. If even it takes a little longer, and requires a little more work, concentrate on the top 10 or 15 search engines first. After you get a listing in these top engines, you probably will not want to bother with most of the others.

Getting listed in a major search engine is becoming somewhat of a game. There are all kinds of things and maneuvers that can be used to get each of the major engines to list your site. There are several companies that will assist you in performing this task including DDSi. The service is called "Indexing" or "Indexing Services". Most of these companies charge a fee for their service. These fees generally start at just a few hundred dollars as a one time fee, and go as high as several thousand per month per site. Some of these services will guarantee your site will get listed in selected services within the top 50, or top 20, or even top 10. Use of one of these services may be a good investment for your site if they are legitimate. However, you should read the section titled "Indexing and Keywords" before you plunge in. It is difficult, if not sometimes impossible to tell who is legitimate and who is not. One key is their price and promise. If they offer their services for a very low fee (less than a few hundred dollars), or tell you they can get you listed in more than 20 search engines, it is a good bet that they are just mass e-mailing your submission using a submission program (available for free from several sources if that is how you want to proceed).

Indexing requires a considerable amount of planning and work to do it right. It may involve changes to your website, and filing fees. If the offer seems too good to be true, it most likely is. There is another trick that even some of the more legitimate indexing services are using that will be covered in the next section, "Indexing and keywords".

## **15. Indexing and keywords.**

The subject of keywords is becoming messy and confusing. Some designers say to use single descriptive words that describe your site or service. Some profess to put short phrases in the keyword section that describe your site. Some will tell you keywords are not important, only the title counts. Well, they are all correct and they are, in general, worthless. The major search engines are getting very smart regarding keywords and rankings. Do a little test for yourself. Pick one of the major search engines and do a search on some subject. Look for some unusual keywords. Select one of the pages that turns up in the search. You may have to review the search engine's advanced search notes to find exactly how to control how it searches and prioritizes sites. For example:

I used AltaVista as the search engine ([www.altavista.com](http://www.altavista.com)). At AltaVista, a "+" in front of a word means that that word MUST be found on the page. Enter the search term "+dogs +eye +color". The first entry in the list (at least at the time I wrote this document) is

"West Coast Hockey League" at "<http://www.wchl.com/>"

This is a good example of how keywords are NOT the key to getting a good listing position. Assuming you are using either Internet Explorer or Netscape, click on view and then click on "Source" or "Page Source". This will show you the code that makes the page work. However, if you search the



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page, you will NOT find any phrase starting with “keywords” (the required preamble for placing keywords on a web page). Keywords are not the KEY to getting found or listed. The next paragraph will give more details of how the search engines are working today.

Most of the top search engines actually index (examine and catalog) THE ENTIRE PAGE. Some of them even index all of the pages on your website. If you really dig down into the details of what each search engine is looking for, several will actually state that “keywords” are ignored! There is more to getting your pages indexed by a search engine than can be covered in this outline and hiring someone to help you with this is usually a good investment, especially if you need to get listed as quickly as possible.

You should be aware of one gimmick used by some of these indexing specialists. There are many of these companies who advertise that they are so good, they guarantee a top listing (top 10 or 20) in the top search engines. Well, be careful if you select an indexing company based on one of these claims. In order to prove that they got your page listed in the locations they guarantee, they will enter some search words into the appropriate search engine and wait for your site to show up. However, they will also tell you that the key words they entered have been carefully chosen as appropriate for your website. Consider the fact that if you choose your search criteria carefully, and target it carefully, all under the guise of “appropriate for your website”, you can make almost any web page list near the top on any search engine. Consider this. If I put in a few keywords and include the title to your site as required keywords, your site is likely not only to be number one in the list of found sites, BUT THE ONLY ONE! This hardly has any meaning in the real world. In order to determine what your ranking is in a particular search engine, you must enter search keys that are realistic. Search keys that your customer will actually use. This will never be a fixed list. If you are not sure, ask some friends or customers what they would enter if they were looking for products or services that you offer. This will give you a better perspective.

Some people spend a tremendous amount of time coming up with keywords to use in their website. Spend some time and look deep into the information provided by some of the major search engines regarding what they are looking for in terms of page ranking. Most of the major search engines are getting very specific about what they are looking for. Most will tell you that keywords are treated just like the rest of the words on your page. Some will even tell you that keywords are IGNORED all-together! Most search engines are looking for descriptive text at the beginning of the page. Your keywords can actually get you **banned** from some search engines. Most of these major search engines want a good description of your page in the first half of the page. They want good descriptive words, but they do not want you to repeat the meaningful words over and over, just to repeat them. For example. If your keywords repeat special words over and over: “metal forming, metal bending, metal polishing, metal cutting...”, etc. Some major search engines may read this as an attempt to repeat special words over and over. THIS CAN GET YOU BANNED from a search engine! Coming up with a good set of keywords is not a separate task from the development of the rest of your page. Your entire page must be specific (especially in the text of the first half of the page) towards your service or product.

## 16. Design in stages.

Designing a website is not a one-shot effort like making a company brochure. Websites are living documents and constantly changing. They change based on opinions, goals, and a myriad of other factors. If you plan to make a big push effort to develop “the perfect website”, stop before you even attempt it. You should plan to develop your site in stages. Plan your home page so that you have room and a method to expand it. Break your website down into blocks or chunks and prioritize them. Pick the



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top three or four blocks and start there. You may find that once it is in front of you, you may not like what you have. It may not look as good as it sounded when you started. You can write down descriptions without end, outlining what your site will look like. It may sound great on paper, but it may look very different in front of you on the screen. If you develop your entire site in one big push, you may have a considerable amount of rework to do.

As visitors start using your site, you will get feedback from them. And unless you don't care about your business, you will listen to what they are telling you. Keep one thought in mind as your site develops. You have to put your pride aside, and sometimes things that make perfectly good sense to you. Remember, it is not your visitor's responsibility to understand how to work your site. **IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE IT WORK FOR THEM!** Don't waste your time attempting to determine the intelligence level, or the cooperation level of your visitors. Let me make it easy for you. Just assume that ALL visitors are less than brilliant, and are not willing to read or follow directions! Rest assured of one simple fact. Every user will do everything they can (purposely or accidentally) to use your site incorrectly, look in the wrong place, misunderstand all of those phrases that you made sure were crystal clear, and generally make a mess of anything that you try to make orderly. Do not take it personally when you start seeing comments on your new site. In general, bite off small chunks of your development effort, and be prepared to make changes or even start over.

## **17. Designing your own Website.**

Designing your own website...sound scary? Well, do not panic. There are several different types of websites and some are easier to build than others. Presentation or Static pages are the easiest. In these pages you simply display some information and there is no feedback via the website. If you keep things lined up loosely, and do not try to get too fancy, and you are willing to do a little reading and learning, you can more than likely make your own site. There are a number of tools available for designing a website. Most of these tools are WYSIWYG tools (What You See, Is What You Get). If you look on the home site of almost any Internet Service Provider, they provide a variety of tools, mostly free. You can also use a search engine to search for "web tools free". There is a very popular program that can be purchased for less than \$100 from Microsoft called FrontPage2000. I offer a word of warning about this program. This program is very easy to use. It works much like Word. However, this program has two major drawbacks. First, since it is from Microsoft, it works better with Internet Explorer than it does with Netscape. This is a MAJOR drawback. FrontPage2000 also has several bugs (as do most of these programs). The second drawback is caused directly by the ease of use. By allowing formatting to work like Word can make the web pages it creates somewhat unstable. Using size or spacing values like points, or picas, etc. is dangerous for web page use. Also, although FrontPage supports CSS, the easy formatting methods discourage people from using them. I previously did not recommend this program for building sites. However, after working with some of the other higher end packages, and seeing the bugs that they have too, I now think that FrontPage2000 is not a bad starting package.

A package that is far from perfect, but published by a neutral publisher, is Macromedia's DreamWeaver. This program is neither as simple to use as FrontPage, nor as intuitive. You can get a free 30 day evaluation copy of this program directly off the Macromedia website or in the back of the [DreamWeaver for dummies](#) book. This program does support many advanced features (but not perfectly). DreamWeaver is one of the most popular web development packages used by professional web developers, but it is far from perfect. This package is also not as inexpensive as some of these other packages, about \$299 retail.



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You can also get some very good books that tell how to use these programs in very simple terms. This is another good way to find low cost or good basic web development tools. Go to a bookstore that carries a good selection of computer books. Look through the "books for dummies" (I like these books and use them myself. Publisher Hungry Minds, formally IDG books). Find a book that covers a web development program that has a CD in the back of the book that either has a free version of the program or a demo version. This will give you a chance to learn the program and test it. There are also several packages that you can get and use (usually unlimited) for free in the form of shareware. Some of these packages have a limited use time, and most only cost a few dollars if you want the full version. You can find all kinds of HTML/WYSIWYG web editors at [www.shareware.com](http://www.shareware.com). Enter key words like "web design" and let it search for all the programs available. You can download them for free. You can also look with key words like "HTML" or "Internet".

There is another source of software that you can take advantage of. Most of the major software publishers like students to learn to use their programs. They generally have "Academic Pricing" packages. This pricing structure is usually about 25% of retail. How does one get Academic Pricing? Well, it is easier than you think, and you probably have the answer in your pocket or purse. **Academic pricing is available to students.** The first place to check is your student store. There is also a website ([www.gradware.com](http://www.gradware.com)) that will sell Academic software to anyone with a student or instructor ID (yes they do check). If you do not have a student ID, you can register at a local Junior Collage for under \$50. You will find discounts like the \$299, DreamWeaver package for \$94. There are a few drawbacks to Academic packages. First, they are usually not upgradable. This is not usually a big problem, because the Academic price for the full package is often less than the regular upgrade price. Second, in most cases, you can not get direct support from the publisher (other than replacement of defective media). They expect you to get it from your class. (note: gradware is just one company I happen to know about that sells software at Academic pricing. There are others out there that you should investigate on your own including the student bookstore. I do not own stock in gradware, or get any commissions for sending anyone to them. Use of their company name should not be considered a recommendation or referral. You should also note that Academic software is expressly intended to allow people to learn about these products and NOT to be used for commercial purposes).

There are several important facts that you must keep in mind when publishing a website. Unlike the fixed and predictable aspects of designing the printed page, building a website is like standing on a base of loose Jello! First, you have little control over how big the viewable area of the site is going to be. Your visitor can be running in many different display resolutions which will directly effect what they see. In the past, 640 x 480 on the PC was the standard. This is now moving towards the 800 x 600 and 1024 x 768 resolutions. With few exceptions, you should always allow 50 pixels on the right side of the frame for a scroll bar. Then there is the question, "Is the visitor running their browser in full screen mode or windowed?" You have NO control over this. The next key point that you have to account for is which browser your visitor is using. Unless you make your entire page an image (which would take forever to download), your pages are actually made of several instructions to the browser to paint your information on the visitor's display. Depending on how these instructions are interpreted, your pages could look very different on one screen verses another. The two most popular browsers (but not the only two) are Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator. The specifications regarding how a browser is supposed to function are regulated by an organization called W3C. However, neither Microsoft nor Netscape are willing to wait for W3C to, standardize, adapt and publish specifications for browsers. Both of these companies are typically one to two versions ahead of W3C. If you are doing your own web page publishing, do not listen to propoganda from either. Both of these companies would rather see the other one disappear, they both have their own agenda (adding new functionality), and neither one is willing to voluntarily be compatible with the other. It is my suggestion whether you build your own web page or you



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hire someone else to do it for you (whoever you hire should test for you, but do not rely on it), test your site out under several different browsers, at different resolutions and windowing adjustments. You can be in for a real surprise! It is better that you find these surprises before your potential visitor does. When your web page does not work for them, it is not their fault or doing, it is a direct reflection on your company. In general, I have found Internet Explorer more cooperative or forgiving than Netscape (I do not own stock in Microsoft, nor do I particularly recommend one over the other).

## **18. Contracting for Website design.**

If the section on making your own website scared you away, or you are just not the adventurous type, then you need to find someone to create your web page for you. This is not necessarily a bad thing. No small business owners I have ever come across are bored and looking for something to do with their spare time. Finding someone who can take on this project for you, and bring the learning curve to you, can save you considerable pain, frustration, time, and sometimes, money! However, getting the wrong professional can end in a legal mess.

Here are some suggestions on how to find someone to put your site together. Finding someone local is nice, but not a high priority. Using the Internet to pass suggestions and test files back and forth works great, next door, or across the country. I recommend you make sure whoever develops your site for you, that you agree that a sample site is going to be published where you can view the work as it is developing. DO NOT let them blindly charge ahead with several pages without you seeing what is going on. It is much easier to change course than it is to undo several pages and start over. Unless you have already planned out the entire site and just need someone to put the nuts and bolts together, you should attempt to find someone who has some real knowledge of your business, or is at least willing to take the time to learn (without driving you broke in the process). Understanding your business and what your customers are looking for is critical. DDSi provides a private viewing site for all web development customers for just this purpose. I actually find it much better to get the client to follow along closely as their site develops. This usually avoids uncomfortable situations where something is rejected and we have to agree on the additional charges for making the changes. Being an active electronics engineer gives me a unique insight to producing highly technical websites.

The big name developers are not always the best choice. There are many smaller web development companies who specialize in working with smaller clients. Some of these smaller web development companies can often take the time to learn about your business and offer more personal support. If you are a medium to large business, with a large wallet backing your development, you may find some of these larger web development companies are more appropriate for you. They can often assign multiple programmers to your site with a central coordinator and develop a very large site quickly. Many of the medium to larger web development companies will market themselves to you as having the ability to not only produce your web page, but expertly market it on the web, promote it for you, help you get high rankings in the search engines, etc., but all for a price! Again, for the medium to large companies, this may be very appropriate. However, the smaller companies, and the startups, money does not always flow from a hydrant. You may be better off, finding someone who is looking for the nuts-and bolts development and is looking to service the smaller clients. It is much easier to work with this type of developer. They are usually more willing to take things step-by-step (including payment and development obligations) thereby providing you with more control. They are often more willing to let you have some say in the development of your site. Often, the larger development firms do not want you to spend much time with the person actually doing the work. It is too costly for them.



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This may sound obvious, but when you contract for a website development, **GET A CONTRACT!** Get the contract in writing and signed by everyone involved. It is incredible, the amount of money spent on Internet development with nothing in writing. Getting a contract may not be easy. As I said, websites are dynamic and change during development. Often, even the concept does not exist at the time a contract is signed. This makes putting down in writing, exactly who is going to do what, and what it will look like, difficult at best. However, there are some factors that can be clearly defined in a contract. The major headings from my web development contract for Discovery Data Systems, inc. is listed at the end of this outline. In addition to the basic contract, I have two addendums. The first simply defines the name and address, and contact information of both the client and DDSi. It also defines a specific contact person for each company. The second addendum is an outline from a sample contract for development of a real 28 page website by DDSi. (The names of the products and the company have been changed, and the pricing estimates removed). This is one example of how to outline a proposal for a website that does not necessarily exist yet. At DDSi, I prefer to do development on a page-by-page basis. Between the main contract and the addendum, everyone knows exactly what is expected, the areas that still need to be defined more concretely, and what happens in almost every event. **DO NOT GET STARTED WITHOUT ONE!** If you find someone to do your site development, and they tell you that they never need a contract, or they have never used one and have never needed one, remember one important fact. If anything goes wrong, there is only two ways to settle the issue: 1. You agree to lose. 2. You hire attorneys and fight it out in court from ground zero, the expensive way. A contract like the DDSi outline provided can avoid many of these potential conflicts.

## **19. What is a domain name, and why do I even want one?**

Some people like to think of a domain name as an address or a phone number. I like to think of it as being a little more important than that. Putting it simply, to me, your domain name is synonymous with your logo. This is the first point of contact with your company from the Internet. The people that contact you via the web, enter this name and remember you by it. A great many of the "dot.com" companies today, use their web address (including the "com") as their company name.

As to the question of: "Do I really need one?" the answer is: technically - no. Every domain name is translated into a numeric code (happens behind the scenes, you do not even notice it). For instance, "www.discoverydatasystems.com" translates to "207.69.207.198". You could literally enter "http://207.69.207.198" on the address line of your browser and it would work fine. You do not get to choose the numbers assigned to your domain name. If you happen to end up with some catchy sequence of numbers that you can make into a company name, then you are set. If you do, let me know, I still have not seen one yet.

Is the ".com" really that important. If you asked Internet specialists this question two or three years ago, they would have looked at you as if you were crazy and replied a curt "Of course!". If you ask a web specialist in another two or three years, the answer will probably be something like, "well, it is the most common, but the others work too." The fact is we are running out of hard addresses to host all of these websites, and the ".com" names are starting to get a little scarce, a little long, and a little strange. Today, the accepted standard is that ".com" sites are for business, the ".net" are generally some form of Internet service company, the ".org's" non-profit organizations, and the ".gov's" are government agencies. Well, now an entire country has sold off its' rights to the ".tv" extensions to the highest bidders in place of being country recognizable (supposedly worth over \$1billion to the country).

General comments on domain names. While the ".com" is currently still the most recognizable and desirable, it is not mandatory. More and more ".net's" are starting to emerge, but slowly. If you can



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not come up with a good, rememberable, typeable (not too long, not too complicated) domain name, then consider the ".net" or ".tv". There are a number of sites that will offer to let you search for a domain name for free. Some are more free than others. Most people do not understand why some of these websites exist. Some say it is for the advertising on the site. Well for many, there is a far more sinister reason for their existence. Most of these sites remember each name as you search for it. When they get enough hits on a particular name, THEY go and register it for themselves. They also tend to register all three versions of each particular name (".com", ".net", and ".org"). They will then gladly turn around and sell you that name for a small profit (many over \$1000) plus a long term hosting contract on the server that they just happen to own. If you want to look up a name without consequence, go to [www.networksolutions.net](http://www.networksolutions.net) and select "WHOIS Lookup". The major disadvantage of this method is that you can only lookup exact spellings. Some of the other "free" lookup sites will let you search with wildcards or give you a list of other names that are close to the one you entered. When you find an available domain name, and if you think it is one that someone else may want to use, it may be worth the \$72 to register the ".net" if you get the ".com" name (or vice versa) to eliminate the possible confusion. Some companies go as far as also taking the ".org" name just to seal the deal.

## **20. Getting a domain name - terminating.**

Once you find a name that is available, you basically have three choices to get it registered. You can register it directly with Network Solutions. If you are going to do this, make sure you get the technical support info (termination address, contact name, etc.) and send it in with your registration. If you do not do this correctly, Network Solutions (formally "Internic", the control company for Internet domain names) will help, but charge you an extra \$10. You can register the name with the hosting service that you choose. In most cases, they will do all the paperwork for free (you still pay the \$72 registration fee). Some may still want to charge an administration fee, but this is becoming more the exception rather than the rule. You might ask why would they do it for free? Several reasons. 1. They will only register it for free if you agree to host your website with them. 2. They avoid all of the technical support issues if they register the name themselves. 3. If they register more than 50 names at a time (not a big deal for many hosts), they get 50% off the registration fee and pocket the difference. Your third option is to register it with one of the name lookup sites as mentioned above. The fees and services in this case could be anything.

Terminating your name is not as mysterious as it sounds. Simply speaking, terminating a domain name simply means telling Network Solutions where to have the DNS servers (Dynamic Name Server) route requests for your site to. For example. The DNS servers have been told that when someone requests [www.discoverydatasystems.com](http://www.discoverydatasystems.com), they should be directed to 207.69.207.198. At that address, the default page (index.html) is sent to the requestor.

One word of warning. Regardless of who does your domain name registration, you must make one point very clear, and get it in writing if possible. **YOU MUST HAVE OWNERSHIP** of the domain name. Some web hosts have a nasty trick when they register your domain name for you. They register the domain name in their own company name. If you ever decide that you want to move your web page to some other host, they hold the name. You are stuck! Once your name is registered, you can go to Network Solutions ([www.networksolutions.net](http://www.networksolutions.net)), use the WHOIS Lookup and see the registered name on your domain name. The "Registrant:" is the one that controls the use of the name. If the registrant name is not you or your company, something is wrong!



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## 21. Web Hosting.

Web hosting is different from Internet access. If you have access to the Internet through an Internet service provider (example. Earthlink), they will probably also provide you with an e-mail account. In many cases, they may also tell you that you have a certain amount of free web space. This free space, while slightly limited in size, is usually enough for a fairly good size website. There are some limitations to this type of web hosting. 1. You have to use the domain name that your host provides to you. You cannot terminate your own domain name to this space (usually). 2. These host servers usually do not offer any page support utilities such as FrontPage extensions, CGI support, etc.

When you contract for web hosting, you will usually receive a certain number of e-mail boxes. Before you agree to have your website hosted by someone, make sure that they can provide the support that you need. For instance, If you are going to start an online shopping service, you may need SQL support for a data base. Many pages require CGI support, and ASP is also popular. You need to know what you are going to need prior to signing up for hosting. In most cases, if your host does not support the function that you need, it is difficult if not impossible to add them.

One factor often overlooked when searching for a web host is “band width allocation” and backbone access. All website host companies are connected to the main Internet backbone through various methods. If your host is using T1 to T3 support, this should allow them to provide almost unlimited access for your page. If they are in a cloud connection or frame relay, then they may be band width limited. If they are a relatively small or local provider, then frame relay may be quite adequate to support your page. If they already have a heavy server load, and you plan to have heavy traffic to your site or just want fast response, then you should consider looking elsewhere. You may want to ask your potential host for the name of three or four large sites with heavy traffic currently on their site. Visit these sites and see what kind of response you get. Try it at 1:00 or 2:00 am and again at 7:00 pm. If you see a significant slowdown at 7:00PM, then you know their bandwidth is getting limited. Note: Clear you cache’ before each of these tests. This will force your system to completely reload each page giving a more realistic test. You should also be aware that when you signup with a host, you are actually purchasing a certain amount of traffic to your site. This is measured in “bytes per month” or “megabytes per month”. If you plan to have a very busy site, your provider may make you pay an extra surcharge. If your usage is really heavy (some porno sites hit this limit) you may be asked to move your site to another service.

When you finally sign up with a web page host, you will receive the address of your site, an FTP login name and password. Your web developer will need this information in order to move your website from his development system to your host. Once the page is uploaded, it is ready to use. You may also need your host company to activate certain services required by your website.

## 22. Who owns what – are you a hostage?

I have mentioned this in other sections, but it is worth restating. Make sure that you understand very clearly who is going to own what, and what rights you have with your website and domain name. If at all possible, GET IT IN WRITING. Even a very simple written statement will go miles in court. Example:

“In making payment to XYZ company, and by company XYZ accepting this payment, I understand that XYZ company will develop an Internet Website for my company with the following characteristics. I understand that after final payment, I will have full ownership and use rights to this website without restriction and I understand that XYZ company claims to have authority to issue these ownership and use rights to me. I further understand that XYZ



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company will register the name and that I will be made the legal registrant of this domain name.

Signed: Me---

Signed: XYZ company ----“

This may not spell out every detail, but it will make clearer to a judge what your understanding was at the time things got started and what was in your mind at the time of signing.

### **23. Cookies - Do they taste good?**

There is an ongoing controversy regarding the issue of cookies. This issue is almost universally misunderstood by the average visitor. Let us start with what a cookie is. A cookie is a small file placed in a special folder on your computer by the web page. The typical use of this cookie is to identify you when you revisit the page. Many people are scared by the thought of your web page writing to their disk. A web page is EXTREMELY limited in what it can write in the form of a cookie. First, the data must be rigidly structured. The web page can not write just anything. Further, a single cookie can not be any larger than 4000 bytes. A single web page can not have more than 12 cookies and there is a finite number of total cookies that can exist (I forgot the exact number). The last factor that makes cookies safe is that only the web page that created the cookie can read it. Typical information that is stored in a cookie include the date and time that you last visited the page, possibly your user name and password for that site, other personal information that the visitor had to give to the web page in the first place. Typical web users are afraid that putting personal information in a cookie through a web page, will make it available to the whole world. The cookies process was invented and implemented just for the that specific purpose. If it were that easy to get to the personal information, cookies would not be used. Having said that, there are actually a number of ways to get to cookies, even ones written by other pages. However, if you are smart when you use cookies, the data stored in the cookie will be encrypted. Even if another web page gets to the information, they will not be able to make use of it. If you use cookies, you should give the visitor the right to refuse cookies and you should explain to them what you plan to store in the cookie, how it will be used, and what benefits they will realize by allowing you to use them.

### **24. Privacy/Cookies Policies.**

We are living in a time when everyone is literally paranoid about computers. Half of the population is convinced that just having a phone line connected your computer exposes the data on your system to the world, even if you have not dialed yet. The other half is convinced that all of your data is going out over the Internet even with the computer turned off. Most of the population is extremely concerned that giving their name or any other personal information to any website will result in automatic placement on every advertising and mailing list that ever existed. Can you imagine what these people think about giving you their phone number, credit card number , birthdate or maiden name? Make a point to divulge your complete privacy policy in plain simple English. Make a policy that you would not mind agreeing to and stick to it. If you state something on the Internet and violate it, you are breaking federal trade laws and it becomes a federal crime. It is also a good way for a scorned visitor to start posting comments about your company with almost no recourse for you. If you try to extract data from



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your visitor and plan to sell your customer lists, you may find that your visitors will go to other sites and avoid yours. You have to make a decision. Are you in the business to sell customer lists, or your own products? Pick one industry or the other and focus on that. Make your customers feel comfortable telling you about themselves and doing business with you.

## 25. Secure Credit Card Business.

I will touch on this very briefly. If you plan to accept credit card payment (or any other sensitive information) use a secure server connection. A secure server connection is simply having your web page encrypt the data prior to sending the data over the Internet to the host server. The host server then decrypts the data locally. This prevents the data from being used by anyone that may intercept it. Use a secure connection and tell your visitor that you respect their security of sensitive information and you are taking steps to secure it.

## 26. Closing Comments.

**KISS** – Keep it so simple! (or as some would say: keep it simple stupid). Filling up the next several pages with these four letters could not over emphasize the principle enough. Just like the printed magazine ad where you only get a fraction of a second to get the reader’s attention, your visitor is not going to have much more patience with your web page. Flash and pretty is nice, just don’t try to buy your next meal with it. Strive to have your pages be clean, clear, easy to understand and follow, and provide the visitor with fast access to the information that they are looking for. Save the other hoopla for your personal Web Page and the picture on your walls !

**NOTE:** All of the above stated claims and suggestions are the opinion of Barry Wroobel. As with any advertising or marketing advice, strategies, methods, etc., you should review this material, along with material from other sources to form your own opinions and directions. Remember, even those who claim to be “experts”, have been wrong before! **QUESTION EVERYTHING AND EVERYONE.** Anyone who tells you that they know everything about any kind of marketing should be avoided at all cost. If something does not sound quite right, or it sounds questionable, or it is too good to be true.....**IT USUALLY IS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE OR JUST WRONG!**

Please feel free to call regarding anything that I have said or that I have presented in this outline. I am always receptive to comments (positive or negative) and welcome your reply.

Sincerely,

Barry Wroobel



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## **Addendum: Major Headings from the Discovery Data Systems, inc. Web Development contract:**

Section 1 - DEFINITIONS

Section 2 - CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION -

[2.1 Contract Coordinators -- (make someone responsible, define who can authorize changes or development.)]

Section 3 - CHANGES -- [3.1 Change Orders -- (what form do these take, etc.), (3.2 Sufficient Writings – who is going to take responsibility for clarity)]

Section 4 - NOTICE OF DELAY -- [4.1 Notification of delays -- (what is acceptable and what is not, who is responsible)]

Section 5 - SPECIFICATIONS -- [5.1 Specifications – (make an outline as soon as possible and amend it to the contract in an addendum, even if is in outline form. You can always make changes along the way)]

5.2 Accessibility Of Website During Construction -- [make sure that you can see what they are developing for you. A password restricted website is preferable, but not absolutely required.]

Section 6 - Deliverables -- [6.1 Delivery Of Deliverables -- define what is going to be delivered and how. In Calif., if the entire product is delivered via the Internet exclusively, there is no sales tax. If any part (other than return of customer owned materials) is delivered to you by the developer (disk, paper, drawings, etc.) by any means other than the Internet, then sales tax on the entire project must be paid. (Calif. is cracking down on this and has made special laws regarding this exact subject.)]

Section 7 - COMPENSATION -- [7.1 Invoicing –, 7.2 Expenses --, 7.3 Partial Payment And Ownership In The Event Of Termination --, etc. Spell all of these out IN ADVANCE! What has to be paid up front? What has to be paid in progress payments? What is due at the end of the project?, When and how are invoices and payments to be made, etc.]

Section 8 - CONFIDENTIALITY AND NON-COMPETITION -- [8.1 Confidentiality --, 8.2 Non-Competition -- did your developer make the same or similar site for someone else?, This may not be a bad thing, as long as everyone knows what is going on and it does not work out to anyone's disadvantage. This language is usually very standardized]

Section 9 – REPORTS -- [9.1 Reports – how are you going to keep track of what is happening in the development of your site.]

Section 10 - CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION -- [10.1 No Confidential Information of Developer – The developer most likely has other clients. Developer should agree not to tell you things you should not know. 10.2 Confidential Information of Customer -- You are most likely going to have to divulge certain aspects of your business to the developer. Put some restrictions on them.]

Section 11 - OWNERSHIP AND RIGHTS -- [11.1 Ownership of Work Product by Customer --, 11.2 Vesting of Rights --, 11.3 Preexisting Works --, 11.4 Indemnification/No Infringement --, this one ends more people in court than any other topic (other than payment for non-usable work). Make sure that the developer understands that once the site is accepted and paid for, YOU OWN IT without conditions. Make sure that if the developer integrates some support package within your site, you know in advance what it will cost you for a license (can you even get one without the developer cooperating?). Is the developer putting some piece of code that they previously developed that you can only use with their permission? Does the developer have the rights to give to you for any of these preexisting works? Will the developer indemnify for these items?]

Section 12 - AGREEMENTS WITH EMPLOYEES and SUB-CONTRACTORS -- [12.1 Work Suppliers--, If you are contracting with a larger firm, they will have employees or subcontractors working with your materials. These people need to be covered too.]

Section 13 - REPRESENTATIONS AND WARRANTIES -- [13.1 Ownership Rights --, 13.2 Developer cooperation –, 13.3 Customer agrees to hold Developer harmless --, 13.4 Conformity, Performance, and Compliance --, Make sure you know in advance who owns what and at what point. If you put something into your website that is unique to your company, someone else may try to steal it from you. You may need your web developer to testify for you. Will they? Under what conditions?, It is ultimately your site and most developers want you to take responsibility for the contents. It is not unusual for the developer to want you to assume all responsibilities for the content in the event that someone claims infringement or damages.]

Section 14 - TERM AND TERMINATION -- [14.1 Term of Agreement --, 14.2 Termination of Work --, 14.3 Survival --, Get it in writing when the contract is completed, when final payments are due, what rights you have in terminating the contract, what happens if the project is terminate before it is done, etc.]

Section 15 - MISCELLANEOUS -- [lots of standard clauses, Force Majeure, No Agency, Multiple, Counterparts, Authority To Enter Into Agreement, Section Headings; Exhibits, No Waiver, Governing Law/Consent To Jurisdiction And Venue, Entire Agreement, Neutral Construction, Unenforceability, Time Of The Essence, Notices, No Assignment, etc.]

## **Addendum: site specific development outline:**

Addendum B



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## Website Outline for SampleCo, inc.

The specific background and graphic presentation is to be agreed upon by the acceptance of milestone 1 listed below. The following paragraph shall serve as a suggested framework to be accepted by customer as milestone 1. The arrangement and exact wording to be decided by SampleCo.

Framework outline:

General: All pages will have the navigation bar located horizontally across the top of each page. The navigation bar shall contain:

A. Company logo and phone number.

B. Navigation buttons (exact order not specified):

1. Available Equipment - New

Used

Refurbished

2. Planning a new funny room – we can help – our design and planning services.

3. Frequently asked questions (and some that anyone planning a funny room should ask)

3. Take a funny room tour – Select the type of funny room you need and take a virtual tour.

4. Save some Money! – Learn how in integrate used and refurbished equipment into your funny room design and save!

5. About SampleCo - company profile.

6. Contact information – “Let us help you!”.

A common color theme is to be carried throughout the entire Website. Each page shall be designed for a fixed 640 pixel wide screen. At SampleCo's option, we can take advantage of a 800 or 1200 pixel screen for the Website. Using these widths will require viewers using lower resolution displays to scroll left or right to view the entire page (this functionality is part of the standard Web Browser and activates automatically. There is nothing for the user to purchase, install or activate.)

The remainder of all pages are to encompass the entire remaining viewable area under navigation bar.

Page 1 – Home Page.

Picture of funny room or the painting being prepared for the brochure with one or two short paragraphs and a few bullet items about SampleCo. Full address and phone/fax number. This page should also include any disclaimers or limits of liability, or any other legal notices.

Page 2. – Products Selection Page. To include left side navigation bar with equipment listed down left column. We can break this up in several different ways. If you have both new and used/refurbished similar pieces of equipment, we can list the equipment by type. Each page selected can then show both the new and used/refurbished equipment in a comparative mode. If the new and the used/refurbished equipment is not the same, then by simply moving the mouse over the equipment type name will display a small two or three line box allowing the user to select (new or user/refurbished) or (new or user or refurbished). We should have a conglomerate picture or montage of equipment or bullet items in the remaining viewable area. We can also allow the user to mouse point to a type of equipment in the photo and link by clicking on the picture.

Pages 3 through 18 (exact count will vary depending on specifications from SampleCo).

Each of these pages will cover one piece of equipment. We should show a picture of at least one unit with all of the features that we can reference in the copy. We can include any copy and technical specifications that is required by SampleCo including current inventory volume. A back button will be displayed returning the viewer to the SampleCo Home page or back to the equipment listing page. All of the navigation bars can either remain or the left hand product navigation bar can be removed and the area used for displaying product information (to be selected by SampleCo).

Page 19 – Planning a new funny room – we can help – our design and planning services.



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This page should have facilities/capability type pictures. We should present each picture in a somewhat small fashion with some bulleted information on what SampleCo can offer in each area. We should have larger head/bulleted text indicating that SampleCo can help with any single part of the funny room design or provide the entire package from design to equipment.

We should have buttons on this page with text having a possible title of: "Is your funny room in California? Then you better read this". This can hyperlink to a page outlining at the bottom of the page or a new page explaining how SampleCo can help make sure the customer's funny room meets Calif. earthquake standards. (We may want to make this selling point and warn that some out-of-state companies may not be as up to speed with current standards as SampleCo and what can happen if the customer does not plan ahead on this factor).

Page 20 through 25.

Take a funny room tour – Select the type of funny room you need and take a virtual tour.

This page should open with some text telling how SampleCo's experience can help with many types of funny room designs. We should list three to five common types and allow the visitor to select the type of funny room that they are building. Selecting a funny room type, links the viewer to a floor plan of that funny room type. We should allow them to click on various types of equipment in the floor plan and then show that to them. These views of the equipment can be automatically opened in a second browser window. This will allow the viewer to simply close the browser showing the equipment and return to the floor plan. This floor plan page may be a good place to place some copy with typical variances encountered in this type of funny room and possibly some common mistakes or oversights made when planning this type of funny room.

Page 26.

Save some Money! – Learn how in integrate used and refurbished equipment into your funny room design and save!

This page would contain your 17 page outline of purchasing used or refurbished equipment. This document should have a table of contents at the top allowing the viewer to jump down to specific sections. If desired, the user can print the file directly from the print button using auto formatting. While the page will be a very long page (user can use vertical scroll bar on browser to scroll) and the cost of this page will be higher than the other individual pages, it will be far easier for the user to simply scroll back and forth rather than jumping from page to page and significantly less expensive than breaking the document into individual pages.

Page 27. About SampleCo - company profile

We should put pictures on this page of the people that will interface with customers. We should also have some background on each of these people. This gives the viewer a more comfortable connection with people verses just a company logo and serves to personalizes the company. We should also include some background on the company telling how it got started and where it is today. We should tell what the company capabilities are and what makes SampleCo unique over the competition. This page should talk up SampleCo as much as possible. Once a viewer finds the site and the product that they are looking for, they are next interested in "who are they going to be dealing with".

Page 28. Contact information – "Let us help you!"

We should list the individuals (possibly show their picture again) who a potential customer would call or get information from. We should give phone and fax numbers and e-mail links for each of these people. This page can also contain a customer profile form that the customer can fill out with some background on their application and requirements. Once completed, this form will be e-mailed directly to SampleCo. If you decide to provide on line catalogs/brochures, the links for downloading these would be located on this page.



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### **Development Outline, Milestones and Estimated Cost.**

DDSi and SampleCo both understand that the exact nature and specifications of this Website are still evolving and will continue to do so throughout the development. Therefore, the following is a planned outline with loosely based milestones. Only the first quotation for the first milestone is presented as a not-to-exceed figure. The remaining milestones and quotations are presented for approximate budgeting and scheduling. SampleCo retains all control through each milestone. DDSi will present additional quotations and estimates to SampleCo for each milestone prior to proceeding with that milestone. All timelines are based on development time for DDSi. Any delays imposed by response time of SampleCo will extend out delivery times and possibly effect the cost of development. All copy including stock numbers is to be supplied on PC computer readable media by SampleCo. Image scanning is included in the page price listed below. All mechanical drawings are to be supplied by SampleCo on PC computer readable format media in Autocad 14 (or lower rev.) Data/text entry will be billed extra at \$85 per hour.

Milestone 1 – Initial look and feel.

DDSi will initially generate one rough web page for review by SampleCo. SampleCo will have the opportunity to make changes and request a new format. Included in this milestone is one complete page change by SampleCo if the original submitted format is not acceptable. All post format selection minor formatting changes are included. This page will serve as the Home Page for SampleCo.

Estimate: 1 week – Fixed price: \$

Milestone 2 - Products Selection Page

Time estimate: 2-4 days after milestone 1 – cost estimate: \$

This page will contain all of the products for sale by SampleCo. The exact formatting and size of this page is unknown at this time.

Milestone 3 – Individual product pages (15 estimated)

Time estimate: 20 to 28 days – cost estimate: \$ per page.

Milestone 4 Planning a new funny room – we can help – our design and planning services

Time estimate: 2 – 4 days – cost estimate: \$ , link and extra Calif. page: \$.

I anticipate this being one semi-long page with several photos and ample text. The link to the Calif. page can go to the end of the page or a separate page. I recommend the separate page so that the view can easily print this information separately.

Milestone 5 – Take a Virtual tour.

Time estimate: 4 to 7 days – cost estimate \$ per page (opening page and floor plan pages), \$ per floor plan page with product links.

Milestone 6 – Frequently Asked Questions.

Time estimate: 3 days – cost estimate \$ to \$.

I anticipate this being one long text page. I will include a content section at the beginning with links to answers and explanations of each question.

Milestone 7. – Educational page containing the “17 page” write up.

Time estimate: 4-6 days – cost estimate: \$, external links to products \$ extra.

This will be one long page. Since it will be virtually all text, it should load very quickly. We can include a linked table of contents at the top. It may also be appropriate to place links in the document to show the reader what the individual pieces of equipment looks like if appropriate.

Milestone 8 - company profile and contact information page

Time estimate 4 – 7 days – cost estimate - \$ including e-mail form and link.



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Milestone 9 – inventory update setup (not for use by the public if done in HTML type Web page).

Time estimate 1-2 days - cost estimate - \$ - \$

Milestone 10 – Website cleanup, completion and acceptance.

Publishing – DDSi can publish the Deliverable onto the SampleCo Web Server - \$

Documentation: All Deliverables are in PC computer readable format. After the final acceptance of the development, DDSi will furnish a short written description of what is on each page and how it was created. No additional documentation is included.

### Terms

As each milestone is completed and accepted by SampleCo, DDSi will generate an invoice to SampleCo indicating the amount being billed for the current completed milestone and a total due of 75% of this amount allowing SampleCo a 25% project completion holdback. These invoices will be due and payable within 15 days. At the completion of the final milestone, DDSi will generate a final invoice including the final milestone and all holdback amounts will then be due and payable within 15 days. In the event that SampleCo stops or holds up development for more than 30 days, then SampleCo agrees to pay all holdback amounts for all work as specified in section 7.3 of the SDA.

### Additional Licenses

At this time, there are no anticipated licenses that SampleCo will be required to purchase.

### Hosting

This agreement does not include any : publication services, hosting services, tracking services, update services, maintenance services, or any other services beyond Web Page development.

### Developer Link

SampleCo \_\_\_\_\_ does or \_\_\_\_\_ does not grant permission for Developer to include a  
“Website Development by Discovery Data Systems, inc.” link on the SampleCo site.

Page: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_