

# Do you have a Strategic Internet Marketing Plan?

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You want to be on the Internet and you've just hired a Web designer to create your site. But, have you taken time to develop your marketing plan? Maybe you already have a Web site. But, is your site meeting your expectations? Perhaps, it's time to look at your Strategic Internet Marketing Plan and if you don't have one, now is the time to get one. Whether you hire an Internet expert or do an evaluation yourself, your plan should include the following considerations:

- 1) Is your Web site targeting the right audience? If you haven't talked to at least one of your customers and asked about their opinion of your site and the value it brings to them, you should do so. Maybe you're not targeting the right group and without asking questions you will never know.
- 2) Is your message clear? Your site should contain simple messages that visitors would clearly understand in a few minutes. Does your site already do this, or do you need to modify your content? Remember, less is often more on the Internet.
- 3) Are you driving sales with a call to action? Does your Web site encourage the visitor to participate in any way? Are you really asking for the business or are you just assuming that they will want to buy from you simply because you are there? Think of it another way. If you met with a client, face to face, would you ask for their business? Of course you would. It makes sense to do the same on the Internet.
- 4) Take a look at your profit analysis. Have you given thought to how the Internet can be profitable for you? You can benefit in a monetary sense. You can also gather client information and send a message to a client that makes them feel special.
- 5) If you asked someone to evaluate your site, would the evaluation be positive in every way? Often I hear people say, "I'm not finished setting up my site, but could you tell me what you think of it?" You know what I think - you should complete it before you invite me in. After all, would you invite customers in to an unfinished store front?
- 6) Think back to what you learned in your business and marketing classes and evaluate your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
- 7) How does your Web site stand up to the competition? Are there any advantages for the visitor or is he or she likely to check out a competitor and not return?
- 8) What new trends or ideas are working, on the Internet, that would bring more business to your site?

Bell says, "Call before you dig." I say, "Create your Strategic Internet Marketing Plan before you build your site." However, it's never too late to hire an Internet consultant to perform a strategic analysis of your site. If you can't afford a consultant, then review the steps above and don't be afraid to ask for your customers' opinions. It's time to take stock of what you have and where you are going. If you're not doing it, you can be sure that your competition is!