



Web Marketing

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There are several ways that your business could utilise the Internet and Web to help improve your marketing of your business.

Other Fact Sheets in this series cover the “how to” aspects of e.g. email marketing.

In this Fact Sheet, our E-Business Advisers discuss the range of options you have available:

1. A Marketing-only Web site:

It's almost a pre-requisite for businesses to have a web site - over 75% of UK businesses do.

The problem is many of them aren't gaining business benefits from them.

The reason tends to be that the web site isn't integrated into the marketing strategy of the business - it's just sort of stuck on the web and forgotten about!

Here are a few tips on how to make a marketing web site successful:

- Firstly, mentally integrate it into your marketing strategy - for example, it's always amazing to the authors of this paper the number of Directors that don't know their own firms' web address.

If they don't - nobody else will!

This rule applies throughout your business too, from the M.D to the receptionist (especially the receptionist, actually!)

Incorporate your web site address into all your stationery and signage, mention it to prospects and customers - and use it!

See the Fact Sheet on “Free & Cheap offline Marketing for your Web site” in this series.

- Have a clear picture of who your target visitor will be - business or consumer, local or international, male or female, young or old?

Web site visitors usually are trying to solve a problem or find some information - you need to think about how your site needs to be designed to help them to do so.

See the “Bad Web Righting” and “Benefits not Features!” Fact Sheets in this series for more details.

- For a professional looking site, employ a good web site designer to develop your site for you.

A good web designer will know how to make the best use of the technology: the chaps “down the pub” who'll do the site “on the cheap” will possibly give you precisely that - a cheap and nasty site.

Not the image you want potential customers to see.

Always ask web designers for references and look closely at their previous work. Take the references up too.

See the several “Web Development” Fact Sheets in this series for more guidance



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- Don't think that just because the site exists, people will "beat a path to your door" - they won't.

You need to incorporate the tips found in the "Free & Cheap Offline Marketing for your Web site", "Pay per Click Advertising" and the three "Search Engine Optimisation" Fact Sheets in this series to make sure that your site is easily found by prospective customers.

- You need to also ensure that you are following the legal requirements for issues such as Data Protection, the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act etc.

See the "Legal Aspects of e-Business" Fact Sheet in this series for more information.

2. Email Marketing:

If you want to stay in touch with customers, email newsletters often do a better job than web sites, whilst providing an effective way of directing customers to further resources available at your company's web site.

Anyone can now run an email newsletter for very low cost, irrespective of your line of business.

The downside is that you do have to make sure that your customers want to be contacted via this means - otherwise it's just spam, and actually illegal.

See the "Email Newsletters" Fact Sheet in this series for more information.

3. Advertising your web site via online directories:

In some sectors, there are well established directories that are well promoted in the Search

Engines.

For example, in the Hotels / Guest House market, www.smoothound.co.uk is a well promoted and used directory that allows links to your web site, for a fee.

If there are other similar ones in your sector that are well used - consider paying for a link through from them, but monitor the amount of visitor traffic through to your site to make sure it is economic.

There are also many generic sites such as www.yell.co.uk, and many other locally based sites that might be appropriate, dependant on the market you are trying to reach.

Do some research - and be aware that there are many directories (who may well approach you by phone) that are not at all effective routes for advertising your site.

4. Online Sales via your web site:

If you decide that you wish to sell online through your web site - all the previous points are as valid as for marketing-only (or "brochureware") web sites.

There are, however, several other issues that you need to be aware of.

These are covered in the "E-commerce - B2C & B2B", "Consumer Protection (Distance Selling) Regulations 2000" and "Third Party Payment Providers" Fact Sheets in this series.

Of course - we also strongly recommend that you talk to us at 360e - our web site address is below for contact details.



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5. Useful Links:

The several Fact Sheets in this series mentioned in the text - all of which are available from the same site as this Fact Sheet.

www.ebusinessclub.biz - the East Midlands e-business club, with access to many other resources, including online booking onto the "First Steps" FREE workshops mentioned, at a venue near you.