

Internet Basics by Timothy Copsey



'websites that work'

**Tel 01268 750855
Fax 01268 750780**

www.ajswebdesign.co.uk

© Copyright Timothy Copsey 2000

Internet Basics by Timothy Copsey of AJS Web Design

Reasons why an organisation should have a website

- ◆ The internet is now an everyday part of millions of peoples lives. If people want to find information on anything at all, including products and services they are looking on the World Wide Web for answers. Consequently organisations with an effective website are finding it can be very useful as an advertising, promotion and marketing tool. It allows an organisation to communicate quickly & effectively with it's existing customers and help it find new ones.
- ◆ A website can be used to publish a company's information, providing details of products and services, & contact information. It also can be used to provide extra items of interest e.g. a DIY website could give details of 'How to build a shed, etc '
- ◆ Once a website is live on the www (World Wide Web), it can then be visited by anyone, anywhere in the world with access to the Internet.
- ◆ Websites provide 365 days a year and 24 hour-a-day access to details of a business's products and services. At any time of the day or night, customers can view the information presented and respond to it. They can print a hard copy if they require or send an email enquiry. If the site is in the style of an on-line shop they can even place an order and pay for it.
- ◆ The information held on a website can be quickly & easily updated, unlike traditional printed promotional material.
- ◆ A website address (e.g. www.ajswebdesign.co.uk) on a letterhead, business card and other forms of advertising provides an immediate point of contact.
- ◆ Websites aimed at consumers are often highlighted in the media as an important part of the Internet, which they are but that is not the whole story. Business to business use of the Internet and the World Wide Web is expanding rapidly. If a company's competitors don't have a website, then there is an opportunity to gain competitive advantage. If a business is not on the Web it needs to try and catch up fast.
- ◆ Compared to other promotional activity getting an effective website up and running can be very low cost

Website Creation

The key elements for the creation of a website are as follows :-

Content

The most important part of a website is the content. It is essential that a website has useful information that users will want to come and view. If you want people to revisit your site then it needs to be updated periodically with fresh information. Careful thought needs to be given to what the objectives of the website are and what users will find useful. This should be clearly established before construction begins on the website, although obviously the content can be added to later.

Style

A website should look professional in appearance and project the organisation's corporate image.

- Attention needs to be given to incorporating logos and the use of an appropriate colour scheme.
- It is important that the style is consistent throughout the different areas of the site.
- The look should be clean and uncluttered
- The website should be capable of being viewed on different computers using different browser software (e.g. Internet explorer, Firefox)
- The website should load as fast as possible. All appropriate methods need to be undertaken to achieve this (e.g. keeping images fairly small in size).
- Excessive use of animated gimmicks should be avoided

Navigation

It is important that visitors to the website can navigate about it easily. They should be able to get to the areas that interest them as quickly and as simply as possible.

Visibility

What is meant by visibility is the ability to find the website in order to visit and use it. The key point in relation to the construction of the site itself is that it should be coded in such a way that it is search engine friendly (i.e. people searching on search engines/ directories can find the website). This is a difficult task to do well but efforts should be made in this area. There are other things that can be done in relation to visibility but they do not involve the way the site is created.

There are other aspects to using the internet effectively to promote an organisation, but the above points set out the main points in relation to the construction of the website itself.