

## Getting a Web Presence - Six Reasons to Go Cyber

Saying that the Web is complicated is like saying that football is aggressive. Web trends come and go, with success stories and disasters wrestling for attention in the public eye. Sometimes people get it, and you have an amazing case like the advent of Twitter. Others miss the point spectacularly, such as CNN's short-lived series where newscasters read excerpts from blogs.

With so much coming so quickly, it's no surprise that some people are hesitant to expand their business into the online marketplace. It's intimidating, and the penalties for failure can be harsh. However, here are six good reasons that every business can and should establish a Web presence.

### **#1 - Common Reference**

Today, the Web is an integral part of most people's lives. It's not surprising that fewer and fewer people each year go to the newspaper or television for information and entertainment. News travels faster on the Web, and the sheer volume of entertainment available via sites like YouTube, Netflix, College Humor and others all mean less time in front of the television, and more time surfing the Web.

This is a warning and an opportunity. Traditional venues do still have a place simply through inertia and ubiquity, but they also are giving ground to the rising force of the Web. Getting a presence online allows you to keep pace with these growing trends; as people grow ever more dependent on the Web as a means of information and conducting business, it is the Web-oriented enterprise that likely will have its customer base grow, rather than shrink.

### **#2 - Innovation**

The Web is so unrestrained that there are all manner of ways people can develop their creative impulses and come up with the next world-winning idea.

In that spirit, it's healthy for any business to expose itself to innovation and competition. The increased tide of information may seem overwhelming, but managed carefully and studied diligently it can provide a wealth of ideas that can help your business grow. Any organization that cuts itself off from valuable information is just asking to be bypassed.

### **#3 - Communication**

No other system of communication has been so fundamentally universal as the Web. People crave communication and contact, and the Web has affirmed this through every social multimedia network that has evolved and thrived. This is much more than a simple case of friends catching up on the latest gossip; it is a powerful tool that can keep your business ahead of the game.

The Web is bursting with information. Many experts use the Web to publish materials they don't want to take the time to ram through slower, more traditional channels, because they're eager to share. If you have an issue for your business, the Web has an expert ready to discuss it. Getting a Web presence allows these experts to see what you have to offer, and to help you refine it, be it through a forum discussion or a friendly email.

### **#4 - Efficiency of Exposure**

This is where the Web truly shines, as demonstrated by the success of bookselling giant Amazon. Advertising takes time and money, so you want to put your advertisements where the greatest number can see them for the smallest cost. So rather than have many scattered retail bookstores, Amazon has one centralized system that everyone can go to, almost anywhere in the world.

These benefits extend beyond the mail-order mindset, as well. Having a well-designed, effective website for your store can get people interested. Rather than take a gamble on an unknown restaurant, for example, consumers can come to its site and see exactly what's on the menu, for what prices, and even reserve a table with a convenient online form. As a result, the restaurant fills up tables, and its competition misses out.

### **#5 - Inexpensive Investment**

Very few businesses have to incur a massive expense when setting up their initial Web presence. The cases in which you'd need your own server, for example, are vanishingly rare. Bandwidth and hosting space can be acquired for very reasonable rates, with many hosts offering trial periods and special business discounts. For the many benefits a Web presence can offer, the investment is hardly worth mentioning; but the ROI can be

staggering.

## #6 - A Case in Point

This is a bit of a 'meta' reference, meaning it requires a little thinking outside the usual box. But consider for a moment just where you're reading this article. Consider what probably brought you to this website. Is it a coincidence that an article about establishing a Web presence can be found on the Web? A bit of lighthearted irony, but it does get you thinking a little, doesn't it?

People are using the Web, and are going to continue using it. Major legislative battles are being fought over just how the Web should be allowed to function, but the Web most likely is going to be the defining arena of all business for the next century and beyond. Do your business the best service you can, and consider not if you should get a Web presence, but what form is the most appropriate to begin with.

## About the Author

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