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Web Biz for Beginners

By John Williams

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About the Author

John Williams is a professional magician who started his first business on the Internet as an extension of his mail order business selling magic tricks.

He edited and published the autobiography of a retired professional magician, the late Card Mondor, as an electronic book or ebook (a computer file that contains the complete text and pictures of a book) and was inspired by that experience to develop another business; writing and selling electronic books.

That takes up most of his time at present. He has written eight ebooks and has two more in their early stages.

John's magic site is <http://www.ezymagic.com>

His web services site is <http://www.ezy-internet.com/>

Introduction

I'll assume that you know how to connect to the Internet, buy an ebook, download it and similar basic stuff. I will touch only briefly on those topics here. That information is covered in more depth in my earlier ebook, “Net ABC” which you can get from the [Ebookwholesaler Member](#) that supplied this ebook to you.

For completeness, I will briefly cover some of the same material here but, this time, my focus is on creating your web site and promoting your business or other activities with it.

Would you like to set up your own web site to:

Keep in touch with friends and family

Show pictures of your family, travels or hobby items.

Promote a club or cause that you are associated with

Promote your business or start a new business

If you put “YES” to any of the above, you may have tried but found it too frustrating, expensive or time-consuming. Or you might have just heard that it's too frustrating, expensive, time-consuming or even *dangerous*?

Web Biz for Beginners tells you how to safely surf the web, put your own web site together and promote yourself, your business products or services and my aim is to make it clear enough that you can do it yourself!

I'll keep the explanations as short and as clear as I can. If there's anything that is still unclear, please subscribe to my ezy-Internet newsletter at <http://www.ezy-internet.com>

I'll stop this introduction right here... **let's get started!**

Before You Go to the Woods Today

You have probably heard or read of the tricks and traps that lurk on the World Wide Web?

There are many, and more seem to start every day. That means the Net is like the rest of our society – new schemes to take our money, reputation, appear in our towns and even the countryside regularly.

That doesn't stop many of us from mixing socially and doing business with people we've never met or know much about. We advance slowly, in line with our experience and the knowledge that we picked up from dealing with other people and businesses.

Treat the Net the same as the off-line world – take care but focus on enjoying yourself and the benefits that your Net adventure can bring your lifestyle, family and business activities. There are more people for us to interact with on the Net than most of us are likely to deal with off-line (and thousands more coming on-line every day), so there are more scammers too.

Protect Your Computer from Viruses and Other Nasties.

Just as you put appropriate tires and maybe even other accessories on your car before you drive into unfamiliar rough country, you need to give your computer some protection against the possibility of viruses, spyware and other nasties that it might pick up on its Net journeys.

That's important for every Internet user – the casual user who just uses email to keep in touch with friends and family, the multimedia enthusiast that can't resist downloading music files as soon as they are released and especially for anyone that uses their computer for the Internet and their business, whether that business is off-line or on-line.

Connecting to the Internet without a current version of a reliable anti-virus program and at least one program to guard against spyware and other malevolent intruders is not much

different to walking blindfolded down the middle of a highway against the traffic at midnight. You may not be hit but the risk level is high.

I recommend that you download and install these 2 programs:

Ad-Aware SE (either Plus or Pro) <http://www.lavasoft.de>

Spybot Search and Destroy <http://www.safer-networking.org/en/>

Run them daily to detect and, with your approval, remove spyware (programs that track your usage of the Net, then send that and maybe other information about your system to whoever secretly put the intruder on your system), dialers (programs that can change the settings on your Internet phone connection so that your calls are routed through off-shore, expensive exchanges without your knowledge) and other nasties.

The recommended programs cannot be complete protection against every possible intruder but they are frequently updated and free versions with no time limits are available.

A reputable anti-virus program is also essential:

Vet <http://www.vet.com.au> (for Australian readers). My positive experience with this program and their support makes me happy to recommend them.

Two other companies, McAfee and Norton, are recognized as supplying effective programs. I have used each of them in the past.

There is also a good free anti-virus package, AVG supplied by Grisoft <http://www.grisoft.com/> They also have a commercial version. The free version has, I believe, less frequent updates, and support for the free version is only by email but it is great that Grisoft continues to make this free version available and update it regularly.

You must keep whichever anti-virus program you use as up to date as possible. Even with the most current update, there is a small chance that you could be struck by a virus or

other attacker that is not recognized by that program – it may have been developed and released since the last update of your anti-virus program – but that's fairly unlikely.

If that happens, contact your supplier's support as quickly as possible. You should not send any emails or travel on the Net if you suspect that your computer is infected.

You must be careful of computer files that you get off-line as well as from the Internet. Use your anti-virus program to check all disks, CD Rom's and other media that you put in to your computer before you transfer any files at all. That includes newly purchased software. Though it is rare, there have been instances where disks with new commercial software files have also carried viruses!

The couple of minutes that it takes for a scan could save your considerable frustration.

Some Safe Buying Tips

There are risks in using credit cards or disclosing personally sensitive information on the Internet. These same risks exist when dealing with people and businesses off-line too.

Always run your spyware programs regularly and keep them updated to reduce the chance that a hidden program is recording your keystrokes or other information such as the sites that you visit.

If you feel any anxiety about a site that you visit, close the browser window and don't go back.

You can examine the cookies that have been placed on your computer with special programs (<http://www.karenware.com/> has a free, reliable one). Some people remove all cookies from time to time but they are used by legitimate sites, including your bank and hosting provider as well as other sites such as software providers so that could cause you some inconvenience.

Never disclose any information of importance, such as passwords or credit card details, on any site where your web browser is not displaying a lock or other generally recognized symbol that indicates you are dealing with a secure site.

When you have visited a secure site and made some sort of sensitive transaction, log out of the site and **close the browser window completely**. Do not go to another site while using that same window.

Do not respond to any emails that appear to come from a financial organization such as a bank, credit card company or whoever, which ask for sensitive information.

Always contact the company off-line or use the normal address for accessing your account – NEVER use a link in an email. I have seen some “spoof” emails that look more credible than the real emails from some of the companies that I deal with!

Be Prepared for Disaster

Yes, even in the “Internet Age”, we need pens and paper.

Keep a copy of everything that is on your website and don't rely solely on the files that are on your computer. I've had a hard drive become unusable without warning and Zip disks and floppy disks unreadable – no CD Rom's, so far, but it can happen.

You have to decide how thorough your backup and fall-back procedures are. The best way is to balance the cost in time and money it is worth to reduce the chances and effects of having to recover from the loss of the information, original program files, pictures or whatever.

My set-up is presented as one way – it's nowhere near the ideal.

Every file that is put on any of the machines is scanned before it is opened. My computers are scanned completely every 24 hours with current software.

The protective programs check for updates every time BEFORE I run them unless they notify me of an attempted intrusion.

I keep a small, thick book with alphabetical tabs for all my passwords and other essential information. I used to use an electronic organizer but it “fried” its memory, so I started keeping a paper record even after I got a new organizer. Some people use a computer program such as the highly regarded RoboForm from <http://www.roboform.com>. When I used that, I still kept a paper record.

I do my work on a five-year-old computer that never connects to the Internet. Some programs that require Net access cannot run on it.

My other old computer that connects to the Internet has some options, such as Java in the web browser, restricted or completely denied.

I don't permit downloads unless I'm very sure that I need it and it's 100% safe.

I do not run ad blocking software because I respect the right of other people to promote their products and services just as I do. I don't mind advertising on sites that offer free services – every provider has costs and it would be unrealistic to expect them to keep giving with no return forever.

If someone uses any advertising method that irritates me, I don't buy anything that they are associated with.

Research First

Start by looking at the search engines to see what aspects of the area are addressed by your products or services – the problems that your potential customers want solved - that people have looked for on the Net recently.

<http://www.inventory.overture.com/> is a free “search word suggestion tool”. Put in a relevant term and it will list the number of related searches and how many related searches were done on Overture in the last month.

As an example, I put in “pig breeding” – 825 people looked for information about “guinea pig breeding” and 286 people searched for “pig breeding”.

Neither of those figures indicates huge potential unless you believe that one of those groups is also anxious to pay for related information/services and that your offering – products or services - has the benefits they want.

If you get very low numbers from this preliminary test, you might change the term that you put in to the tool or even decide to research another area that could be more responsive (pay you better).

The actual terms that people have used are valuable when you start putting your web pages together so make a copy of the listings for your later reference.

Another tool that will give you terms that real people (potential customers) have used is Good Keywords from <http://www.goodkeywords.com/>

You download and install this free software program, then type in a relevant term. Good Keywords, like the on-line resource above, produces a list of the actual terms used for searches in the last month.

Obviously, you need to be connected to the Internet for this software to work.

You should also start book-marking sites that you feel offer the sort of image you want to project with your site. You can't just grab the pictures, text or even the layout of another site for your own. But you can use them as inspiration when you start to develop your own site.

Don't wait until everything about your design is “just right” because all sites are under constant development and you could be losing sales and networking opportunities that will never return.

You have to keep on making changes to your site, such as adding more content that will help your visitors, or changing the order of some pages to make navigation easier for your visitors. Your visitors will help by giving you feedback and buying or by leaving rapidly.

If you don't make it easy for visitors to get the answers they need, they'll go somewhere else and that's where they'll spend their money too!

Most hosting companies provide you with statistics about the visitors to your site. This information is usually available, along with many other facilities, from a Control Panel on your web site.

Programs to Design Your Web Site

You’ll need some software to create and edit your web pages and also a program to upload (deliver) those pages and pictures to your web site.

You can get some of these programs for free and others may cost you hundreds of dollars.

Many free and low-cost programs can be obtained from sites such as:

<http://www.snapfiles.com/>

<http://www.nonags.com>

The low-cost programs are supplied as shareware – you can use them for a free period, usually 7 to 21 days, and then have to pay to continue using them.

Programs to Edit Your Pages

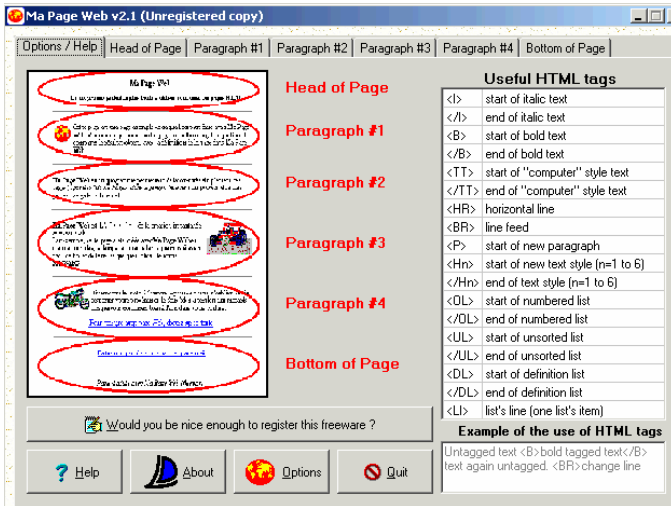
There are many web editor programs to choose from – free, shareware, and full commercial programs. The positioning of a program in a particular category or price range does not necessarily indicate its true value when compared to programs in other categories.

Some people write their pages in a simple text editor, such as NotePad or Edit Pad, or with HTML editors that do not show how the pages will appear to visitors on your site. That gives the tightest control of what appears on their site but involves time and expense while they learn to write good HTML.

Other programs are friendlier for people like us who don’t want to be experts or learn another language (computer or human).

Some of them are hybrid editors and let you write the code while the program shows you how the changes you are making will affect the page. Others keep all of the code changes out of your sight and you make your changes to a representation of the actual web page.

These programs are called WYSIWYG web editors. (What you see is what you get.)

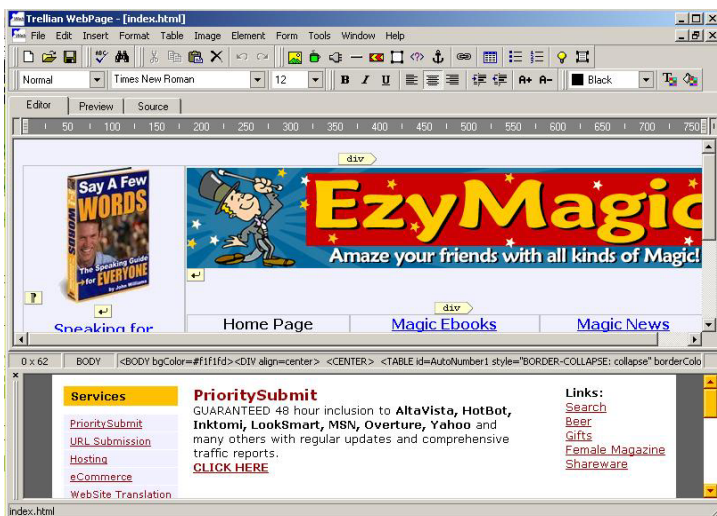


If you want a very simple way to create your site, **Ma Page Web** is worth trying -

<http://www.aldweb.com/?Ing=en> - you can leave off the **?Ing=en** if you are fluent in French because that is the Author’s language.

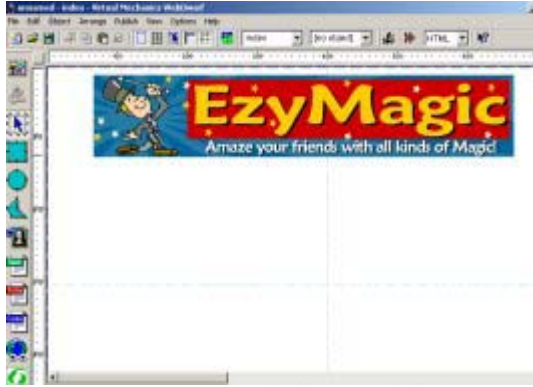
With this program, you simply “fill in the blanks” i.e. click on buttons to select a background pattern (if you want one on your pages) and other options.

You can download tutorials and instructions in the same format (Adobe Acrobat) as this ebook, so I will not give more instructions about using this very neat program here.



One program that I sometimes use is Trellian WebPage, a free web page editor that lets you display and edit the pages in a code page or in a representation of your web page and switch easily between them. It is available from <http://www.trellian.com/> They offer it to give a taste of some

of the features of their commercial program, Trellian Web Studio.



I also checked out IMS Web Dwarf from <http://www.virtualmechanics.com/> This offers pin-point accuracy in setting your text and pictures on your pages. You may be confused when you start if you have not used a web editor before, but the company provides a number of clear step-by-step tutorials on its site. You'll soon be producing pages that

catch the eye.

A well-known company called Sierra Software offers a free, superceded but fully functional version of its Web Editor software program at <http://www.freesierrasoftware.com/> Sierra hope that you will like the free version enough to invest in the latest version which, of course, has even more features.

The free version of Web Plus is a large download, especially if you accept the extra fonts that Sierra offers with it. It has many great features but you will need to study the Help files for a while to get the full power of the program.

Programs to Transfer Your Files

You will also need an FTP program to upload the pages you create along with the pictures and any special scripts that you use to your site.

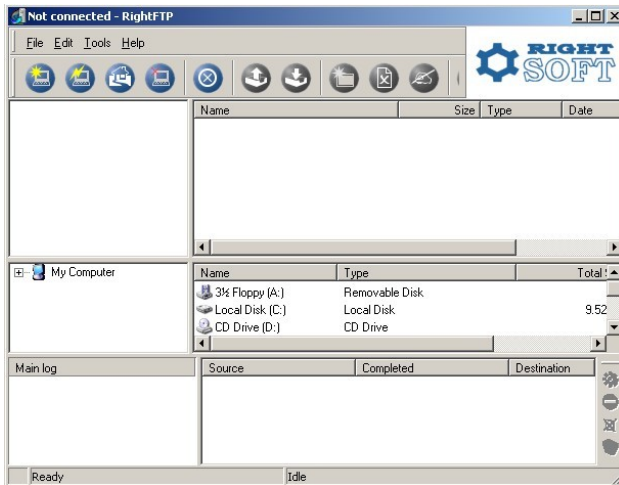
Many of the Web editor programs include the facility to upload your files. That may be the easiest way to start but some of these programs do not have all the functions of stand-alone dedicated FTP programs.

The best way is to try one of the free ftp programs or a web editor that has the FTP function built in. It's highly unlikely that you'll lose anything except a little time with this experimenting.

I use Ws ftp Pro from Ipswitch.com to transfer my files and those of my web design customers. The company has a clearly illustrated, step-by-step tutorial on their site.

They also offer a “light” version for use by students and other non-commercial use. This

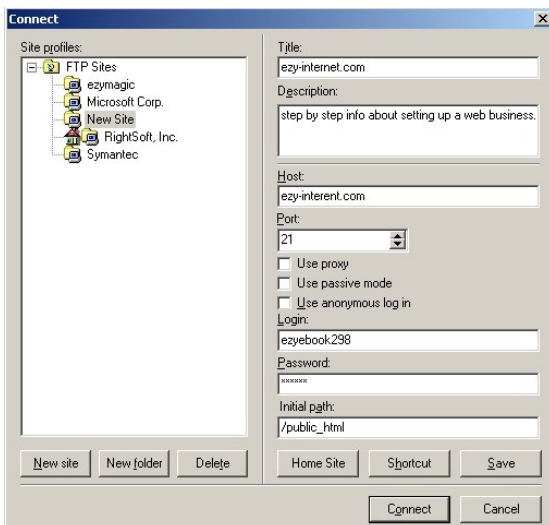
has the reliability and many of the features of its commercial “big brother”.



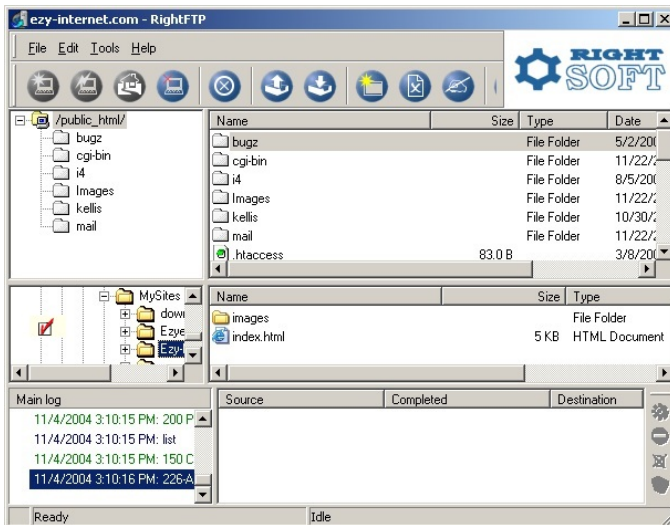
But I’ve set up a free program called Right FTP to use for this demonstration. I tested several FTP programs when I started work on this book and feel that RightFTP is the simplest one with all the necessary features and, also, you can’t beat the

price! You can get Right FTP from <http://www.right-soft.com/> for free.

There are no instructions with Right FTP but clicking on the menus or the picture icons will show you which functions they control.



You need to type in the destination to the FTP Server that you want to connect to. That’s my domain www.ezy-internet.com in the picture (substitute the actual name of your domain).

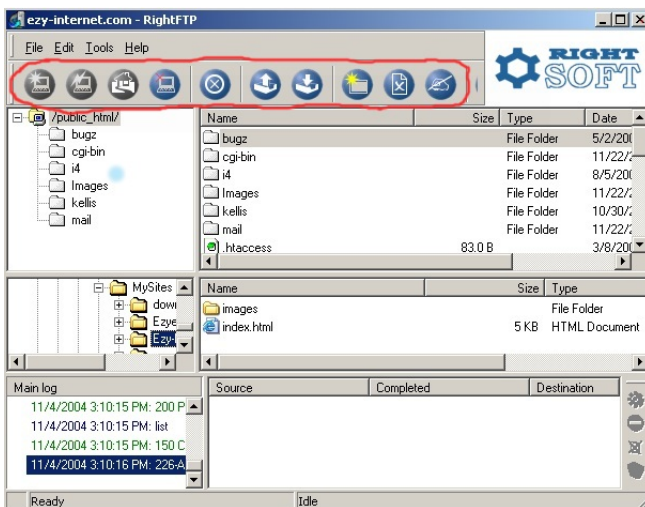


Use the second window on the left (where the tick is) to locate the files on your computer that you want to load to your site. The contents of the folder that you highlight there will appear in the opposite window on the right side.

You can save the details of each remote site that you send files to in

Right FTP or whatever FTP program you use so that you save time when you transfer other files or later versions of your current files. Use the Quick Connect feature in the Tools Menu when you reconnect to a site.

You can create and delete folders on your web site from within your FTP program. Be careful and double-check before you delete any files or folders.



Right FTP and most other FTP programs have a row of icons (small pictures) which you can click on to start various processes. This all helps save you time when you have learnt the basic functions.

This brief overview will still be handy even if you use a different FTP program. Most of them have the

same functions but, for copyright or other reasons, have to be careful not to copy the “look and feel” of another company’s FTP program.

Handling Credit Cards

You need to have an easy way for visitors to pay for any of your products, especially downloadable ones like ebooks, because the less fuss they have to endure in the payment process, the more likely that they'll push their plastic money at you.

There are many services that provide reliable, fast credit card payment handling. They include;

ClickBank <http://www.clickbank.com/>,

PayPal <http://www.paypal.com/>

2Checkout <http://www.2checkout.com/>

There are also many others.

These services collect and verify the payment from your customer, then notify you of the transaction. They charge a handling fee on each transaction. You can draw from your account with some of them at any time and for any amount up to your current balance, while others send you the balance, if it has reached an amount that you specify, every 2 or 4 weeks.

To use some companies' services, you need to arrange a merchant account or facility with your bank. Others send your payments direct to your account, or they may wire it to you or send you a check. Check all these details carefully before you sign up with any particular service.

I currently use ClickBank and PayPal.

ClickBank requires a \$50 set-up fee but also gives merchants that use their service access to an instant army of potential sales-people who willingly promote products of ClickBank Merchants on a straight commission basis.

These people may have their own web businesses, even be ClickBank Merchant Members themselves, or may just have signed up with ClickBank, for free, to earn money by promoting the products of ClickBank merchants. They’re called affiliates and some have built highly successful businesses, earning a substantial income doing nothing but this!

If you want to become a ClickBank affiliate for free, [click here](#).

If you want more information about all aspects of ClickBank, [download the free book from here](#).

PayPal is another service, now owned by eBay – the company that operates the very well-known on-line auction sites in several countries.

It’s free to sign up and start selling your on-line downloadable products through PayPal <http://www.paypal.com/> You must first sign up and supply your necessary details. Before you can start using their service to sell your products, you need to verify your credit card and bank account that you have connected to your PayPal account. This usually takes just a few days and involves PayPal deducting just over \$1 from your account – this generates a number which you send to PayPal as proof that the account is really yours.

Setting up the necessary links on your site so that your customers click through to the selected credit card service is fairly simple.

Each company provides information about how to use their system on their sites, some have clear manuals (no geek-speak) for you to download and they all willingly answer reasonable questions even before you sign up.

Design Your Web Site

Put It On Paper

Your web site will be a shop front, whether you use it to sell your products and services or to promote your hobby, cause or beliefs. You need to be focused and organized, just as if you were equipping a ‘bricks and mortar’ business office or store, though your expenses and the time involved in this preparation will be much less.

Creating your first and subsequent web sites will be much easier if you start systematically. Boring? Maybe - but the time, effort and stress that a little preparation will save you is worth it.

So, gather everything that you will use while creating your site into one place. All your paper notes, related articles torn from newspapers and magazines etc., should be kept tidily and near to your hand in one folder.

Similarly, every computer file that relates to your web site should be copied to a single folder on your computer. It’s a good idea to put that on your Desktop so that you can get to it quickly and use any spare minutes to tweak something. If there are some files that are not easily copied to the central location, put a simple text file in your work folder and list every external file and resource (including your paper ones) in that text file.

You also create your web site inside that folder, exactly as it will be on your web space. When you open your web editor program and start that first page of your site, save it as index.htm or index.html into that special “web site” folder inside your work folder.

This makes it easier when you are ready to upload your web site to your web space. Point your FTP program at the folder which contains your web site and send all the files in it to your domain.

Now you can check the two versions of the site against each other inside your FTP program. You’ll quickly spot, for instance, any file that has been changed on your computer where the equivalent file on your site is still the old version.

Remember that the time shown against the files on your actual web site may be different to the times shown against the files in the copy of your web site that is on your computer. That’s because the server (large computer) where your Internet web site actually is located could well be in a different time zone to the one that you are in. The relationship between the times displayed against the two sets of files will be constant.

Templates

I’ve included information in the resources section about sites from which you can get web page templates – pre-designed pages that you may use on your web site by just adding your own information and pictures. These templates often come with some pictures, banners and sometimes even with special scripts which let you show the date or other information on your site.

Be sure to check and follow any Terms of Use that are on the site that you get the template from or that arrive in a text file with your new template. If the supplier says, "please include a link to my site on each page you create with this template I am giving you for free", that’s what you should do. If you don’t want to include the link, then just look for another template where the supplier does not put that condition on it.

You can also buy packages of pre-designed web-page templates. The attractiveness and usefulness is for you to judge. What I like or will use may not appeal to your eye or suit the type of product or service that you want to sell.

The most important consideration with the look of your site is “will my visitors be encouraged to stay at my site, also to return and, most importantly, buy what I offer?” That should have more weight than your particular liking for certain colors or fonts (type styles).

It’s widely accepted that people may have to see your message 3 or more times before they buy. So you should try to make relevant changes to your site or they may be turned off before that important buying decision is made because they just see the same thing at your site, displayed in the same way every time they visit.

Some web businesses make an error that’s almost the reverse of that – they change the site, add interesting content, even games and free downloads but don’t make it easy for their visitors to buy anything.

When you’re designing or updating your site, make sure your visitors can see clearly where to click when they are ready to buy!

But, even if you start by using a web page design supplied by someone else, a time will come when you want to produce your own.

Your Design

It isn’t that hard to produce pages with eye and customer appeal. Just remember that time is compressed for Internet users and so is their attention span; make everything super-simple and repeat your main points.

Lay out exactly what you will offer with the words and pictures that you’ll use.

Sketch out:

How you want the site to look

Colors: These should be thought through because color schemes can have a marked effect on the acceptance of your site and the information, including advertising, on it.

You can do your own experiments or research through the Net about the effects of different colors and color combinations.

Red – excitement

Black – depressing (or even evil if your visitor has a vivid imagination)

White – cleanliness, renewal

Blue - Peacefulness

Pictures: Pictures attract the eye and can improve the appeal of your site if they are relevant to the theme of your site and not so large that they make your page slow to load into your visitor’s web browser.

Test your pages with the sort of equipment that your visitors are most likely using to access the Net. Currently, the vast majority are still using dial-up connections with a maximum speed of 56k – many are, in reality, even slower than that.

Any pages that take more than 25 seconds to load with that sort of equipment will probably reduce the number of visitors that stay at your site for more than say, 26 seconds!

Words: Use plain words and short sentences unless your market is willing to read long, dense prose and then spend their money. Keep your paragraphs short too, break them up with bunches of bullet points and keep it all relevant to what your potential customer wants.

If you’ve got a half-page which tells the history of your company or is about the qualifications of your chief chemist, that’s probably costing you money – it could drive your visitors away or put them to sleep, but it’s unlikely to encourage them to buy what you are selling!

Everyone should learn basic HTML so that you can make changes to your pages more quickly. It will also help you to understand and fix any mistakes that appear on your pages from your own efforts or maybe even quirks in the web editor program that you use.

Before You Open Your Editor

Go to the folder on your computer that you have set up to put your web site in. Inside that folder, create a new folder called **images**.

Copy all the pictures you will use on your site into that folder. Keeping all your images inside just one folder will reduce the chance that your visitors will see errors instead of your carefully prepared or selected images.

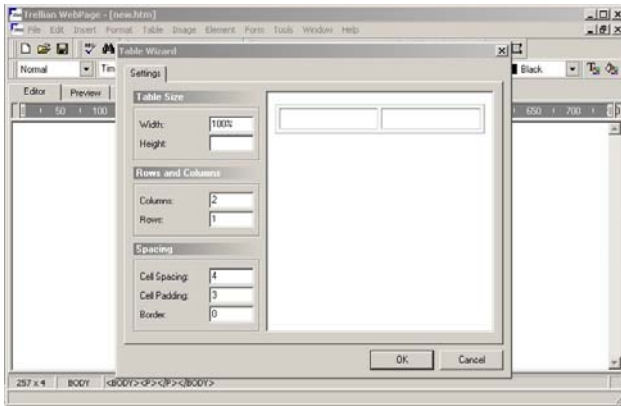
Over time, you will probably create sub-folders inside the main web site folder to keep different pages about different products or services in. It’s easier to have all your pictures in that central “images” folder rather than to have to search for them.

Creating Your First Page

These steps will create a simple page and you should be able to duplicate them with just about any web page editor program. If any step is not available with your editor, skip to the next step or see if you can find a work-around.

Choose your editor program, open it and either click on “New” or select a template if there are some available in the program.

Create a table at the top of your page with 2 columns. Make this table 95% of the width of your page. Make the background color of the cells (boxes that make the table) the same or a contrast to the color you use for the background of your page – your choice.

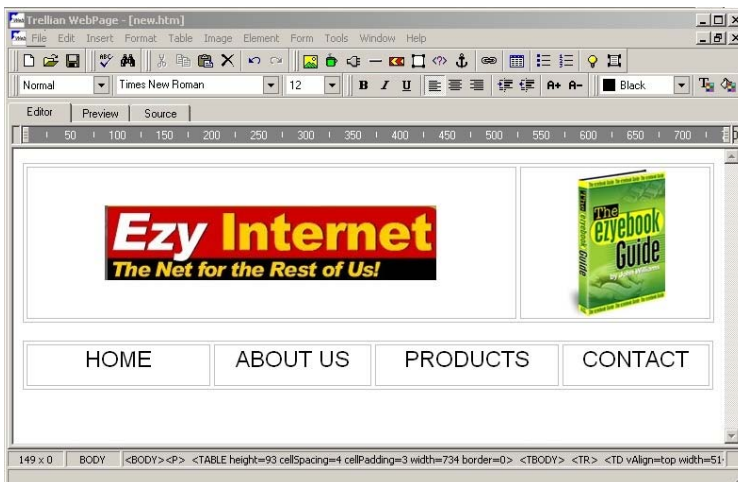
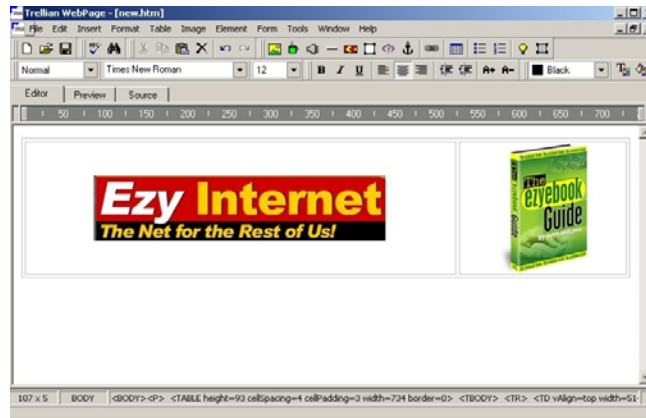


In the left box (cell) put your logo (see the resources section for a variety of ways to create your logo).

Put some text or another picture in the smaller cell at the right.

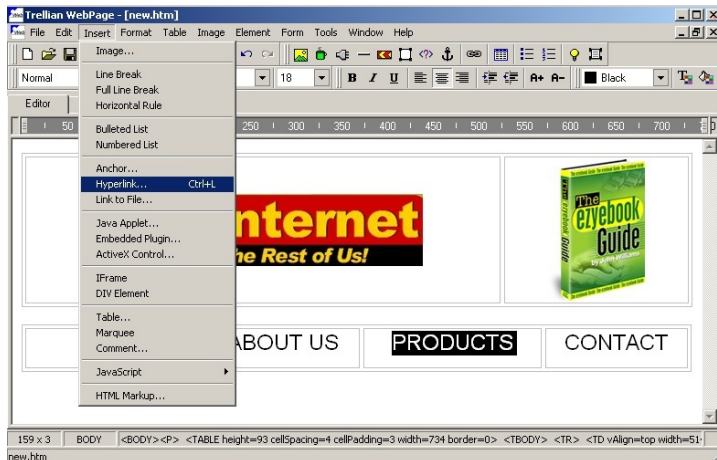
Of course, it looks much better if you make the background of the picture

match the background color of the cell. You can do that with almost any graphic program.



Next we add a rows of buttons to link to other pages on the site. It’s just another table. You can use small pictures for each of the buttons or some large text. If you want to use a fancy font,

make them into a picture with your graphic program. Otherwise, your carefully selected font will be replaced with a standard font if the visitor doesn't have the font that you used on their computer.



Now you put a link in each of the cells.

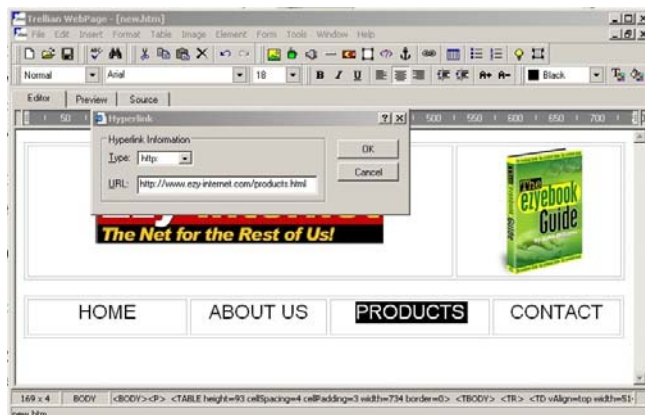
HOME goes to your index.html page (the one we're creating now).

ABOUT US goes to your

about.html page

PRODUCTS goes to your products.html page where you put your products. If you offer services rather than products, you'll have a services.html page instead, of course.

CONTACT goes to your contact.html page where you put a form which people fill in to send you questions and other feedback.



With the WYSIWYG editors, you can usually make these links by highlighting the text or picture that you want the link in, then clicking on a picture of a chain link or a “Link to” option in the program's menu.

Now you just type in the page you are linking to. If that page is on a different site, put the whole web address <http://www.othersite.com.au/fred.html> (yes, I made that one up too).

You can now add whatever text and pictures that you want – keep it simple and neat.

Whether you put the information in another table is up to you.

I always put an “anchor” (Microsoft FrontPage calls it a bookmark to match the other Office programs) called TOP at the top of each page and a link at the bottom of the page which visitors can click on to return to the top.

First, you put the anchor - represented by an anchor with most WYSIWYG editors.

Then you type at the bottom of the page Click here to return to the TOP of this page.

Highlight that text, make it bold and then click on the hyperlink option, specify that you are linking to the anchor (or Bookmark) called TOP.

Save your page.

Then you can save the same page as about.html, contact.html and products.html.

This means that all your basic formatting of the other pages is done. You just need to change text and pictures where appropriate for each page.

Get Your Own Web Space

Your web site is like a mobile home or shop – you can set up with one hosting company now (perhaps one that offers free space but puts adverts around your pages or annoys your visitors by opening extra pages of advertising in their web browser), and then move to another hosting company sometime.

Grab some Free Web Space

You can sign up with a company that provides free web space but that is a trade-off that you could regret later on. Your “home” or “shop” on the web will probably be surrounded by unrelated advertising which pays the supplier of your web space enough for them to make a profit on the deal.

You may also find that each visitor to your site has to navigate through extra advertising pages while they are at your site or immediately after they leave. Some providers now use pop-ups that don’t appear on your visitor’s screen until minutes after they leave your site.

All this works against your visitors wanting to return to your site soon or even come back at all!

You usually cannot put your own domain name on the space you get with a supplier of free web space. Instead of asking people, including potential customers to come to <http://mybargainstore.com/> (a name I just made up), you’ll have to say, “Please visit <http://www.myspaceprovider.com/~myfreespace/>”, (another made-up example).

That does not give anyone a sense that they are dealing with a professional, does it?

Also, when you move to another host, you cannot use the same web address (<http://www.myspaceprovider.com/~myfreespace/>) when you relocate. You have to start building the reputation of your web site almost completely from scratch.

Register Your Own Domain

I hope that you can see the advantages of starting with your own domain name? It isn't hard to get one.

You can register the name you want, if somebody has not already bought it, by visiting a domain registrar. There are many on the Net and all hosting companies will refer you to one or more that they have dealt with satisfactorily.

Put serious thought in to the domain name that you use – try to find one that relates to the sort of business or activity that you will supply from your site. You can use some of the keywords that you found through Overture and Good Keywords in your domain name. It's another small step in building your search engine profile.

If your web site is going to be about frogs, for example, a name like allfrogs.com would be more likely to be found by fellow frog fanciers than, say, johnsfavoritecreatures.com

You cannot just change the name of your domain (web site) to something you think of later. If you want to use a different domain name at some point, go to your domain registrar and check that the new name is available, then you will have to pay for that as well.

If you want to use the new domain name instead of the one you've been using, ask your host about the options that they offer.

You can use both if you want by getting another hosting account for your new name or you may be able to put it on the same account but as a sub-domain of the one that you use as your main web site.

Find a Good Hosting Company

When you have registered your domain name, you need somewhere to set up business – some hosted space.

This is a very important step. Some people think that all they need to look for is the most space for the least money but you must weigh up ALL these factors:

- ? Most Hosting companies have a page with their basic Terms and Conditions of supply (by them) and use of their services (by you). These are mostly common-sense but you should be aware of them before you sign up.

Ask for an explanation of anything that is not clear before you sign up; never assume anything.

- ? How much space does your host provide for the fee you pay:

You need enough to include all the pages, pictures and downloadable files that you expect to put on your site and allow for the traffic (visitors) you get to your site.

Working out the bandwidth you need. You need to allow some bandwidth above what you expect to use for future growth. Look at what excess costs you might be liable for if you exceed the limit of your chosen plan.

You must focus on success even as you approach the project. As your business becomes established, your site will attract more visitors (and customers!) so you must allow for expansion of your site when you first work out your space and bandwidth requirements.

You may have only a few files on your site but have a lot of emails or upload and download large files – all of which can count toward your allowance.

- ? The quality and speed of the support they provide?

Before you sign up, phone them or email their support address to test the speed of their response and whether you can understand and are comfortable with the way that they explain things.

- ? Are there restrictions on your access to your site that might affect when and how you can make additions or other changes? Can you use your own File Transfer (ftp) program or do you have to use some internal method?
- ? Can you use your own scripts to add extra functions to your site? You may want to use php and cgi scripts at some stage. Your hosting company may give you free access to their scripts that they know work with their systems, but you need to find out if you might be able to also use your own scripts for specific purposes that could be installed by you or someone that you pay to install them.
- ? Is there a limit on the number of email addresses that you can use on that account? Can you, perhaps, set up just one email address that will gather all the emails sent to that domain?

There is a link to a [recommended hosting company](#) at the front of this ebook.

Set Your Domain Name Servers

This step is very simple though the activity which occurs when you do it is complex. Be glad that don't have to learn how it works, just fill in a simple form, okay?

There are a number of very powerful computer systems, Domain Servers, that store the location of every site on the Net. When you type a web address in to your web browser, the system that you are using sends a request to those Domain Servers and they supply the location (if it's available) instantly.

When you sign up for your Hosting account, you'll get an email with the information you need to send to the Domain Servers through the company that you bought your domain name from - your Domain Registrar.

Go to your Domain Registrar and log in to your account. The rest is easy.

You just type the information from your welcome email that the Hosting Company sent you into a form at your registrar. If anything is not clear to you, contact the registrar's

support. They will smooth the way for you, if needed. These companies do hundreds or thousands of these transfers every day and they make it as easy as possible for you to keep you as a happy customer but also to keep their support costs down.

This information has to spread through the Web so everyone will be able to get the information of where your site is located. There is a delay of maybe 2 days before anyone can see your site on your new address on the Internet.

Your Hosting company will have provided you with a temporary address where you can upload your pages and pictures (if you intend to use any) so that your site will be ready to be unveiled immediately this DNS process has completed.

Promote Your Offline Business On the Internet

This is one of the first articles I ever wrote, shortly after starting my own website. The information is still very relevant.

Get more local business and recognition Absolutely the Quickest & Easiest Way Your Own Web site!

A lot of small business people believe that the Internet would be little use to their businesses because they only work in their local area. They think that putting their business on their own web site is too difficult and expensive for them.

This is simply not true.

You or any other business person can use the World Wide Web to generate local leads and get more customers even if you don't know what "WWW" represents (World Wide Web)! The power and potential of the Web is not just for the computer geeks and major businesses.

You have a great advantage on the Web because you already know how to get people to respond to you and keep their attention. These skills will help to attract people to your web site to read your message and ask you to supply your product or service to them.

Put yourself, your products or services in front of the millions of potential customers who are eagerly searching the Web every hour of every day. Just set up a small professional-looking web site in a few hours easily with this manual at your side.

Your total cost can be much less than a phone directory advertisement or a few quickly discarded newspaper display advertisements.

How YOU benefit by being online.

Can you afford much advertising? Which newspaper or Directory do you choose and which does not carry your message because of the limits to your promotion budget? How large an advertisement can you afford to run? Even if there is only one newspaper or Directory serving your area, your information may be lost among dozens of similar or bigger advertisements on the same page.

Can you afford color? Music and speech are out of the question of course.

On your Web page, you get to use all the words, pictures, colors - even sound - you want just as if you had Bill Gates' budget instead of being limited to a small, silent colorless space in printed publications!

Instead of a few square centimeters, you can use many pages as you require to give your clients all the information they need to understand that your services or products are the ingredient they need to fix their problem.

You can put a beautiful dream of a brochure with all the color and pictures you want on your web site and happy clients will download it and print it out on their printers at no cost to you!

Your web site works for you 24 hours a day, 7 days of every week, putting your message, testimonials, specialties and full contact information in front of a vast and growing number of potential clients.

Your web page gives you exclusive access to your potential customer. Put your message to them in the best way and you have their complete attention while they are at your web site.

Put your new e-mail and web site address on your business stationery; it projects a modern, professional image and sets you apart from your competition that are still stuck with last century's methods.

You can save heaps if you ever need or want to change the information you provide to your clients. Instead of reprinting, say, a thousand brochures at great cost, copy them to your web pages and replace any part or all of it with something entirely different or maybe just in a more modern style in a few hours at the price of a local phone call!

Expand your market; your web site keeps getting more customers

Governments are actively encouraging businesses, individuals and especially families to use the Web because it is **the** low cost way to enhance business, education, social and employment options.

Thousands of people are launching themselves and their families onto the World Wide Web, probably a hundred or more new potential customers just from your local area **every day!**

Use the Internet to generate more leads.

Potential clients and even old customers that you may have lost touch with, will contact you about their needs.

If you don't like cold-calling prospects and realize that many of those expensive brochures and business cards you post out are money down the drain, you will love the Internet where your customers **ask** you to send them your information and recommend you to their friends!

You may not like telling people how great you are; okay, let them read about you on the Internet. They can hear you speak and see all the benefits to them of your best products.

And all that costs you just peanuts!!

What to put on your web site

You can put your favorite brochure, your best testimonials, newspaper or magazine write-ups, even material you have written yourself - on the Net in front of millions of people at

very low cost in one evening and it won't get discarded like a magazine or paper just days later.

If want to change things in your brochure but you were shocked at the printer's quote to reprint it, you can change around the expanded and enhanced Web version to your heart's content without any extra cost! Your clients see exactly what you want them to.

It is important to realize that you should get permission in writing from the people (authors or clients) or organizations (publishers or companies you have worked for) that originally produced the material or appear in any photographs before putting the material on your site.

Most people will be delighted to get the mention on your web site and your thoughtfulness in asking them first can only improve their impression of you and your business methods. It shows them that you are professional and courteous and avoids possible unpleasantness if they find out later you have used their words or an image that they did not want used.

Use your web site to tell everyone what you do, who you have done it for and what is special about your work. You can show them with pictures, even small movies.

You know that the most successful businesses are the ones that people know by name. They won't want just anyone that does the work and supplies the sort of products that you do, they will want you when they read your story in color with pictures on your web site.

You CAN produce a great site with this manual at your side and it won't take you weeks either.

Tell them how and where to contact you and ask them where to send them your information? They will give you their email address more readily than their phone number at social occasions.

You can add a simple form to your site that your potential clients fill in and email to you at any time of the day with their contact details.

Now you can retain their contact details and let them know when you have something new to offer or perhaps a special offer that might be just what they're looking for. This is called "opt-in" and there is no way you can be accused of spamming (sending unsolicited commercial email) if you use this method.

There is much more you can easily add to your web site to help your visitors and improve the response you get.

One service you can use to make your potential clients' visit more enjoyable when your web site has more than a few pages and sections is a dedicated search engine. This is, of course, in addition to the links and menus that you have on each page of your site.

The very user friendly search engine I use and recommend is available for free from

<http://www.atomz.com/>

It is a small download and comes with very clear instructions on how to use it. You can have a very basic search or set it up with many advanced functions and it's very simple to change just about everything at any time.

They supply search engines for some of the largest Internet websites, so we are in good company. You have to pay a fee to use the service if your site has more than, I think, 500 pages!

You can use electronic guest books or message boards and more that your visitors can interact with.

For instance, you might ask them to write their impressions of your site in your guest book and maybe how they think it might be improved. Everybody loves the opportunity to express their opinion and you will find that most (but not all) will be generous to you in their comments.

They will usually leave their contact details just for you to see or for display on your site and it is quite okay for you to email them, thank them for their suggestions and ask if they would like to receive more information from you.

Expand your Supplier and Customer base!

You can use the Web to contact similar businesses to yours and suppliers that you may have not been able to reach in almost any countries, check out their websites, exchange ideas and experiences.

As well as email, you can join newsgroups (discussion lists) and on-line forums to help others and get new information in return.

There are thousands of sites where you can get ideas, information and advice too.

Finding content for your site

The web is a treasure chest of software, pictures and information.

Software: Small and large leading edge companies use websites like yours to put their free and low-cost programs in front of the world alongside the offerings from Microsoft and the other big companies. On the Web, they are all just about on an equal footing. You can enhance your site and sharpen the impact of your message with their software.

It might be hard to believe but there are many people that produce original computer programs and offer them for free (or a small, voluntary donation) to anyone that wants them!

One useful program is World Time Clock. It shows the time in 5 cities around the world. You can select the 5 most useful to you from a large list. This little program is very handy for working out when to log in to web broadcasts that are held in other parts of the World. You can get a copy from <http://www.proprogramming.de/> While you are there, check out the other programs that this generous programmer offers. Most of them are also free!

I've mentioned Blog programs in another section. There are many that you can get for free or very low cost. I set up my first blog with Blog, from farook.org. This programmer set up his own site and fills some of his limited spare time telling the world of his experiences with blogs, programming assignments and other interests including on-line comics. He wrote his own program to put his blog on the Net and you can download a free copy for yourself.

Another great blog program is available from Metateque – there is a free version and a more versatile Pro version available.

Another blog program is Pivot from pivotlog.net This requires a little more experience and confidence to set up but has an ever-expanding list of features and easy to understand support is available through their support forum.

Many of these sites are not run by software producing companies but are entirely Web based resource sites. They arrange with many software producers to provide visitors to the resource sites with access to their programs and have reviews and other information about most, if not all, of the programs. This is very convenient for people like you and me who don't want to spend hours going to several different software company sites, then download all the programs and try them out just to find one that is useful.

Because the resource sites attract huge numbers of people looking for software programs of all types, the software producers are happy to let them offer their programs. The resource sites make the money they need to stay in business by selling advertising space on their pages that will be seen by thousands of people every day and some also sell collections of programs on CD Rom.

Pictures: If you need pictures for your web site, you will find millions to choose from at low or no cost except the time to download them to your computer system.

Information: Leading business people, promoters and coaches have their own web sites where you can get advice based on their experience and training. Don't restrict yourself just to sites featuring people and companies dealing in your specialty.

Save time, expense and frustration

Time: The Web means that you can reach almost any other person on the Web the next time that they log on. And most people check their email at least once each day!

Contrast this with trying to contact someone or a company you need information from by mail if they are located in a different country from you. It will usually take at least two weeks, that's if they bother to invest the time, effort and expense needed to reply by snail-mail!

Expense: Each brochure or inquiry you post costs a significant amount in time and materials. Yet you can easily reach these people and companies with an email and refer them to your on-line brochure and other information in just a few minutes for little more than the cost of a local phone call!

Frustration: When you make a cold phone call or send information to a potential client, you are subject to some stress and may reach them at an inconvenient time.

But the information on your web site is there when people want to see it, even if you happen to be working elsewhere at the time or even sound asleep.

If they phone you and you are not available for some reason, they just phone the next person on their list. But when they are at your web site, they can get the information and you have their full attention. They feel very comfortable giving you their email contact address and it is immediately recorded on your computer without you even touching a button.

Your customers and their preferences

You can put your message and offers in front of the client exactly as you want.

Use more colors and pictures than you could ever afford in an advertisement or brochure, express your individual appeal with your own distinct style and language.

Make it easy for people to find the information they want quickly by adding links and even a dedicated free search engine just for your site!

You control the layout of your site and how people can navigate through it so you make your points and feed them the information in the order that most suits your message.

If you are likely to get inquiries from different types of potential clients, you can easily and quickly provide targeted links and pages that will appeal more closely to each type of inquiry.

Promote your business and your web site

Your web site can advertise yourself and your skills with the same techniques and features as the most successful and well-resourced of your competitors use.

It is a very good idea to put your web site and email address on all your stationery. If you have a sign with your name and type of business on your car(s), you can have your Web addresses added by any computerized sign-shop at low cost. This will mean people who see your vehicle are encouraged to contact you even if you are not in the car at the time.

People appreciate that they can use the Web to learn about your business without actually putting themselves to the trouble of talking face-to-face or even on the phone. They can preserve their anonymity until they have seen what you can do.

The first web site that you build will encourage more people to call you, not the competitor who has just a small ad in the classifieds. That advertisement probably cost him as much as your 24/7 web site cost you!

The Web is expanding and the features are improving all the time. Put your web site up now and be ready for new techniques before your competitors even click their first mouse!

Make your web site useful

The Web was built to encourage the free exchange of information and ideas. People still expect to get something for the effort of bringing up your site on their computer screen.

The first rule of the Internet web site owner should be "Give then get".

You want people to take the time to read about your entertainment offerings and exploits so you should give them some information and, most importantly, FUN.

Maybe you could put, say, your 10 tips and short-cuts you tell your clients on the site. Change them frequently and offer to send new lists by email if your potential clients subscribe while they are on your site. This will give you more names for your address list of potential customers.

You can publicize any public events where you will be able to meet potential clients.

Make money with your web site

While you are promoting your business with your web site, you can look at easily adding some other income producing options to it.

You could, for instance, join an affiliate program of any of the major on-line bookshops and have a link on your site to the area of the bookshop site where they have books related to your type of service. Where this is properly set-up, your visitor can visit the bookshop and see what books you recommend. If they buy any of the books within a period, agreed between you and the bookshop when you entered their affiliate program, you are credited with a small commission.

Another option is to sign up with ClickBank, a well respected company that provides secure handling for on-line credit card transactions, as an affiliate for some of the Merchants that use their service.

ClickBank have probably thousands of Merchant Members that offer a huge variety of downloadable products. You can become an Affiliate Member of ClickBank for free and then promote any of the products which you feel complement your business through your site.

ClickBank, as a respected but disinterested third party handle the actual transactions and the payment of your commission – not the Merchant(s)! That way, you are sure of being paid.

Merchants customarily offer between 30% and 50% commission to people who make these affiliate sales of their products and the products sell from \$5 each (very few) to hundreds of dollars each!

Your costs are almost zero. To sign up as a ClickBank affiliate, [click here](#).

Usually this accumulates for say, three months or until it reaches a set amount such as \$50.00. Then it is credited to your bank account.

If you have written a book or produced other items for sale that relate to your type of business, then you can put them on their own section of your web site and sell them to people all over the world!

You must ensure that anything that is on your web site or is linked to from it is related in some way to your main business and could never tarnish your reputation in any way.

This has just been a broad and very brief overview of the advantages and opportunities that can be yours with your own web site.

Remember, you are never alone on the Web and you can always contact me for further information.

Good Luck!

Resources

Content For Your Web Site

Where can you get content?

This could be just about a book on its own – but I'll limit the section to some of the best that I've personally used.

Blogs

You can promote yourself, your services and products by writing an on-line diary or Blog, to give it the proper term.

You need some special software or you can use the services of some on-line providers that have everything set up for you! You sign up and provide some basic details, then just start typing.

I've listed some programs that I've personally tried in the Resources section of this ebook, so I'll just mention a very successful on-line service that you can use for free!

That's [blogger.com](http://www.blogger.com) This was started as a free service, offering anyone that wanted to the opportunity to start their own on-line diary about almost any subject. The originators were offered and, quite sensibly accepted, a substantial offer from a very large on-line company.

Since then, Blogger has grown and expanded the list of features that you can use if you sign up for a Blogger account. You can have your Blog hosted without charge at [blogspot.com](http://www.blogspot.com) or you can, with just a couple of clicks, set up a link and have the Blog on your own site so you get the benefit of the extra traffic that publicity for your Blog can attract.

A feature that Blogger added recently was a range of professionally designed web page templates. You can select any of those templates to use for your Blog so you are assured of a professional appearance with minimum fuss.

And, it’s still free!

I’ve just added a Blogger-based blog to 2 of my sites;

<http://www.ezyebook.com/blog/> which

is focused on ebooks



and

one which is focused on magic tricks;

<http://www.ezymagic.com/blog/blog.html>

Yes, you are allowed to set up more than one Blog through the Blogger service.

And it’s still free!



You can also add content from other Blogs to your blog and even offer other site owners access so that they can use some of what you write for your Blog to their readers but the Blogger service and the stand-alone programs that I’ve listed in the Resource section are enough to get you started.

I’m looking further in to this and other promotional avenues – you can get that information in updates to this ebook and also in my next Blog that will start on the day that this ebook is published at <http://www.ezy-internet.com/blog/>

Articles

If you are selling other people’s products, ask them if they can supply related articles that you can use to promote their products.

You can also get them on almost any subject that you want from article directories such as mindlikewater.com – check any search engine to find many more.

Be careful to read the terms and conditions posted on the site or that may accompany the article as to how you may use the article. Usually, you are not permitted to modify the text at all and must include the resource box containing information about the author and a link to their site with the article. If you don’t agree with the terms, don’t use the article.

Templates

Many editors offer prepared web-pages called templates that you can add your information and even your pictures to.

This is a great way to remove the drudge work from the first few pages that you create but you should start to use the plainest blank page when you have built a little confidence so that you have the greatest possible freedom for expressing how you want to present yourself and your business to the Internet.

But there are also sites that offer free pre-designed templates that you can use for your web site, subject to the terms that accompany the template and are usually displayed clearly on the site.

You can use these templates or just browse the designs on offer to get inspiration for your own designs.

Some sites that offer free web page templates are:

- <http://www.freesitemplates.com/>
- <http://www.australdata.com/>
- <http://www.elated.com/>
- <http://www.icehousedesigns.com/>

Free Search Engine for Your Site

You can get a useful search engine that visitors can use to search your site without charge from Atomz.com. This is a “taster” version of their commercial offering which has been a recognized leader in this area.

Read and observe the conditions of use.

Easy Meta Tags

One of the ways you can improve your appearance on Search Engines is to put your keywords, title, a description of your site’s purpose and other relevant information into Meta Tags – these tags are placed near the top of the HTML code of your web page. I use a simple, free program called Metty from <http://www.clickfire.com/tools/freeware/metty/> to prepare my meta tags.

To put the tags in place, you need to have a web editor that lets you view the actual HTML code or you can open the web page in a basic text editor like NotePad. You will quickly see some of the standard tags in the code and just add any extra ones that you, or your meta tag program, has created into the same area.

Here is a sample of meta tags from my magic site www.ezymagic.com

```
<title>ezymagic.com</title>
<meta name="keywords" content="magic, trick, magician, stunts, fun, cards, ">
<meta name="description" content="easy fun magic tricks to amaze and amuse your
friends and yourself. Supplying professional and amateur magicians, speakers, workshop
presenters, kids and grandparents since 1969.">
<meta name="author" content="John Williams">
<link rev="made" href="wbbook@ezymagic.com">
<meta name="copyright" content="Copyright 2004 John Williams">
<meta name="revisit-after" content="14 days">
<meta http-equiv="expires" content="never">
<meta name="distribution" content="global">
<meta name="robots" content="all">
<meta name="rating" content="general">
<meta http-equiv="content-type" content="text/html; charset=iso-8859-1">
<meta http-equiv="content-language" content="en">
<!--ezymagic.com magic ebooks tricks and fun for everyone-->
```

Graphics Programs



Start with [Irfanview](http://www.irfanview.com). This program is “donation ware” – you’re asked to donate whatever the program is worth to you. It would easily rank as one of the best and most popular graphic programs ever released. You can even turn a group of your pictures into a slideshow – if that doesn’t appeal, there are many other features too.

Two low-cost graphics programs are Oriens-Enhancer and RahmanImager. Both are available for under \$20 each at time of writing (an advanced version of RahmanImager is \$30) from <http://www.oriens-solution.com>. The developer offered these programs free for a long time and you can be sure the bugs, if there ever were any, have been worked out.

Serif <http://www.freerifsoftware.com/> also offer free versions of their photo editing software and another of their programs which helps you to make 3 dimensional text!

Free Fancy or Flaming Text

But, what if you just don't want to produce your own fancy text for headings or other parts of your site?



At my Magic site you can create as many three dimensional headers as you want for free , <http://www.ezymagic.com/headline.html>!



Or just go to <http://www.flamingtext.com/> - choose what you want and their on-line system will produce your text in seconds free!

Pictures

My favorite pictures are supplied by Hemera <http://www.hemera.com/> Please check the conditions of use with whatever collection you buy.

There are a number of picture libraries on the Internet and some offer very reasonable prices like clipart.com.

You can, of course, use your own pictures if you have them in digital format or can scan them, then edit them and upload them to the Internet.

Boxes and Book Covers

It's been proven that putting a picture of the sort of cover that an ebook would have if it was a real printed book generally increases sales of that ebook!

You should have such a picture for each ebook that you offer. There are several programs for producing those pictures and also simulated pictures of boxes for software. If you get the product from someone else, they'll supply the pictures.

If the ebook or software is your own product, you might have to pay around \$90 for suitable software. Or you could make a small donation at <http://www.boxshotmaker.com/> and get Scott's BoxShotMaker which will help you to produce them for pennies!

Fair Use of Pictures

You should not use pictures of any person as an endorsement of your products or services without their specific permission.

You must only use pictures that you have permission to use on your Internet site. Just because someone is using a picture on their site, doesn't mean that you can grab a copy and use it on yours. Even some collections of Clip Art that are sold do not come with the right to use them for any commercial purpose including web sites. Check the fine print and if you aren't sure, the only sensible choices are to not use the picture or to contact the company directly.

You should not put any of your pictures on to the Internet that you do not want taken and possibly mis-used by others. You can use various methods to protect your pictures and other material but those methods may bring their own problems such as reducing the ability of search engines to get the information you want them to get from your site.

The Sky is NOT the Limit

I hope this guide has put you on the Net and started a new episode in your business life.

Please contact me at any time at <http://www.ezy-internet.com/> with any questions related to this topic or just to let me know how well your web business is doing.

Check out the recommendations for web hosting, a marketing program and a great affiliate program on the first page of this ebook.

John Williams

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