Creating Your Website

GETTING STARTED

- **Domain Name:** Go daddy.com or hostgator (($10-$15)

- **Web Hosting Account:** Need to have a place to store files. We use Hostgator ($7.95 month) at http://secure.hostgator.com/cgi-bin/affiliates/clickthru.cgi?id=pmount. Using this link to Hostgator provides a referral to us and costs nothing extra to you. If you use this link to join hostgator, we appreciate your support.

- **Options on designing your website:**
  - Can hire a designer at elance. http://www.elance.com
  - Use a website template from Web Expressions software
  - Use a template from your webhost
  - Use Ken Evoy's site built it, which also includes hosting, about $300 a year http://buildit.sitesell.com/main

- **Editing:** There are benefits to learning how to edit your own website with software like Expressions Web or Dream Weaver or Site Builder.

- **Uploading to Web Server:** Get an FTP (File Transfer Protocol) Program to upload your pages onto the web. (Core FTP and others are free).

- **Newsletter Lists and Delivery:** You need a newsletter and autoresponder service for newsletters and other messages:
  - We use aweber www.aweber.com/?301955, costs about $19/month. Following this link provides a referral fee to us, as well.

- **Graphics:** at Big Stock Photo or iStock Photo ($1-2 each)

- **Streaming Audio:** Adds audio buttons to your site and streams audio to reduce delay time for playing. We use MP3 Soundstream www.mp3soundstream.com/ ($39)

DESIGN TIPS

People like easy-to-read websites. Start noticing websites that are effective. Websites work that are inviting to look at, visually clean. Navigation is easy. Content is valuable. Graphics load quickly and the site can print out easily. Avoid making your website too busy and unfocused. Be clear about what you want. You can always develop and revise it as you go along.

Planning: The first step is to map out the structure of your site by defining main areas and how viewers can get around most easily. If you buy a book on Expressions Web or Dreamweaver, it should provide suggestions on planning.

- First, be clear about the primary purpose of your website and each of the pages you plan to create. What do you want the reader to do as a result of reading your webpage?

- As you plan pages, you also need to know where you want your viewers to go next and provide links at the bottom of each page.

Design: Professional websites tend to look clean and simple. If you hire a web designer, be sure the person is aware of marketing as well as design and technical ability. Here are some ideas:

- Start with a template and define the areas you want to have on each page – top, bottom, maybe left side. Then decide how you will lay out the content on the pages.

- Use attention-getting titles that connect with your specific audience

- Write in short paragraphs (3-5 lines).

- Use links to other of your pages, but don't overdo it. Remember your most wanted response.

- Use graphics sparingly to reinforce your message and break up the space.

- For bad examples of websites go to www.WebPagesThatSuck.com

- For good ones see www.actionplan.com/webdesign.html

Your Home-Page: This page needs to be clear, generate interest, and give a clear overview of what you provide.

- If you have a complex site, the home page may focus on directing viewers to different sections of the site. Otherwise, you can get right into the content.

- Use questions that your audience will be interested in, especially at the start of the page.

- Use testimonials and case studies and stories.

- Use graphics intentionally and don't overwhelm with them.

- You can use the 6-part marketing copy sequence we discussed in the handout, "How to Write Marketing Copy" (headline, problem, solution, overcome obstacles, your process, call to action).

- Build up your credibility with previous successes and your own background.

- Be clear and concise.

- Direct visitors where they need to go.

Robert Middleton suggests these other pages:

- **"Who We Work With":** Describe the people and companies you work with. These are your ground rules for your ideal clients. "These services are for you if…" Answer client questions and define the people who work with you.

- **"How We Work":** The previous page was about your clients; this one focuses on you. Go into a little detail on what it's like to use your services. Tell about the results you've produced. Remember your mission statement, and translate that into practical terms with a person who's considering your offerings. What makes you the right person for the job?

- **"Services":** Describe your services: the purpose, the benefits and results, the structure, and a call to action.

- **"About Us":** This is your bio. Look at others for examples. Build your credibility and include a warm, inviting picture of you.

Other Pages:

- **"Free Resources" Page:** This is a way people can get to know you. Can include a newsletter archive, targeted articles, audios and ebooks.

- **Products Page:** For those who like reading materials, audios, and more. If you don't have products of your own, you may be able to find products through Clickbank.

- **Resources and Links Pages**

- **Contact Page**

- **Ezine Sign-up Page** (this is so important; you might want to have it on each page).

WEBSITE OPTIMIZATION

This term refers to making your website show up on the search engines. You don't have to spend a lot of money to have your pages show up. The major search engines use spiders that go through the internet and find new pages. Some tips:

- **Use Meta Tags:** This refers to information that appears invisibly in the html language, but doesn't show up on the page itself. The meta tags include the page title, description and key words. These tags are used by the search engines to pick up information about your page. The title is the information that shows up on Google or other search engine, followed by the description.

- **Focus on key words:** Decide which key words your viewers might look up to find you. This could include what you do and where you are located. Consider this with each page and include as many key words as possible and as often as possible, especially in titles and links.

- **Create "Entry Pages."** These are pages you create specifically with the search engines in mind. They focus on using the key words your viewers might be using to find you.

- **Submit Your Site:** You can go to the major search engines and submit your site manually so they will pick you up. This includes Google, Yahoo, and MSN.

- **Google Webmaster Central** has all kinds of info about free services they provide to help you to improve traffic, analyze your visitors, and more.

MORE RESOURCES

- Robert Middleton's *Info Guru Manual* and *Web Site Toolkit*, www.1shoppingcart.com/app/?af=774075. This is another link that will provide a referral to us, if you follow it to place your order.

- www.wilsonweb.com: many resources on websites and email marketing

- Ken Evoy's *Make Your Site Sell* myss.sitesell.com/

- Alexandria Brown's in-depth manual on marketing with your eZine: www.ezinequeen.com/queen.htm

E-Newsletters

E-newsletters are a great way to help people to make positive changes and get to know you at the same time. They are also one of the best marketing tools available. Compared to postal mailings, there is hardly any cost, except your web host and perhaps an email list service. Over time if you are reliable and provide good content, you will be surprised how your list grows, reaching people all around the world. This list then becomes a key resource for notifying people in your niche about your classes and other offerings.

Important points:

- Regular (monthly or weekly) newsletters fulfill one of the keys to successful marketing: building a relationship with clients (getting to know and trust you).

- For signing up, you can provide a free download, such as an article, audio or ebook. With growing competition, this provides a compelling reason to subscribe.

- Offer valuable content. Subjects can be tips, techniques, and strategies. Lists (such as "5 Great Ways to Eliminate Stress") or How-to articles create interest.

- Shorter articles may be better than longer.

- Keep your writing conversational.

- Target solutions to your audience's problems.

- You don't have to write all of your articles yourself. You can use other people's articles, like ours. You may be able to do article trades for cross promotion or have partners and each write a third or a quarter of the newsletters.

- Balance free content with promoting your services. 2/3- 3/4 should be content. The rest can be promotional, as the readers expect that in a free ezine.

- Keep the format simple. Plain text can work sometimes as well or better than html, since it's simpler. Keep lines and paragraphs short.

- Keep the name of your ezine in the subject line, along with a catchy title, so readers know who it's from and want to read it.

- Market your e-newsletter prominently in your website. Also you can get signups after a talk.

- If you are out of ideas for articles, you can use an oracle to help you to find a topic.

- To get started with your e-newsletter, invite everyone you know.