

# Does your business need a website?

By Marybeth Frugé

I have been working in Information Technology for over 20 years and on Web development in particular for the past several years. The World Wide Web is the most popular information and communication resource available to us. The Web has revolutionized the way we work, play and communicate. It is the method of choice to shop and research products for millions of people. If your business is not on the web you are missing out on a large opportunity. A Web site is critical to any small business or start-up.

There are many reasons why a well-designed website is important for your business. I've listed a few of them below:

## **REASON #1: A Web site increases your credibility**

For a small to medium sized business, a web site is a great way of building consumer confidence and looking bigger than you really are. Much like your business cards, stationary and other promotional material, your Web site has a significant impact on how you and your business are perceived. It is important that your web site is easy to use, is well-designed and has well written content. This will have a positive effect on visitor impressions, and your credibility as a business.

## **REASON #2: A Web site increases your visibility.**

The number grows every day, but it is estimated that 47.5 million people use the Internet every day... in the US alone! Imagine how many of these people are looking for the products that YOU offer? Are you visible on the Web? With a web site your business is visible 24X7; not only from 8-5 Monday - Friday.

## **REASON #3: A Web site can increase your local business.**

As a bricks and mortar business, local traffic is paramount to your success. A web site can increase your local business. As a consumer if I am searching for a veterinarian in Overland Park, Kansas I wouldn't type into the search engine "veterinarian"; I would type in "veterinarian overland park, Kansas".

#### **REASON #4: A Web site helps with referrals**

There is nothing better than a satisfied client to give you referrals. With a website your clients can send interested parties to your site to learn more about your products and services. This is way more effective than giving them brochures and hoping they have them handy when the time is right.

#### **REASON #5: A Web site enhances offline advertising methods**

Like most business you probably spend money on offline advertising such as business cards, stationary, brochures and flyers. Adding your Web site address to current marketing material can increase the effectiveness of your advertising ten-fold. A Web address gives people the ability to take action on your offer or product, and can be a reminder of who you are and why they need your product or service.

#### **REASON #6: A Web site can drive repeat business**

There is nothing better than repeat business from your satisfied clients. You need to stay in touch and there is no better way to stay in touch than reaching out regularly with offers and notifications. You need to contact them regularly. A recent study showed that on average people need to hear about your product or service 7 times before they will act on the offer. By staying in contact with your customer via email or newsletter, you keep them coming back to your site so that you are on their mind when they are ready to buy.

#### **REASON #7: A Web site is a great prospecting tool**

In addition to acting as a sales and marketing tool your web site is also a good way to gather and track prospect information. Your website needs the ability to capture who is coming to your site by using forms and surveys. Ask visitors to subscribe to your mailing list; and then periodically follow-up with special offers, newsletters, and special tips. This helps build a resource of leads to whom you can sell.

These are only a few of the reasons your business needs a well-designed web site. If you don't already have a plan to build a site may the time is now! For more information Marybeth Frugé can be reached at [mbfruge@wsiyourwebdesigner.com](mailto:mbfruge@wsiyourwebdesigner.com).