

THE WEB SITE TOOLKIT

"PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW"

The Purpose of a Web Site

A web site is one of the most unique and powerful marketing tools ever invented. It can work like a brochure, like direct mail or even like advertising. It can be customized instantly, and it can be seen by thousands of people for a minimal investment.

We need to watch that we don't get seduced by the power of the web and overestimate what it can do for our businesses. Just as importantly, we need to realize what it can do and harness that marketing energy in the most advantageous way possible.

Since 1996, the experience of developing my own web site as well as dozens of others (<http://www.actionplan.com/webdesign.html>) has shown what is possible with a well-designed, well-written and well-organized site.

The web as a "Marketing Hub"

The web is the one thing that can connect all your InfoGuru Marketing efforts. Your objective should be to have people visit your web site just before they call to do business with you. The web site educates them, persuades them, impresses them and motivates them to take action to find out how you can help them.

What can you actually expect from a web site? Different businesses use web sites in different ways. As an InfoGuru, here's what it can accomplish if done right:

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Increases your visibility and credibility – These days it's expected that if you're in business you'll have a web site. We want to check people out before we buy from them. Once you have generated interest in your services through other marketing methods the next thing people want is more information. And a web site is a fast and easy way to make that information available.

But as you'll learn, not any web site will do. You need to find the balance between design, content and functionality. If you don't, you could have a web site that's no more than a "white elephant." It's there on the web but it's not doing you much good. In fact, it could actually be hurting your business.

Provides instant information on and access to your services – These days everything seems to be in a hurry. Having your materials on the web puts you into "Internet Time" and provides the answers a prospect wants now. The key question, however, is "What information exactly do I need to put on my site?" You'll find the answers in this toolkit.

Enables people to warm up to you slowly before calling – It's scary to pick up the phone and call a professional service provider. They're not sure what to expect. By visiting your site, looking at your free information and perhaps signing up for your eZine, they can get comfortable with you before they call.

Shortens the sales cycle – By the time a prospect calls, they know a lot about your business already. They feel they know you and trust you. It's not unusual that if someone calls you after visiting your site and reading the information about your business that it contains, they will be ready to do business with you sooner - often immediately. I've gotten dozens of

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clients who have called me up after looking at my site and said, "I know you're the person who can help me." It doesn't get much better than that!

Helps your existing clients refer people to you more easily – The most important people to visit your site are not random people surfing the web. It's people who were sent to your site by clients, friends and associates. If you have a quality site with useful information, others will be more likely to tell people to visit your site. It's certainly a lot less threatening than picking up the phone. They can check you out first.

Get you non-local business – This might not happen for awhile, but a good site can be seen by people all over the world and sooner or later, you'll start getting calls from out-of-state, sometimes internationally. My business was centered in the San Francisco Bay area for over twelve years before I had a web site. Now, eight years after putting up my site, clients come from all over the country and the world. The best part is that people come to me, I don't need to come to them.

Sell information products on the site – This can be a sideline or a major business on its own. You can start with inexpensive reports and tapes and move on to eBooks and other information products. This may or may not be for you, but now products on my site account for over 50% of my total revenue. Every day of the week I get sales over the Internet.

I hope that gives you enough reasons to get a web site! It can really leverage any InfoGuru business like no other marketing tool.

But if people visit your site and it's not powerful and effective, you're going to have a lot of trouble turning those visitors into clients. This toolkit is about how to make sure your site gets the job done.

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What's in the Web Site Toolkit?

There are three major components to a web site: content, design and navigation. For an InfoGuru web site, the most important is content. What information exactly needs to go on your site for the best overall results. Sections two through nine are all about content. This is information you're not likely to find anywhere else. We go page by page, outlining exactly what you need to include on your site.

Design is also very important, but this toolkit is not a tutorial on how to design web sites. However it will contain absolutely essential information on what is important in your web design. Whether you plan to design your site yourself (not something I usually recommend) or finding a web designer who can do it for you, the guidelines we provide will make your web site more attractive, more readable, more accessible and therefore get a better response than most other web sites out there.

Finally, the navigation and functionality of your site are key. People need to be able to easily get around your site and find what they're looking for. Sounds simple, but a large percentage of sites tend to complicate, more than simplify your experience learning about a business. I'll give you important guidelines that are simple, but perhaps not that obvious, that will make it easy to get around your site, and most importantly, take action once they get there.

We're going to jump into content right away with the first page on your site I suggest writing - not the home page but what I call the "Who We Work With Page." A good web site should focus on your clients and what they get more than on your business and what you do. In fact, this is the single most important principle of marketing!

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Action Plan for the Web Site Toolkit

- 1.** The best way to do this program is to listen to the audio file first, then read the pdf instructions. Then visit the various web pages samples.
- 2.** How you want to start is by opening a word processing document or text editor and write all your pages according to the guidelines in the next eight sections.
- 3.** First work at developing an acceptable first draft of each web page before moving on to the next section. When you have all your web pages done, then go back and do fine tuning and editing or get some help with editing your final web draft.
- 4.** When you have all your web content ready it's time to look for a web designer who can put your web site together. Don't hire a designer first.
- 5.** Take advantage of the many resources listed on the online [Web Site Toolkit page](#). From editors and writers to web designer and online resources, this will make your job much easier.

In many cases, underlined text in blue is a link to a web page. In some cases it's just for illustrative purposes and will not link anywhere.