

## 1. Lay the Groundwork

- Clearly define your unique value proposition.
- Who are your users?
- What is your main message(s)?

## 2. Define Your Objectives

- Do you want to generate qualified leads?
- Are you offering resources and information to your current customers or the public?
- Do you want to sell your product or service on the web?
- Do you need to appeal to multiple audiences?
- Defining your goals will help shape the design, functionality, and marketing plan for your web site.

## 3. Research the Competition

- Search the web for businesses like yours in other areas.
- Look up the web sites of your local competition.
- Make notes about features you like or dislike, and bookmark what you find for later reference.
- Bookmark web sites with visual designs you find appealing.

## 4. Consider Your Resources

- Are you a computer buff who likes to do stuff on your own?
- Are you busy with other obligations and a bit overwhelmed by the Internet?
- Are you an experienced Internet user or a novice?
- Regardless of where you find yourself on the spectrum of Internet expertise and the time and money you want to invest, there is a optimal solution that will work for you.

## 5. Are Your Plans Realistic?

- What return will you need on your website investment.
- How will people find your web site?
- Can you successfully position your web site using the resources you have?

## 6. Create a Budget

Your website budget should include the costs for:

- initial setup and design
- monthly website hosting fees
- future changes and enhancements
- marketing of your site.

Plan a budget for both time and money.

## 7. Choose a Service Provider

- You'll need a place to host your web pages and you'll need to develop the web pages.

Some options:

- DIY static pages with low-cost hosting.
- DIY hosted solution.
- Web Designer, Static Pages, low-cost hosting.
- High-end hosted CMS/eCommerce
- Custom design, programming and dedicated hosting.

## 8. Register a Domain Name

Best domain names are:

- short
- end in .com
- have no dashes
- have descriptive words
- easy to type/easy to remember
- make search engines happy.

## 9. Domain Name Examples

Good

- [www.alliedbingo.com](http://www.alliedbingo.com)
- [www.bandoninn.com](http://www.bandoninn.com)
- [www.loveyourpets.com](http://www.loveyourpets.com)

Not so good

[www.lane-county-and-eugene-audiologists.tv](http://www.lane-county-and-eugene-audiologists.tv)  
[www.andyschmidt.com](http://www.andyschmidt.com)

For help researching domain names, try:

[www.nameboy.com](http://www.nameboy.com)

Use a reputable domain registrar like godaddy.com

## Decide on Your Presentation

- Connect your presentation with your unique value proposition/philosophy
- Multimedia ... or not.
- Difference between print and web
- Usability

## 11. Map Out Content and Features

Create a rough outline of what pages or sections your web site will have.

Examples:

- Home Page, Description of Services, Return Policy

List any important features you need

Examples:

- Do you want to provide estimates, let visitors shop, accept catalog requests, opt-in email, or publish a calendar of events?

If you are working with a web developer, enlist their help during this part of the process.

## 12. Develop and Collect Site Content

- Write a short paragraph or sketch a simple drawing of what you want on your home page and how you want it to look.
- Use materials you already have, like your business plan, printed brochures, product data sheets.
- Gather text, graphics, your product database, and other materials you may be able to use on your web site.

## 13. Develop Your Marketing Strategy

When your website is ready to go, you'll want to let the public know about it! You need to get the word out in as many ways possible.

- Add your website address to business cards, all print ads, catalogs, invoices, your email signature, etc.
- Send a letter to all your contacts telling them about your website.
- Email Marketing Campaigns
- SEO/SEM
- Press Releases
- Blogs

## 14. eCommerce Issues

- Accepting Credit Cards
- Shipping
- Merchandising features
- Pricing
- Order Management/Processing
- Order fulfillment

## 15. Key Points

- Research your options
- You don't need to be a technology expert to make informed decisions.
- Set realistic goals
- Good planning will help your project progress quickly and smoothly.
- Have fun with it!

## 16. HEROweb Marketing and Design

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- Next class: four-week course begins in April in which we will go into more detail about good web site development practices, marketing, search engine placement and much more.