

BEST DARN CONSULTING Co. PERIOD

Web Development Protection Pack

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How To Make the Right Decisions When It Comes To Your E-Business

“Whether Or Not You Want To Sell Your Product Or Service On The Internet, Make Sure You’re Getting Your Advice From Someone Who’s An Expert.”

When we say expert, we’re not talking about the guy who builds your website ... we’re talking about someone who’s had real RESULTS with marketing businesses online. You would never ask a construction worker building your new home how to sell houses or how to sell your products to consumers. The Internet is the same way; we now have web developers, hosting companies, and transaction companies (just like construction workers) touting that they can help you build your business online. Remember the adage, “Beware of the naked man who offers you his shirt.” If a web developer has no marketing expertise, there is no shirt to offer. Make sure you talk to someone who’s actually made money for a business – both online and offline. The principles of successful marketing are the same for both. **The #1 reason businesses build a website SHOULD be to sell online or to promote their offline business.** It’s not just for information.

Ninety percent of businesses’ websites are what could be classified as “brochure-ware.” They are an electronic version of the boring brochures businesses print year after year. They don’t call prospects to action. They don’t reduce the customers’ risk of doing business. They don’t distinguish the business from the competition. The marketing information contained on a website has to be action-oriented.

With that being said, let’s talk about how to find out if the person you’re dealing with has the ability to help your business make money online (or offline). There are 3 main types of companies creating a lot of confusion about making money on the Internet, they are:

1. Web Development Companies
2. Hosting Companies
3. Credit Card Companies

First, Let’s Look At How Web Developers Make Their Money. There are 3 types of web developers: large development companies (like Microsoft, IBM, Dell Computers, etc.), small to medium size firms, and one-man-shops. Regardless of their expertise or skill, none of them will help you effectively market your website (i.e., make money). So how do they make money? Most of it comes from the custom programming built into your website and in some cases partnering with other companies that provide website services like web hosting. If your flashy, sophisticated website makes money - or bombs - it doesn’t matter to them. They get paid just the same. You, on the other hand, are out of luck, and most likely out of money.

Here’s a stat that may scare you. In a recent study, *97.3% of all businesses stated that their website did not generate enough money to pay for themselves.* How is that possible? It’s not because they’re ignorant, or because they don’t realize the potential. Trust us; they’d love to be able to make a fortune off the Internet. But generally speaking, it rarely happens, and they don’t know why.

If web developers cared about your results, more websites would be making money. It’s like the construction worker telling you that upgrading the lighting, carpet, or brick in your brick-and-mortar shop will bring in all the business you can stand. They try to sell you as much “flashy stuff” as they can, just for the sake of upgrading the website to make them more money. Don’t misunderstand us, having a professional looking website is as important to being successful on

the web as a professional office in conventional business. Just keep in mind that you must separate the suit-wearing construction worker (web developer) from the marketing expert.

Second, There's The Website Hosting Companies. These companies in essence "rent" space on their servers where your website resides. These servers can handle lots of web sites and web traffic visiting your site at one time. Hosting companies are often very aggressive in trying to get business because they know that once they get a customer, chances are they will stay there month after month paying their hosting fees. We don't have a problem with hosting companies, - until they start deceptively telling businesses that they can handle all of their needs for very little money. It's never true. They run ads that sell a complete turn-key website, and hosting package for "as little as \$19.95" a month. You've seen the "19.95 websites. They're what we call "Rinky-dink.com". Even those that have the ability to develop a professional website, which most don't, would still fail at marketing your business online.

Think of the Internet as a vast wilderness. Unless you let people know where you are, they will never "drive by." Especially when your target audience is, in most cases, local. How many times have you been casually browsing the Internet and stumbled across a company that happened to be just down the street, or across town. ANSWER: *Just about NEVER!* The only time it happens is when you're specifically searching for a local company. Besides, if you're looking for a local business, where's the first place you typically look? That's right, the yellow pages – even online. Why, because you can flip through the yellow pages quickly instead of going to some search engine, typing in a keyword and then sifting through 1,284,368 search results. Most small to medium size businesses have a very defined target audience. The best way to reach them is through traditional means.

Third, Credit Card Processing Companies Are Also Adding To The Confusion. Like us, you probably get more than your share of e-mails touting making money on the Internet. Upon closer inspection you'll find that what they are actually offering is credit card transactions, not website development. They automatically assume that you have a website AND that you want to sell something online. Not all businesses have a website and few of them actually have a commodity to sell online. Like our other imposters, these "peddlers of success" fall short of helping businesses understand everything they need to become successful.

Think of your online store the same way as you would a retail store. You need a facility, inventory, employees, some way to process money, and marketing and advertising to help bring in all the customers you need. It's no different online. You need a website (facility), inventory, employees, a way to process money (Internet ready merchant account), and marketing and advertising. Even if you don't sell anything online, you need all of these components. If you were to see an advertisement that touted that it could help you with everything you would need to open a retail store, but they only end up selling you a merchant account, you would be very ... very disappointed. Yet the same thing is being said on the Internet, on TV, and in your e-mail box. Don't fall for it. Web developers, hosting companies, and credit card companies are all elements necessary for a fully functional website.

3 Questions Your Web Developer Never Wants To Be Asked

1. **What Are Your SPECIFIC Marketing Ideas For My Website?** If the immediate response is: “We will register you with 1729 search engines” or “All you need are banner ads”, it should raise a huge red flag. Those are the standard answers of ALL sub-par web developers. The reality is, these methods don’t work for 95% of all businesses. If search engines were all it took to make money, then that’s all you would see big companies doing. Instead, you see those companies buying time on TV, radio, print ads, etc. The reason is, the average click thru rate for banner ads is 4%. Now that’s better than being one of the 1 million plus sites found through a search, but banner ads (on a search engine like Yahoo) cost \$5,000 to \$7,000+ a month for strategic placement. For many companies, that’s their entire marketing budget for a month or even a year.

2. **Do You Write Effective Advertising, Both Online And In Conventional Advertising?** If they say yes, ask to see some of their work or find out whom they wrote it for. Then to really test their ability, call that company and ask them, “How many customers are you getting on your website or in your regular business?” More importantly ... “How much MONEY have you made from those marketing strategies?” It will quickly become apparent if the web developer knows what they’re doing.

3. **How Much Money Have You Made For Your Clients?** If it hasn’t made them money, it was a bad investment for the client. Isn’t that the real reason a business wants a web presence? To make money! The reality is, most web developers will try to sell you ONLY on how good the site looks, not how much MONEY the site is generating. The reason? Simple: Most of those companies don’t know how to make you money. Ultimately, what’s more important to you? How it looks, or how profitable it is? It’s a no-brainer.

Why do we tell you all of this? Why would you want to evaluate your web developer anyway? Because we’ve found that the ones who are good, can give you helpful suggestions and steer you in the right path when you DON’T KNOW the best way to proceed. Usually, these kinds of experts will be happy to work with you even if you’re not buying anything for them. They know that if they can help you now, that you’ll be likely to buy from them when your business needs an expert.

Questions To See If Your Web Developer Can Actually Do What They Promote

Before you start with this list of questions, you need to understand the mindset of the people you are calling and how to get the information you need to make an educated decision. Here's the list of questions ... Use this to qualify who is good and who is not. Write their answers in the margin provided.

General Info

1. Why would I do business with you? (Why are you better?)
 - a. Get specifics
2. How long does it take before my website is up and running?

Web Design

3. How many web pages do I get?
 - a. What do extra pages cost?
4. Do you design my website, or does someone else do it?
5. Who do I interact with to build my website?
6. What are your credentials, where can I see more of your work?
7. Can I see ones that are the same price as what you're talking about now?
8. Do extra graphics and design cost more?
 - a. How much more?
 - b. How many pictures do I get?
9. Who makes updates or changes to my website?
 - a. How many do I get?
 - b. How often, how much do extras cost?
10. Who do I call if something isn't working?
11. What programs do you build websites in?
 - a. What script languages are you proficient in?

Hosting

12. Who does hosting?
 - a. Why them? Who are they?
13. How closely are they tied to the Internet backbone?
14. Is hosting extra?
 - a. How much?
15. How much web space do I get?
16. How many e-mail accounts do I receive?
 - a. Who sets them up?
 - b. How many alias e-mails?
17. Do I get a domain name?
 - a. Does it cost extra?
 - b. Do I own the domain?

18. How reliable is the hosting company?
 - a. What happens if it goes down?
 - b. Are the servers backed up daily?
 - c. What redundancies do they have in place?
19. Is my website secure from hackers?
 - a. What security level do you have?
20. Do they support multimedia?
 - a. What media?
21. Can I put streaming audio or video on the site?
 - a. How many people can view a file concurrently?

Transacting Processing

22. Can I use my own merchant bank?
23. Is the merchant account provided?
 - a. Is it seamless?
 - b. Who sets it up?
 - c. Who do I call if there is a problem?
24. Who does shopping cart services? (How does it work?)
 - a. How many products can I sell?
 - b. What do extra items cost?
 - c. How quickly are the funds transferred?
 - d. What is the buy rate?
 - e. What are the other transaction fees? Describe them?
 - f. Can you process checks?
 - g. Is it electronic (real-time)?
 - h. Is it a draft?
25. Are the transactions secure or encrypted?

Marketing

26. What kind of marketing do you do for me?
27. Search engines: How do they work? How many do you sign me up with? Who are they? How often are they updated?
28. How effective banner ads? How much do they cost? Do you do that? Where do you place them?
29. How do you market my site?
30. Any other marketing strategies?
31. What were the critical elements of making it successful?
32. How much MONEY have you made for your clients?
33. How much MONEY are your websites generating?