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Web Site Check List

How to collect materials to create your Web site.

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Deciding to involve an Internet presence in promoting/advancing your business is fast becoming more of a requirement than an option. When the decision has been made to establish yourself or your business on the Internet you will want a Web page that reflects your business (or self) to your satisfaction. You may be starting new and want to develop a look and feel from scratch, or you may already have an established look for your business.

Look and feel means:

- a. Color – do you have corporate colors established?
- b. Layout – the graphical elements, navigation and color schemes
- c. Font Usage – do you use a certain font in your existing marketing materials?
- d. Pictures – do you want pictures on your Web site?

Obviously these considerations and others will require some thinking. Your Web designer will need some details from you to get your ideas and the final design to resemble each other. A good way to get started in this phase is to take note of sites you like and don't like. Note different color schemes, font usage and layout.

I suggest that you start keeping track of your thoughts on this subject. Use whatever means you normally would from a written journal/notebook, a standard manila file folder and loose-leaf paper or a Microsoft Word document. Label your folder/file/notebook "My Web Site". You will want to address six overall subjects with a page or so devoted to each subject. Label each subject as follows:

Purpose and Goals
Target Audience
What I Like
What I don't Like
Web Site Pages
Other Thoughts

1) Purpose and Goals

- What is the goal of your site?
- What do you want visitors to DO at your web site?
- What are you hoping to achieve with your Web site?
- Do you want to attract a larger audience? Provide existing customer base with information? Sale products?
- Generate leads to be followed up by your sales team?



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2) Target Audience

- Age group, Income, Gender.
- What sort of Web interface will appeal to them?
- Consider what their problems are and how you plan to offer solutions to those problems through your product or services.

3) What I Like

For example, if you are a Realtor, browse some Realtor Web sites. Go to Google.com and type in any **city** plus the words "**real estate**" - you should find plenty!

- Take note of the Web sites that appeal to you.
- What do you like about them? The Layout? Colors? Navigation? Fonts?

Layout - think about how you want the layout of your Web site to look. Take notes of Web sites that you find appealing.

Colors - Choose your colors wisely. If you have existing marketing materials, you will want to send them to your Web designer for scanning and color sampling. It's important to maintain your existing branding and corporate look.

Elegant business like colors include dark, rich colors such as navy blue, burgundy, scarlet, deep purple

Fresh, healthy colors include bright orange, pale yellows, blues and greens.

Loud, high-impact colors include vibrant colors such as bright shade of yellow, bright red, purple and black.

If you are not sure about color, ask your designer to send you a color sample page like the one we have here:
<http://www.kelie.com/color.htm>

We recommend choosing one color as the primary color of the site and one or two complimentary colors. If you don't chose to have a white background, make sure your text color does not conflict with the background you select.

Navigation - Keep it simple and you won't lose your Web site visitors. Do you like your navigation across the top? Left side? Right side? Nice buttons or text links?



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Fonts - Use an easy-to-read font for the majority of your text. Fancy fonts and special fonts can be used for headings, subheadings, special announcements and news. Take note of several sites that use a font you like.

4) What I Don't Like

Knowing what you don't like is just as important as what you like. Your Web designer can steer clear of practices you don't like. Write down things you don't like about Web sites. What don't you like about them? Visually loud? Difficult to read and understand? Unclear navigation?

5) Web Site Pages

Decide on the pages you would like to have on your Web page. More pages can always be added later. Here are some ideas about what kind of pages you need:

- **Homepage** - this is the first page of your Web site. This page should clearly state what your site is about. It can include a mission statement and link to your other pages for more information. This the most important page because it is your visitors first impression they will have of you.
- **About Us** - This page is about you! Include your resume, your pictures, your biography, and your service.
- **Resources** - All your links to other Web sites go here. It is good to trade links with other realtors but only from qualified sites. You can put in your mortgage lenders, your real estate company if applicable.
- **Contact Us** - Usually all your contact information goes here along with a form for your visitors to fill out. When your visitors fill out the form, it is instantly E-mailed to you.
- **Testimonials** - Nothing sells like existing happy clients. Show off your letters here.
- **Other** - The sky is the limit when it comes to thinking of all the great content you can present your visitors with. Jot down some ideas you have that weren't mentioned below.



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6) Other Thoughts and Ideas

Write down any other thoughts and ideas that you have for your Web site. Do you want your navigation buttons to change when the mouse rolls over them? Do you want a copyright statement at the bottom of your pages (recommended)? Do you want a Flash movie added to your Web site? Message board? Polls? Other special features? Add these to your "Other Thoughts/Ideas" worksheet.

Once you have filled up your journal with your thoughts and ideas, it is time to hand it over to your designer along with the copy (text) for your pages.

Your designer will be most impressed with the information and clear insight you're able to provide. You'll also save a lot of time by clearing up questions regarding your design before they ever crop up. Just like creating a plan for your business strategy or marketing efforts, creating a plan for the creation and design of your site is highly recommended.

You'll also need to think about

Domain Name

What your domain name will be. A domain name looks like:

BusinessName.com

If you provide you Web designer with a list of desired domains they can check upon the availability.

E-mail Address

You'll probably want to use your domain name. An example is:

Mary@BusinessName.com

E-mails can be set up to forward to an existing E-mail address you may already have so you don't have to check too many E-mail boxes.