



**THE INTERNET
WORLD
WIDE
WEB
WWW**



What is a Web Site and why do I need one?

Many business owners hear about the continued expansion of the Internet and wonder if it is relevant to them. Marketers advertise the "Information Highway" and encourage businesses to get connected or risk missing out on the millions of eager buyers just waiting to beat an electronic path to their doors. Business owners listen to the hype, shake their heads and carry on serving their customers with tried and true methods.

One thing that can't be ignored in the "Information Age" is that people are finding things out in new ways. Nearly half of all Canadian households have computers that are connected to the Internet. People are using search engines (electronic indexes of the contents of the Internet) with names like "Google" and "Yahoo!" as their first choice for accessing information, not just for research but for simple things like where a certain movie is playing, what are the family skate times at the local rink, and so on. This trend towards on-line information access will increase as time passes.

The decision to have an Internet presence is like paying extra to have your business name appear in bold print or to pay quite a bit more to have an ad in the Yellow Pages. It is not always clear that the ad is paying for itself but if you're not listed incidental shoppers won't find you when they "let their fingers do the walking" and others may assume your business is no longer around. As more and more people use the Internet for accessing basic information not showing up in Internet search results has similar implications.

How and how much?

As with many aspects of business the size and nature of your Web presence will be determined by the goals you set for it. One of the first things needed to establish your site is the address. Internet addresses are called "Domain Names". Each domain name is unique and must be registered – similar to registering your business name. For example ON-LINE Computer Services Inc. has a registered domain, "www.on-line.net", which is used to access our web site on the Internet. Registering a suitable, unique domain name for your business costs about \$40.00 a year.

Your actual web presence can start with a single page providing basic information about your business; location, hours of operation, specialty areas and how to contact you – a type of page called a "placeholder" -- or be a fully developed, interactive, e-commerce enabled site through which significant business can be conducted. In either case it must be hosted on a Web Server. There are a number of web-hosting services available which generally include hosting the web site and providing electronic mail services under your domain name. Alternately you can post your site as a page under a larger site in which case your address would be, "www.SomeOtherBusinessName.ca/YourBusinessName" – hosting under your own domain name is definitely a better way of becoming known on the Internet!

ON-LINE has provided web site hosting and email services for some time and are pleased to add web design and web site development services to our offerings. To get started on the Internet ON-LINE has developed a "Placeholder" package which includes registering your Domain Name, designing a placeholder Web Page, hosting the site for one year, submitting your site to various Search Engines and providing custom email addresses for \$49.95/month for the first 12 months, \$24.95/month thereafter. If a more elaborate presence is required or you want your current site maintained or updated please contact us and we will work with you to develop a design and provide a quotation.

6 Steps to the Web

1. Select Domain Name
2. Register Domain
3. Develop Web Page
4. Host Web Site
5. Inform Search Engines
6. Set up Email

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