

Some thinking and planning on your part will help me to design a site that meets your needs and your clients' needs. Planning ahead also means:

- Fewer revisions
- Money saved
- A consistent image for your company

Here are several things to consider as we prepare to develop a site for you. Keep in mind that this is written for companies but most of it is applicable to personal sites as well.

#### Who Are You

- What does your organization do?
- What is your mission or vision?
- What products or services do you offer?
- What do you do that others don't?
- Why should someone use your services?
- What are your key messages?

#### Who is Your Audience

- Is it clients?
- Is it friends?
- Are you a money making venture or a not-for-profit organization?

#### What is Your Look

- Do you have a logo?
  - If so, is it available in digital format?
  - If not, should you have one?
- What do you like in a website? Show me some examples if you can.
- What do you dislike in a website? Show me some examples of this, too.
- Do you prefer horizontal or vertical navigational bars?
- Do you have special fonts or graphics that you want to use?
- Do you have permission to use those items?
- Do you have copy of material you want to include on the site?
- What do you want people to say about your site?

#### What makes You Different

- What makes you different from your competitors?
- How do you want your site to differ from your competitors?
- Why would someone stay at your site?
- Why would someone buy from your company or pay attention to your message?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of your competitors and their web sites?

## What is Your Contact Information

- Where are you located (if that is important)?
- Can you provide a map of your location?
- Will you want contact information on the site?
- Will you be using people's names, or generic contacts (like "Orders")?
- If you have several contact people, do you have short descriptions of what they do?
- Do you have a fax number?
- Do you have a toll-free number?
  - Don't forget to provide the little things, like the area code and the postal code
- Do you have email addresses?
- Do you intend to sell something on-line?
  - If so, have you looked into forms of payment?

## Marketing and Promotion

- Do you have a marketing plan for the site?
  - If so, please provide a copy of that to me
- Are you going to market it yourself or hire a professional to advise you?
- Search engines
  - I will need a short (25 words) description of your company, organization, or site, to submit to search engines
  - When writing this, use keywords that describe your company, preferably ones that are not common

## What You Can Provide Me With

*It is preferable for these items to be provided electronically or on disk*

- Photographs in .jpg and .gif
- Do you have people's permission to reproduce photos they took or photos of them?
- Samples of brochures, pamphlets, flyers, newsletter, posters
  - Make sure these are up to date
- Clean copy of your logo and any other graphic art your company or organization uses
- Text to be included on the site
  - Make sure it is edited and up to date
  - Use simple, short sentences (they are easier to read than dense text)
  - Use bullets
  - Use headers
- For tips on writing for the web, see [e-write](#) and [Writing for the Web](#)
- Any other media that you want on your site
- Any other organizations you want to link to or provide contact information to

## Maintenance

- Who do you intend to use as a host?
- Who do you intend to use as an ISP?
- How often will you want the site updated?
  - We can discuss the process and fees for this
- How will you provide material for updates?
- Will you be doing your own editing of updated materials?