



**WEBSITE and MULTIMEDIA CD-ROM  
MARKETING and DEVELOPMENT**

## **A Primer on Website Development**

A brief overview of the issues and considerations you'll need to be aware of when developing a website.

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## Website Development Primer

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### The Importance of Your Web Strategy

Times are tough and the news is full these days of e-business failures. Yet, last year 30 percent of e-commerce sites reported becoming profitable. What made the difference? Certainly a solid web strategy was a contributing factor to each success.

What makes a successful web strategy? The components are much the same as those for a good business plan, with emphasis on the word "plan." Too many websites show little evidence of forethought as owners rush to put their site up.

### What is the Purpose of Your Website?

This decision needs to be addressed and is the first and foremost priority in beginning your website development. Just about anything is possible online, constrained only by your available time and budget. Web sites can be marketing tools, online storefronts, customer support centers, customer service centers, or media distribution outlets. You must decide what your website will do for your company.

**What business need will it satisfy?** The most elementary website enables clients and potential customers to access and obtain information about your products or services. This type of website is a good start towards leveraging the advantages of the Internet for your business. At the other end of the field of complexity are websites that perform actual business transactions online, such as retail stores, auction sites, financial institutions, or business-to-business services. Every website has an intended function and purpose. It is up to you to decide how to leverage the web for your business needs.

### Who is Your Target Market?

Are you attempting to reach customers? Prospects? Potential employees? How will you attract them to your website and how will you keep them returning again and again?

Users drive the Internet. Because of this, it is important for you to predict what they desire and how they will best benefit from your website offerings. From what you know about your target market, how do you anticipate your desired users will find your site?

Industry statistics indicate that more than 80% of users who find what they are looking for do so using search engines. If you depend on traditional media coverage in your business, be aware that the Internet has become woven into the fabric of modern marketing and news reporting. Journalists consistently turn towards corporate and association websites for information when researching information.

### Who is Your Competition?

Who is your competition online, and what bar has been set for user expectations? Your prospective clients who utilize the Internet compare information and resources. You don't want your company image to seem lacking because your website isn't at least as good as, if not better than your closest competitors.



## Form and Function

It is essential to plan your website from your users' perspective. You should focus on the top three things users will want to do on your site and structure it accordingly. One of the most common errors in corporate websites involves setting up structure that follows the company organization chart, or the corporate brochure. This will receive the same attention paid to a static brochure or informational document – not much. The Web is interactive; you must give users a reason to visit and a reason to return.

## Key players

Your website is going to serve as your virtual presence on the web. All stakeholders in your company should have input. This includes Marketing & Sales, IS, HR, PR and Finance. Involving these departments from the onset will ensure that your total company's needs are met, and will promote a highly cooperative collaboration process.



## Timeline/Budget

You'll certainly need to consider what financial resources you will commit to your online strategy. The more functional your website, the more design, programming, databases and content development you will need to implement. This type of interactive functionality is not inexpensive. The days of doing business with a simple and inexpensive website are rapidly dwindling.

Marketing your web site is no longer an inexpensive process. Most of the major web directories require fees for placement. Knowing which of these marketing strategies makes sense for your business is why a thorough marketing evaluation of your website is important.

Establishing a production plan and timeline that makes sense for your business is equally important. If you need to be online in a hurry, consider a phased approach that gains you online visibility sooner while allowing for next-step development. Be realistic. If you are attempting to support a company event, such as a product launch, don't leave your web development until last. Integrate it into all of your marketing planning.

Your web strategy Toolkit:

- **Industry Market research**
- **Online competitive analysis**
- **Stakeholder input**
- **Corporate business plan**
- **Marketing plan**
- **Budgeting & Timeline**

## The Production Process

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CD Media's development process emphasizes clear communication and strategic thinking. We make the most of your message and materials. We work with you to determine the best solution to fit your needs, and then package your content into its most engaging form. We focus our wealth of experience to enhance delivery, improve retention, and make sure cutting-edge technologies work correctly the first time - every time.

### Initial Consultation

We begin with a media consultation to kick off your project successfully. During this assessment phase, we collect the materials and assets you already have, determine what needs to be created, and outline programming and functionality. Based on this interview process, we create non-technical documents that set clear objectives and outline the strategies we will pursue to achieve your goals.

### Requirements Definition

The most crucial element to a successful final result is to develop specific project definitions. During the requirements definition phase we develop detailed functional and creative requirements and we complete a project plan. Upon completion, the plan is presented to you for final review before we begin production. The project plan details the overall flow, functionality, navigational architecture, and graphic design of the final piece.

### Production and Technical Development

Next, CD Media develops your project's graphic look and feel, copy and other creative elements. We partner with you to hone these elements into a consistent theme. After the initial graphic design and copy are approved, we begin development of the final creative structure.

While we complete graphics, copy, and script, audio/video editing and media preparation take place. Simultaneously, programmers begin coding and application development. Ultimately, we complete all content and it is compiled into the final form.

### Review and Testing

CD Media works with you through every step of the production phase. We test the pre-production version against determined system requirements and review it thoroughly to ensure that there are no performance, or programming errors. Content is reviewed for inconsistencies before getting your final approval that the project is ready for delivery.

### Final Implementation

Once you approve of our work, web-based projects go "live". The development process doesn't end here, however; CD Media stays with you to provide additional technical guidance, answer further questions, and support you throughout implementation.

We hope this helps you to begin the process of website planning. If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

