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## *Company Web Site Vital to its Success*

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The old adage, "You never get a second chance to make a first impression" rings especially true with regard to a Company's web site. Create a web site that appeals to your target audience. If it lacks initial appeal, they will most likely not stay there or return. Similar to the construction of a building, it is imperative to have a clear and defined plan as to what you want your web site to convey about your Company and its product or services. The following are some questions you should ask yourself when designing your Company's web site.

### **What do I want my Web site to be?**

The answer to this will depend on what you want your web site to accomplish. Are you looking to generate e-commerce through your web site? Is it meant to be no more than an electronic brochure for your Company and its products or services? Would your audience benefit from helpful content and links? The answers to these questions will help to guide you in your design process.

### **Who is my target audience?**

A web site that appeals to a 20 year old music store clerk will not have the same appeal to a 50 year old business executive. Once you have determined your target audience, your web site needs to reflect their tastes. This should influence the colors, graphics and overall style of your web site. The 20 year old may be attracted more toward "web wizardry" - pop ups, animation, etc., while the 50 year old may find a straight forward, easy to use format more attractive.

### **Who will maintain the site?**

With an estimated 104 million active domain sites, internet users have plenty of choices when it comes to content. What does your site have that will keep them coming back? It is important to keep your content fresh and updated. This means someone needs to take ownership of web site maintenance. For smaller companies, unless you have content that needs to be constantly updated (i.e. inventory), the task of maintenance does not have to be a full time job. A web site review should be scheduled monthly to update content. Even providing users with some ever changing periphery content or a new look to existing content will give them a reason to keep coming back.

### **Who is going to create my web site?**

Only ten years ago web site creation was best left to web designers. Depending on the complexity of the content you desire, it still may be best to enlist the services of a professional. However, there are numerous web design programs, useful books and online resources that can allow a novice to create a web site and get it up and running in a short period of time. Remember, there is no patent on web site designs, so visit other web sites to find ideas for you to use to reflect your Company and its products and services.

With over 270 million internet users in the United States visiting an average of 59 web sites per month, having an internet presence has become a requirement for all businesses, big and small. A well thought out design with pertinent content, products and services, which are maintained and updated, will project the image of your Company and aid in its success.

For more information, please email Charles Paolino at [cpaolino@downeycocpa.com](mailto:cpaolino@downeycocpa.com) or call 781.849.3100.

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