

The internet is the fastest growing medium ever developed. As a small business owner, it is imperative you do not overlook the potential of the internet as an advertising, marketing, and information tool. A custom designed web site will not only increase your chances of attracting new customers, it will help you generate additional sales and if properly done, a web site can act as your own 24x7 sales person.

To help you get started, we have created the new website checklist below to help you gather the information required for us to begin building an effective web presence for your small business. At the end of the document is an overview of how the Green Apple Webs process works.

New Website Checklist

Domain Name(s): Your domain name is the address customer would type into their web browser. For example, Green Apple Webs domain name is www.greenapplewebs.com – Nike’s domain name is www.nike.com

Note: Consider using both .com and .net to protect your online presence. Your domain name should reflect/represent your business or product(s).

Content: Is very, very, very important. I’ll say it again, content is very, very, very important. The more targeted content you provide the better informed your customers will be **AND** your search engine rankings will climb higher. Focus on providing content that is relevant to your products, services, and targeted demographics / geographic locations. For example, if you offer tilling services for gardens, flower beds, etc. you are probably geographically bound to a small area. Ensuring you state the area (city, town, etc.) that you offer your services. This will help drive traffic to your website when compared to broad searches for garden tilling. Give it a try, search on *garden tilling* in Google. Then search on *Garden Tilling in Edwardsville* - the #1 ranking in Google when searching on *garden tilling in Edwardsville* is www.gardentilling.net – a Green Apple Webs customer!

Think about what a customer of yours would want or need to either purchase your products or services or to use / service your products or services. Do they need to be able to contact you via phone or email? Do they need directions to your office? Do they need product manuals or instructions? Do your customers ask you the same questions over and over? Do you offer coupons they can download?

Thinking about your business from your customer’s point of view will help you build an effective website. Try not to focus too much on your own success, but instead focus on how your products or services can make them more successful, productive, give them time back to focus on other things, etc.

Site Design: The layout of your website is very important. Your potential customers must be able to easily navigate your website to find information. Always use a simple menu that directs customers to the appropriate section of the website. The visual design also needs to represent your business, your services, and your products in a professional manner. The colors should match your company brand. The logos should be the same used in your advertisements, letter heads, shirts, hats, etc.

Note: If you need help finding a design / layout please visit the Green Apple Webs Website Templates section.
http://www.greenapplewebs.com/website_samples.asp

Keywords: Keywords are the words or phrases you think your customers would use when searching for your products or services. You will use these keywords in your website and search engine submissions to help drive traffic to your website. If you offer unique products or services then coming up with the correct keywords will be easy. If you offer a common service across a large geographic area, keywords will be less impactful but still important. The combination of keywords and content will help drive traffic to your site.

Note: Go to Google and search for your products and services. Look at your competitors' websites to get a better idea of the content they provide to your potential customers. You'll need to provide similar or better content to steer customers to your website.

Links: There are two types of links – inbound and outbound. Inbound links are links from other websites that point to your website. They are the most important link type as they help drive your search engine ranking higher. Building a list of potential link referrals is very important. If you resale products and services please check with the manufactures / service providers to determine if they offer links for their partners or distributors - if they do, get your website listed. If you are a member of any trade organizations, get your website listed with them as soon as possible. All inbound links will help, especially those from websites that offer the same types of products or services. Outbound links are simply links to other websites. Consider offering links to the manufactures of the products you sale, or to your local chamber of commerce, etc.

Search Engines: Search engines scan your website for content, inbound and outbound links, keywords, etc. - The combination of all this data reflects how high your website will be ranked in the search engines.

Note: The formula for this ranking is kept secret by each search engine companies.

Green Apple Webs – New Customer Process

1. Sign-Up Online at <http://www.greenapplewebs.com/signup.asp>
2. New Website Design – Yes / No
 - a. If No, list current website address:

3. Existing Domain Name – Yes / No
 - a. If yes, list domain(s):

 - b. If no, please suggest domain names

4. Pick [Website Template](#) or provide Website Samples
If you picked a template, list the name here: _____
5. Provide all website content (please include brochures, flyers, advertisements, manuals, etc)
6. Provide all links to other websites or content
7. Provide list of [web technologies](#) you want on your website
8. Provide list of email addresses you want to use on your website
 - a. If you already have domain branded email accounts we cannot add additional unless you move your domain name(s) to our hosting service
9. Provide logos, color samples, and other graphics you want used on your website
10. Review the list of suggested pages provided by the Green Apple Webs Team
11. Suggest additional pages
12. View prototype website
13. Document changes / modifications
 - a. Repeat 13 until you can move to step 14
14. Approve website design & content

Green Apple Webs will submit your site to the major search engines, enable your email accounts, and provide you an ID and password for the real-time content updating once you sign a contract and pay for your website.