



*Inside Secrets*

# To Developing A Profitable Web Site

by Leva Duell

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## **About "Inside Secrets to Developing a Profitable Web Site"**

Are you excited about your online business? Overwhelmed with the huge amount of choices and the many steps you need to take to develop or revamp your web site?

This book will assist you in developing your web site. It will give you the tools you need to start developing and enhancing your web site and turning it into a profitable online business.

Whether you are designing your own web site (or have a professional design it), want to generate more traffic, or need to convert more visitors into buyers, "Inside Secrets to Developing a Profitable web Site" can help you make your web site more profitable.

You will understand what makes a web site successful, what attracts visitors to your site, how to compel potential buyers to stay at your web site, build trust, boost traffic and sales.

Read on and apply the simple steps to become an online success. Learn these proven web design, marketing, and search engine strategies, and put them into action. Focus on your uniqueness, target your ideal audience, provide lots of benefits, and include useful web content and turn your content into an effective and professional-looking web site.

Each chapter gives easy-to-follow, step-by-step instructions to help you plan your web site. You'll find tips to help you provide valuable web content, organize your content and link your web pages.

By filling in the worksheet and following the strategies outlined in this book, your online venture will become successful faster.

If you focus on those strategies you will be way ahead of your competition. And you will be in the top 1% of successful marketers.

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## Professional Services

### ***Web Site Design Built on Proven Marketing Strategies***

Studies have shown that users will spend more time exploring a professionally-designed web site. Not only will it enhance your image but it will increase your profits.

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## Why You Must Be on the Internet

A web site is a powerful tool to promote your business.

### Worldwide Market

- The web expands your market worldwide and helps you reach a wider customer base.
- You can reach millions of Internet users, individuals, businesses, entrepreneurs and organizations.

### Your Hardest Working Sales Tool

- Your web site provides information about your services and products and allows customers to automatically order 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week.
- A web site will improve customer service. Customers can contact you at their convenience for orders, important information, inquiries, or feedback.
- A professional web site can make your business look bigger and more successful.

### Instant Access

- The web offers instant access. Examples include instant database access, downloads of articles, ebooks, and software, tracking shipments, and online ordering.
- Your email messages and articles reach thousands instantly.

### Low Cost

- The cost of a web site is low compared to a retail store.
- Marketing and distribution costs are lower on the Internet compared to direct mail and other marketing methods. Eliminate postage and printing costs. You can work from home and don't need to rent an office or a retail store.

### Ready-To-Buy Customers

- When people find you online, they are ready to buy. Your target market wants information and appreciates the instant delivery of your product and the ease of online ordering.

Just remember, a new venture takes time to build. Don't give up too soon. Be patient and enjoy the process.

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# **Developing A Profitable Web Site**

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## What You Need to Design Your Web Site

You'll need the following items to start designing a web site to sell your products and services.

**A computer with an Internet connection and an email address** to receive orders.

**A domain name.** Having your own domain name is a must for a commercial web site.

**Hosting.** You'll need a reliable hosting company that can handle your current and future needs.

**A merchant account** processor, payment gateway, and shopping cart to accept payments online.

**Web design software.** If you want to design your own web site, you probably want to use a web editor. A web editor is software that creates the HTML code for you.

**Images.** You'll need images to spruce up a web site. These can be photos, illustrations or clipart.

**Statistics.** You need to know the number of visitors you receive and where they come from. Make sure to get statistics capabilities when purchasing a hosting service.

The right knowledge and the right tools will make it easier to create and maintain a successful site.

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## Getting Your Web Site Launched on the Internet - What's Involved

To get your web site on the Internet, you need a domain name and a hosting company. The following information answers frequently-asked questions (FAQs) about domain name registration and hosting.

### Domain Name

Choosing an effective domain name is important to attract potential buyers, increase visibility, convey a professional image, and inspire trust.

#### What is a domain name?

Having your own domain name is a must for a business web site. Your domain name or web address is a unique name, identifying a specific web site, for example, <http://www.FiveStarWebDesign.com>.

You can register your domain name with .com or other extensions, including .net,.org,.info, and .us. Always register the .com name since most people are familiar with it. In addition, consider registering your domain name with.net to prevent competitors or speculators from registering a similar name.

#### Follow these tips when selecting a domain name

- Choose a descriptive domain name that conveys professionalism and is easy to remember and type.
- Consider a domain name that represents your business name, product name, or indicates your type of business.
- Consider variations of your domain name like making it plural, adding dashes, or underscores.
- Include relevant keywords in your domain name to boost your search-engine ranking. For example, [web-design-resource-center.com](http://web-design-resource-center.com), [webdesignresourcecenter.com](http://webdesignresourcecenter.com), or [webdesignresources.com](http://webdesignresources.com).

#### More tips about domain names

- A domain name can include up to 67 characters, including the .com, .net, .org, .edu, or other extensions.
- Domains cannot contain spaces.

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- Domain names are NOT case sensitive, so you can spell your domain in uppercase, lower case, or a combination of both, e.g. <http://www.FiveStarWebDesign.com> or <http://www.fivestarwebdesign.com>.
- You can use numbers, letters, and hyphens (dashes) in your domain name, but the web address cannot start or end with a hyphen.
- Special characters such as ! @ # \$ % ^ & \* ( ) and ? are not permitted in web addresses.
- Avoid confusing characters like 0 (zero), 1 (one), 2, s, and z to minimize the risk of typos. The number zero (0) can be confused with the letter O, and the number "1" with the letter "l."
- If you register a domain containing hyphens, also register the same name without the hyphens, for example, [www.five-star-web-design](http://www.five-star-web-design.com) and [www.fivestarwebdesign.com](http://www.fivestarwebdesign.com).

You can check the availability of a domain name at <http://www.networksolutions.com> or any of the registrars listed by <http://www.internic.com>.

### **Registering a domain name**

It's best to choose a hosting company first before registering your domain name. Have the hosting company register or transfer your domain name for you.

You can register your domain name yourself through domain name registration services, known as registrars. Internic provides a list of ICANN-accredited registrars (the organization governing domain names) at <http://www.internic.com/regist.html>. When submitting a registration or transfer, the registrar will ask for the name of two domain name servers that contain your IP address. Your host will give you that information. Once your domain name has been registered or transferred, it takes approximately 72 hours before it becomes active.

### **Fees for domain name registration**

Each registrar sets its own price for registering domain names. The fees to register a domain name for one year range from \$3 to \$35 a year. It's a small price to pay to gain your prospects' trust. You can register a domain name for one or several years. At the end of the registration term, you must pay a renewal fee to keep your domain name. If you don't renew, someone else can take your domain name. Some registrars offer free or discounted registration services in connection with other offers, such as web hosting. Make sure they are reliable. Receiving a \$10 discount is not worth the delays and hassles you may encounter. Ask your professional web designer for a referral.

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## **Parking a domain name**

If you want to reserve a domain name but don't have a hosting company yet, you may have to pay a fee to a hosting company or registration service to hold or "park" the name. Some registrars charge \$40 and others offer parking for free. Make sure they are reliable.

Protect your business and product names by registering them as a domain name before someone else does, and renew the registration before it expires.

**IMPORTANT TIP:** When registering your domain name, make sure you are both the billing contact and administrative contact. If your hosting company lists itself as the billing contact, you won't have much leverage to keep your domain name if you decide to switch hosts.

## **Keep the Same Email When Changing Hosting**

When changing hosting companies, you can keep the same domain name and email address connected to that domain name, e.g. [Leva@FiveStarWebDesign.com](mailto:Leva@FiveStarWebDesign.com). You simply transfer your domain name to a different hosting company.

## **Frequently-Asked Questions About Hosting**

The following section answers frequently-asked questions (FAQs) about hosting.

### **What is a server or hosting company?**

Every web address must reside on a server (host computer) to be accessible on the Internet. A server is a computer that is connected to the Internet and uses specialized software to make web pages available on the Internet at fast speed. Because obtaining and maintaining your own server is expensive and requires specialized skill, small businesses usually rent space on a hosting company's server to store their web pages. When Internet users enter your web address into their browser, the host directs them to your web site.

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### **Can I use my own computer as a server?**

Yes, you can, but it's not practical. When you turn off your computer, nobody can access your web pages. Hosting companies use much higher speed internet connections, allowing your web pages to be viewed at a much faster speed than your telephone line.

### **Can I get free hosting?**

Free hosting has many limitations and often provides only limited space for personal use. A major disadvantage of free hosting is that you will have a long address which starts with the provider's name such as <http://www.yourprovider.com/yourname/yourfilename.htm>. In addition, most free hosting companies place advertising on your web pages that detracts from your message and slows down your pages.

Hosting fees range from \$4-\$100/month, depending on the space and features you need. The average fee for hosting for a basic small business web site is \$7-\$20/month. You may have to pay extra for a shopping cart, sequential autoresponders and other features.

The following sites provide a list of free hosting options:

<http://www.webtimetools.com/free1.shtml> and <http://www.freewebspace.net>.

To convey a professional image, you must pay for hosting and get your own domain name.

### **There are two hosting companies I recommend:**

**Site Sell (SBI!)** provides much more than hosting. It provides a sitebuilder, unlimited, sequential autoresponders, marketing tools and a lot of education and tools. See how it compares with other, typical web hosts at

<http://www.profitablewebstrategies.com/proof.html>. The fastest and best way to understand exactly what SBI! is and does is to take the Video Tour. Watch the video now at <http://www.profitablewebstrategies.com/sitesellvideo.html>

**Lunar Pages** is a hosting plan that will work for most people. I am using this hosting company for several of my clients and am happy with their system and customer support. Visit <http://www.profitablewebstrategies.com/lunarpages.html>

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## Choosing a Hosting Company

### How do you select a hosting company?

Select a hosting company based on their service and support, the reliability of the company, the speed and quality of their servers, cost, the web space and bandwidth they provide, and the availability of features such as pop email accounts, statistics, and autoreponders. Ask your professional web designer for a referral.

#### 1. Service/Support

It's vital that you can reach your host 24-hours-a-day, 365-days-a-year. If your web site is down for several hours, it might cost you hundreds or thousands of dollars in sales.

#### 2. Reliability of the Hosting Company

Make sure the hosting company is reliable, has been in business at least two years, and has good ratings with the Better Business Bureau and Dun & Bradstreet.

A server should be up at least 99 percent of the time. Ask if the host has back-up servers available they can use when the server is down. Request testimonials and a list of satisfied customers.

#### 3. Fast and Reliable Servers

Choose a hosting company that uses fast and reliable servers.

#### 4. Cost

Hosting for a basic business web site shouldn't cost more than \$20 per month. You could pay higher fees if you need more features but don't pay for features you don't need.

#### 5. Web Space

You may need additional space if you are offering a lot of free downloads like software demos, videos, images, free ebooks, and similar items.

#### 6. Bandwidth

Be prepared to grow and get additional traffic. Make sure you won't have to pay additional fees when your transfer volume increases. 10 GB bandwidth will be enough for most sites, even for high traffic sites. If you're offering a lot of downloads, you might need more.

#### 7. POP-email Accounts

Make sure that your email addresses reflect your domain name. POP email accounts allow you to use email software to receive your incoming emails instead of having to log in to a web site to

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check your email. I believe that most hosting accounts provide this feature today.

### **8. Support for ecommerce**

Many hosting companies provide tools for adding your own store. A store is basically an order button or a shopping cart system that provides a secured access page on your site. Even if your host provides a shopping cart, you may need a more sophisticated system from a specialized company.

### **9. Statistics**

Statistics are important to analyze where your traffic comes from and how successful your advertising campaigns are. You need to know the number of visitors you receive daily, weekly, and monthly, which sites they came from, and which pages have been accessed. Check your statistics often to improve your web site's traffic and performance and turn visitors into buyers.

### **10. Autoresponders**

Autoresponders are one of your best marketing tools. An autoresponder is an email address programmed to automatically and instantly send a pre-composed email message back to the sender when receiving email. An autoresponder can automate a lot of work. Use autoresponders to immediately respond to email subscriptions, send follow-up messages to subscribers, and send a series of newsletters and promotional messages, free reports, and articles. Most hosting companies provide autoresponders but most are not sequential autoresponders and they are not working with web forms. You may need a more sophisticated autoresponder from a third-party company. See more info about autoresponders below.

The easiest way to select a hosting company is by referral. Your professional web designer can recommend a hosting company and upload your web pages to the server. If you design your own web pages, you will need an FTP program such as WS\_FTP to upload your pages.

See my hosting recommendations in the resource section.

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## How to Accept Payments Online With and Without a Merchant Account

Credit cards are the most popular way to pay for products and services on the Internet. The majority of online customers will pay by credit card, debit card, electronic check, or PayPal. Very few people will mail in a check. If you are not accepting credit cards online via a secured server, you will lose sales. The more card types you can accept, the better your sales will be.

To accept online payments, you'll need a merchant account, a payment gateway, and a shopping cart. A shopping cart on a web site collects the payment information, communicates with the payment processor and gateway, verifies that the credit card or echeck is good, and returns the authorization or denial to your site. This all happens very fast.

You can set up a thank you page that will automatically appear when the payment is authorized. When selling ebooks or software, you can put your download links in your thank you page and automate the complete ordering process.

You'll typically pay an activation fee and monthly fees for both the merchant account and the shopping cart (approximately \$30/month for each).

I recommend [1shoppingcart](#) if you are already generating a good amount of sales and will use your own merchant account.

This is one of the most powerful shopping carts I've worked with. You can set up many products, do recurrent billing, set up membership sites, provide upselling options, have your download page expire automatically after a certain period of time, and provide your own affiliate programs. They also provide unlimited sequential autoresponders.

They have many plans depending on your needs. You can start with the basics and upgrade anytime as needed. I like the convenience of having the shopping cart and autoresponders all in one convenient place. If you need unlimited autoresponder programs, [1shoppingcart](#) is one of the best options available.

Some third party payment processors like [PayPal](#), [Clickbank](#) and [2checkout](#) will process the payments for you without needing your own merchant account.

Third party providers allow you to take payments online without having your own merchant account and without paying monthly fees. A third party provider gives you a link to a secure site where your customers place orders using their credit card or check. You receive your payment from the provider instead of from a bank or financial institution.

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It's easier and faster to use a third party provider. You don't have to qualify for a merchant account which typically involves having good credit. And you save the monthly fees for both the merchant account and the shopping cart. Typical fees include an activation fee and transaction fees. The transaction fees are higher than you would pay when having your own merchant account. When you start generating enough sales, you can switch to a traditional merchant provider to save on transaction fees.

### Popular Third Party Providers

#### Fee Comparison

Sale Price	<a href="#">ClickBank®</a> \$1 + 7.5%	<a href="#">2Checkout®</a> \$0.45 + 5.5%	<a href="#">Paydotcom®</a>
\$10 Sale	\$1.75	\$1.00	\$1.00
\$20 Sale	\$2.50	\$1.55	\$2.00
\$47 Sale	\$4.53	\$3.04	\$3.00
\$97 Sale	\$8.28	\$5.79	\$3.00
\$197 Sale	\$15.78	\$11.29	\$3.00

Below are inexpensive options to accept credit cards online without a merchant account and without monthly fees.

### [PayPal](#)

Every online merchant should accept [PayPal](#) payments in addition to credit cards. Although only about 20% of your orders will be paid through [PayPal](#), you don't want to lose sales from people who are familiar and comfortable with using [PayPal](#).

- No Sign up fee, no monthly fees.
- Lower transaction fees than other merchants. 2.2%-2.9% of sales + \$0.30 USD per transaction.
- The money goes into your account within approximately 4 business days.

[Click here to sign up for a Paypal account](#)  
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## ClickBank

Clickbank is a great choice for digital products such as electronic books and software but doesn't not allow sales of physical products (unless they are complimentary to digital products).

- \$49.95 activation fee for EACH account. You can set up many products on 1 account. You need a new account or third party software to create affiliate links for separate products.
- No monthly charges.
- \$1.00 per transaction + 7.5% of sales.
- Money is held for 2-4 weeks and additional money held in reserve.
- Clickbank will accept credit cards, online checks, and PayPal payments.
- You get a check in the mail from clickbank every 2 weeks. There is a \$2.50 check processing fee.
- Typically, the maximum price Clickbank allows for publishers inside of the U.S. is \$200 but you'll need their review and approval for products over \$50.
- You receive additional exposure through a free listing on their website (Clickbank Market Place)
- You have your own built-in affiliate program and get additional exposure through the Clickbank Mall. Many affiliates look at Clickbank to find affiliate products to promote. ClickBank has over 100,000 affiliates who know how to promote digital products. ClickBank's affiliate tracking systems will award commissions and pay affiliates on your behalf. You decide how much commission you are willing to pay to your affiliates. And, you only pay if there is a sale.

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<http://www.profitablewebstrategies.com/clickbank.html>

## 2Checkout®

- 2Checkout has a sophisticated shopping cart that supports recurrent billing (e.g. memberships)
- Very popular.
- \$49.95 one time set up fee.
- No monthly fees.
- Transaction fee: \$0.45 per sale + 5.5% of sale amount.
- Payment is electronically deposited directly to your bank account twice a month.

[Click here to sign up with 2Checkout.](#)

<http://www.profitablewebstrategies.com/2checkout.html>

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### Paydotcom

- You need to be a PayPal member and get paid instantly through your [PayPal](#) account.
- Sell physical and digital products.
- Your customers pay you via [PayPal](#). They can use their available PayPal funds or their Checking Account, Visa, Mastercard, American Express, Discover, Eurocard, Bravo, Visa Debit, MasterCard Debit, or Novus that is on file with their PayPal account.
- Free sign up for first product. You can add multiple product lines for a one-time \$29 activation fee.
- No Monthly fees.
- Transaction fees: \$1-\$3 per sale + Paypal fees (approximately 3%)
- Supports recurrent billing for subscriptions and membership sites.
- No pre-approval required.
- Provides stats tracking.
- Provides a robust affiliate management system with promotional tools for your affiliates.
- Paydotcom is gaining popularity rapidly. It has a lot of benefits, including low fees. At this time, it won't give you the same exposure that Clickbank can give you but this can change fast.

Sign up with Paydotcom at

<http://www.profitablewebstrategies.com/paydotcom.html>

Give your customers several different payment options to order your products or services. It's essential to accept credit cards when doing business online. Some customers don't have a credit card or don't like to order online, so you still want to give them the option of faxing their credit card information or sending you a money order.

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## Web Design Software

Hiring a professional allows you to focus on running your business instead of the numerous technical issues involved in web design.

If you want to design your own web site, you probably want to use a web editor. A web editor is software that creates the HTML code for you. WYSIWYG editors allow you to design your web site using a What You See Is What You Get interface. This is similar to a word processor where you can see what your page will look like as you're typing it. But even when using a web editor, it helps to learn the basics of HTML to solve some design problems.

Dreamweaver is the most popular professional web editor today but has a steep learning curve. FrontPage is popular for non-professional users. However, it is incompatible with other programs, is not receiving any new updates, and will cause problems if you need help from a professional designer in the future.

Some hosting companies offer free online wizards and template-based software that will guide you through setting up web pages. Using those makes it easy to start creating web pages but it will be difficult to make changes. You may also have problems moving your pages when switching providers.

If you plan on creating a simple web site, you can use one of the many free web editors that are available on the web. Below are free HTML & WYSIWYG editors and a trial web page editor.

Free trial of Dreamweaver - [http://www.Macromedia.com/software/trial\\_download](http://www.Macromedia.com/software/trial_download)

Nvu - <http://nvu.com/>

First Page 2006 - <http://www.evrsoft.com/>

HTML-Kit - <http://www.chami.com/html-kit/>

Arachnophilia - <http://www.arachnoid.com/arachnophilia/>

Site Build It! ("SBI!") provides hosting that includes a sitebuilder. SBI! is the *only*, all-in-one, site-brainstorming-**and**-building-**and**-hosting-**and**-marketing, *step-by-step system of software tools* that delivers a thriving, profitable business. It provides the *right* process, the *right* tools and removes the barriers and mysteries, correctly applied at the *right* time to grow long-term profits. The best way to understand exactly what SBI! can help you is to take the Video Tour. Watch the video now at <http://www.profitablewebstrategies.com/sitesellvideo.html>

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## **Storyboard, Flow Chart, and Design Map**

Plan the design. Storyboard your web site before you start designing your pages. Draw a layout on a sheet of paper or in a graphics program.

### **Flow Chart**

A flow chart provides a strategic plan for developing a web site.

It will:

- Clarify the needs of the client, web designer, and target audience.
- Indicate the site's content
- Map out how the site will be organized.
- Indicate the navigation.

### **Design Map**

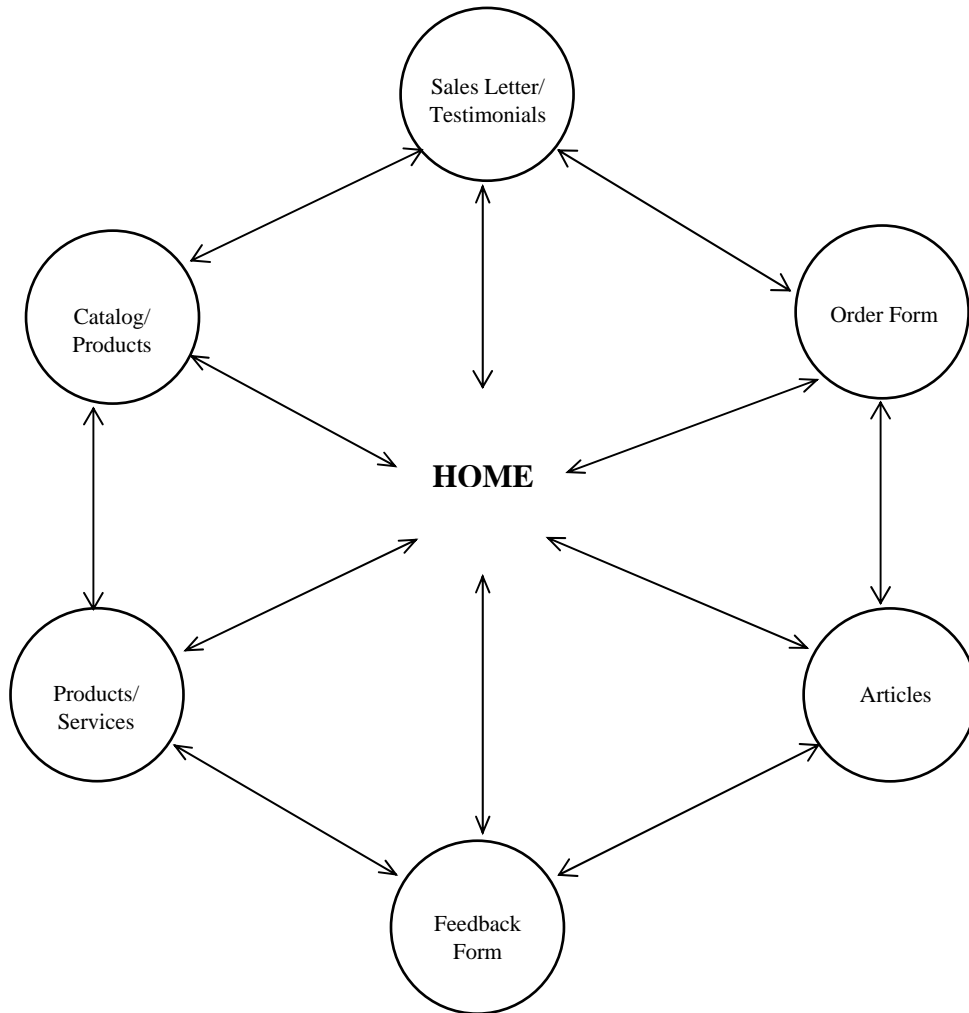
Design maps describe the layout, content, navigation links (buttons, images, keywords, and topics) on each page of the web site.

A design map also shows the connections (categories and connection between the pages), links and organizational structure of the main pages, subordinate pages, pop-up windows, and the location and importance of relevant images.

See a simple Web Site Development Schematic below showing linked pages.

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## Web Site Development Schematic Showing Linked Pages



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## Plan Your Web Site for Profits

Most businesses fail to plan for online success. Knowing your purpose, audience, and uniqueness are the first steps to developing a successful web site. Follow these three steps to position your web site for Internet profits.

### Step 1: Determine Your Purpose

The first step in planning a web site is to determine what you want to accomplish. Do you want to sell products and services, find new customers, establish credibility, or improve customer service?

The purpose of your web site will influence its content and design. Depending on your goal, you may want to write articles to establish trust, provide a compelling sales letter, a catalog, product information, a secure online order form, and a shopping cart.

### Step 2: Define Your Ideal Customers, Their Needs and Concerns

Many web sites are trying to attract everybody. Don't make this mistake. Your web site will be more profitable if you focus on the ideal prospects who are most likely to buy your products or services. Ask the following questions to find out who your ideal customers are:

- Who wants or needs your products or services?
- What is the age range, gender, profession, industry, income level, and education of your ideal customers?
- What are your customers' needs, wants, and concerns?
- What problems can you solve for your customers? What problems do your products or services solve for them?
- Who will be visiting your web site?
- What is the common denominator of your visitors?
- Why will they come to your site?
- What information do they want?
- Are most of your customers computer literate? What computer monitor and screen resolution do they have? What browsers do they use? Do your visitors connect to the Internet with a slow modem or a fast connection such as cable or DSL?

Target your web site's content and design directly to your ideal customers. Attract your target audience with a benefit-oriented headline. Tell right away what your web site is about and what's in it for them. If they don't read further, they were not prospects.

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Make your text large for seniors. Use a conservative design for accountants. Make your design colorful for children. Avoid movies, sounds, and Flash animations if your clients have slow computers and Internet connections.

You can dramatically increase your web profits by focusing on your customers, providing information they want, and solving some of their problems.

### **Step 3: Demonstrate Your Uniqueness**

To be successful with your web site, you must stand out from your competition.

The competition is tremendous on the Internet. How many web sites are you competing with? How do you make your site stand out from those other web sites? And more importantly, how can you get your prospects to buy from you instead of one of your competitors?

Simple, you do that by emphasizing how you're different and better. Marketers call it "USP" or "Unique Selling Proposition."

Instead of copying everyone else, separate yourself from your competition and develop a web site that distinguishes you from all the others. Focus on what makes you unique; attract your audience with a benefit that is different from everyone else's; and provide a distinct advantage or offer.

But first, determine what makes your business unique. Here are some questions to help you establish what sets you apart:

- Why should prospects buy from you instead of your competitors?
- What are the most important benefits or results your customers will get from your products or services?
- What do you do better than anyone else? Do you possess hard-to-find or specialized expertise?
- Do you offer a free consultation, initial visit, analysis, or better advice?
- What makes your services better, more unique, or more desirable than your competitors?
- Do you have the lowest prices or the highest quality products in your industry?
- Do you provide the fastest service, the strongest guarantee, longest hours, or better follow up?
- Do you keep customers informed with newsletters?
- Do you target a specific audience?

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After determining what's unique about your products and services, you can emphasize this uniqueness on your web site and set yourself apart from your competition. Here are some ways to accomplish that:

- Provide your USP, benefits, and site description at the top of the page.
- Use words and images to make your site unique.
- Target your audience in your headline and first paragraph.
- Use benefits that appeal to your audience. Talk their language.
- Create a unique design. Design a custom web header and product images, such as an ebook cover or CD cover.

How to Create eBook Covers - Visit <http://www.qualityebookcovers.com>

How to Create Header Templates - Visit <http://www.qualityheadertemplates.com/>

Give your prospects a reason to buy from you instead of a competitor's web site. Study your competition and then be different, look different, and give them benefits the others don't.

Plan your web site for profits. Determine what you want to accomplish with your web site, who your ideal audience is, and what makes your online business unique. Only after implementing these steps are you ready to start developing your web content.

The worksheet below will help you plan your web site.

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## Planning a Profitable Web Site Worksheet

**What is the purpose of your web site?** What do you want your web site to do?

sell products and services    create interest for your products or services    generate leads    provide information    provide customer service    establish credibility    follow up on leads from other advertising    follow up on initial sales calls    get people to come into your store

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### Who is your ideal customer?

- Who wants or needs your products or services? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Who will be visiting your Web site? What is the common denominator of these potential buyers? Why will they come to your site? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What information do they want? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What are your customers' needs and concerns? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What problems do your products or services solve for your customers? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Are your customers computer literate? What computer, monitor, and screen resolution do they generally have? What browser do they use? Do your visitors connect to the Internet with a slow modem or a fast connection such as cable or DSL? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Industry/Profession \_\_\_\_\_
- Age Range \_\_\_\_\_
- Gender \_\_\_\_\_
- Income Level \_\_\_\_\_

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- Education \_\_\_\_\_
- Ethnic Origin \_\_\_\_\_
- Gender \_\_\_\_\_

**Why should prospects buy from you over your competition?** What sets you apart from your competition? Do you have the best customer services or the lowest prices? Back up your claims with testimonials, statistics, and other data.

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## Attract Buyers to Your Web Site With Valuable Content

### Give People Reasons to Visit and Buy from Your Web Site

Content is the most important component of your web site. Useful content gets visitors to your site, engages them, builds credibility, and converts them into buyers. Surveys indicate that 80 percent of visitors go to web sites to get information. Only 5 percent are interested in graphics.

Valuable content can include how-to articles, reports, tips, links to useful resources, and freebies. For example, a web design company may provide free graphics and diagnostic tools. A CD web site may offer free reviews, biographies of musicians, and an online jukebox that allows visitors to preview their music selection.

To make money with your web site, you also need to include:

- Contact information. Include your name, business name, email, 800#, local phone number (international prospects can't call 800 numbers), fax, and mailing address.
- Company information.
- Product information, the benefits of your products and services, how to purchase them, and their best uses.
- A compelling, benefit-oriented sales letter.
- A special offer.
- A call to action.
- Ordering information.
- An online order form.

### Target Your Content to Your Audience

- Provide information that is valuable, useful, or entertaining to your target market.
- Feature content relevant to the topic of your site.
- Use a feedback form to find out what your visitors and prospective buyers want.

Visitors typically come to your web site four to seven times before they buy from you. Next, you'll find out how to keep attracting prospective buyers to your site and turn them into buyers.

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## Keep Attracting Prospects to Your Site and Turn Them into Buyers

It may take 4 to 7 visits before your web visitors buy from you. New information, regular changes, and updates keep visitors coming back to your web site. As your visitors develop confidence in you, they will be more likely to buy your products or services. Follow these tips to keep prospects coming back, win their trust, and increase your online sales.

### **Capture your visitors' email address**

Collecting email addresses is essential to staying in touch with your prospects. Provide a free report or subscription to your ezine (electronic newsletter) to capture your visitors' email address. Follow up with ezines, offer more valuable information to establish credibility, inform them of what's new on your site, and invite them to return to your site. I'll talk more about autoresponders later.

### **Provide valuable information and benefits**

If your visitors don't see anything that interests them, they will go to your competitors and may never come back. If you provide plenty of valuable information and benefits, they are more likely to bookmark your site and come back later.

### **Update regularly**

Studies show that people spend more time at a site that changes regularly.

1. Make changes and provide new, original, and useful content often.
2. Update your web site at least once a month, even if the changes are minimal. Make small changes, e.g. updates, new articles, a tip of the week.
3. Keep all information current.
4. Indicate the items you updated.
5. Mention that you are continuously adding new information.
6. Ask visitors to bookmark your site and come back for new information.

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### **Content that attracts prospective buyers back to your site**

- Updated information (e.g. industry information).
- Timely information (e.g. events schedule, class schedule, articles, tip of the day/week).
- Updated product (e.g. latest edition of your book, updated virus software).
- New product (e.g. new software demo).
- Quality freebies (e.g. free reports, tips, tutorials, and ebooks; free pictures and graphics; free samples, book excerpts; free templates, software, sounds, and videos).
- Go to this resource page to see more examples of freebies at <http://www.FiveStarWebDesign.com/links.htm>.

### **How to generate content for your site**

- Recycle information from newsletters, postcards, free tips, and reports you already have.
- Spend time exploring useful web sites and request permission to use some of their articles.
- Go to free content sites providing archives of articles you can publish on your web site.

Provide valuable content and update your site regularly to give prospects compelling reasons to return to your site. The more frequently they return, the more likely they'll buy your products and services.

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## **Design Your Home Page to Motivate Prospective Buyers to Explore Your Web Site**

Generally you get only one chance to grab your visitors' attention. Use these four easy steps to compel prospective buyers to explore your web site.

### **Step 1. Headline**

Start your home page with a compelling, benefit-oriented headline, followed by a subheadline.

*Example:*

Enhance your competitive edge with a professional web site. Five Star Web Design & Marketing uses design techniques that persuade visitors to click on your links, spend more time on your site, and order your products and services.

### **Step 2. Description of your web site**

Target your audience by describing your site's content in one to three sentences. Tell what you can do for your visitors, what problem you can solve for them, what solutions you provide, and what your qualifications are.

*Example:*

Web Design Built on Proven Marketing Strategies. Five Star Web Design & Marketing specializes in developing custom web sites for small-and medium-sized companies at competitive rates.

### **Step 3. Provide links**

- Provide links that give visitors an overview of your site's content.
- Turn your links into headlines. Include action words and benefits to invite and motivate people to go deeper into your site.
- Write several headlines with different hot buttons to motivate a larger number of visitors.
- Link to a testimonial page. Providing testimonials from customers or authorities in your field is a powerful way to convey the benefits you offer.
- Provide a link to your sales letter, catalog, and order form.

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*Examples:*

- Multiply sales, subscriptions, and traffic with action words.  
<http://www.profitablewebstrategies.com/actionwords.html>

**Step 4. Capture your visitors' email**

- Get your visitors' email address and build email lists of your prospects.
- Few people will buy from your web site on first contact. Generate leads with your web site, stay in touch by email, and turn your visitors into customers. Send regular email to establish trust; provide additional information and value; offer additional products and services; and get visitors to return to your site. Over time, they will develop confidence in you and buy from you.
- Offer something valuable to get your visitors' email address such as a free special report, newsletter, evaluation, consultation, discount, or special offer.
- Keep the sign-up form brief. Ask for your visitor's email address and name. Ask for their address and telephone number if you're planning to follow up by mail or phone.

*Examples of valuable information:*

1. Yes! Send me your FREE report "Top Ten Ways to Generate Web Traffic."
2. Enter your email address here and receive "10 Secrets That Are Guaranteed to Make Your Internet Profits Explode!"

I'll provide more information later in this book about how to collect email addresses and build your list with autoresponders.

**More tips to make your home page effective and keep visitors at your site.**

1. Provide your benefits, site description, and USP in the first fold (the top of the page - the first screen visitors see without scrolling down).
2. Capture their name by providing a subscription form in the first fold.
3. Make your home page fast loading. If people have to wait to view your home page, they will leave and go to another web site. Avoid large graphics, flashing animation, audio, video, and other technical features that slow your page down.
4. Make it easy and logical for visitors to get to the information they want.
5. Make it easy to contact you. Provide a phone number, email address, and web address.

Let's recap how to motivate your prospects to explore your web site: Target your ideal prospects, grab their attention with benefit-oriented headline and links, and tell them what you can do for them. Don't forget to capture their email address and stay in touch by email to turn your visitors into customers.

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## Increase Sales with a Professional Web Site

Design plays a crucial role in a web site's success. Your web site is the first impression people have of you. It's often your first and only contact with your prospects and customers. Follow these tips to create a powerful online image and increase your online success.

- Create a professional-looking web site. A professional-looking, easy-to-read-and-navigate web site is essential to building trust and converting web visitors to customers.
- Keep it simple. Simplicity is the key to powerful design. A web site must be pleasing to the eye, but not too flashy. Don't overuse the latest web techniques.
- Be unique. Design original graphics and layouts to obtain a unique look. Stand out from the crowd. Avoid templates and clipart graphics. Use graphics that support your sales message. Don't clutter the page with graphics that have nothing to do with the content.

If your web site is professionally designed, visitors will conclude that you are professional. If your web site looks amateurish, they will assume that the quality of your services and products is unprofessional too.

Give a positive impression with your web site. Convey a professional, competent image with pleasing, powerful design to encourage visitors to stay at your site longer, return to your web site, and convert visitors into customers.

Combining layout, graphics, typefaces, and color into a unique design requires the talents of a skilled professional. Hire a professional designer to create a special look for your web site, show professionalism, build trust, and increase sales.

Visit <http://www.FivestarWebDesign.com> to see web sites I've designed and to find out more about my web design services and rates.

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## 9 Easy Ways to Skyrocket Your Online Sales

Apply these marketing strategies to skyrocket your online sales.

1. **Design your web site based on your Unique Selling Proposition.** Why should prospects buy from you instead of your competition? What sets you apart? What makes your products and services unique, better, and more desirable? Do you provide hard-to-find expertise, the best customer service, lowest prices, highest quality, fastest service, or strongest guarantee? Back up your claims with testimonials, statistics, results of studies, and other data. Stand out from your competition. Offer more. Make your offers unique. Be original.
2. **Put the benefits of your site and your USP right on top of your home page.** Many web visitors never scroll down past the first screen of information. Give your potential buyers the information they need as quickly as possible.
3. **Include an "Opt-in" form to collect your visitors' email addresses.** An opt-in form captures the email addresses of interested prospects and gives you permission to email them. Getting your visitors' email addresses and building opt-in email lists is essential to staying in touch with your prospects and turning your visitors into buyers. Offer something valuable to get your potential buyers' email addresses such as a newsletter, free report, consultation, discount, or special offer.
4. **Stay in touch.** Visitors rarely purchase the first time they visit a site. They want to get to know you before they are willing to spend money. Communicate consistently with your prospects through online newsletters and email messages. Give potential buyers reasons to return. Provide valuable information in your ezine. Mention what's new on your site. Provide special offers and discounts to your subscribers. Invite them to visit your web site again and again. These techniques work. Try them and watch your prospects become buyers.
5. **Ask for feedback.** Find out what potential buyers want. Use feedback forms and email surveys to conduct market research. Ask what products and information they're interested in. What benefits are most appealing. What price they would pay. Analyze the feedback and adapt your site as needed.
6. **Write compelling sales copy.** Effective copy works just as well on the Internet as it does in direct mail. Attract potential buyers with benefits. Start each web page with a compelling, benefit-oriented headline. Tests have proven that the more you tell, the more you sell. If people aren't interested in your products or services, they won't read past the first paragraph. If they are interested, you can't tell them enough.

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7. **Motivate readers to do what you want them to do with action verbs.** A call to action such as "call now," "order now," and "click here" can dramatically increase sales. Give precise instructions. Tell them exactly what to do. For example, tell them to subscribe to your ezine and give you their email addresses. For more examples of action verbs, see our articles "Increase Sales, Subscriptions, and Traffic With Action Words" at <http://www.profitablewebstrategies.com/actionwords.html>.
8. **Include your URL on each web page.** This will make it easier for people to go back to your web site.
9. **Keep search engines in mind when designing your site.** Include keywords and META tags in your web pages to improve your ranking with search engines. For information on how to improve your search-engine ranking with keywords, go to [http://www.profitablewebstrategies.com/keyword\\_strategies.htm](http://www.profitablewebstrategies.com/keyword_strategies.htm).

Take a look at your web site and see how many of these elements are missing. Implement these proven direct marketing strategies now to increase your online sales.

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## 9 Easy Ways to Boost Credibility and Online Sales

Credibility is a big concern on the Internet. If you want to sell products or services online, it's essential that potential buyers trust you. Follow these strategies to build trust with your web site.

1. **Obtain your own domain name.** Your domain name is your unique address on the Internet such as <http://www.yourname.com>. To find a list of domain name registration services and check the availability of your preferred domain name, go to <http://www.internic.com>.
2. **Pay for hosting.** Why should you pay for hosting when there is free hosting available? To have a short domain name and convey a professional image, you must pay for hosting and obtain your own domain name. Free hosting has many limitations and often provides only limited space for personal use. Your URL (web address) will be long and look like <http://www.freesever.com/yourname/yourfilename.htm>. Most free hosting companies place advertising on your web pages that distracts from your message and slows down your pages. And it's difficult to get listed in major search engines when using a free hosting service. Hosting fees range from \$10-\$30/month. Pay this low fee to increase credibility and gain your prospects' trust.
3. **Provide useful content.** Content is the most important element of your web site. It gives visitors and prospective buyers a reason to come to your site, return, and refer others. It builds credibility and makes you an authority on a particular topic. Examples of content include articles, reports, newsletters, software downloads, discussion boards, book excerpts, and resources. Tailor the information to your ideal audience.
4. **Update frequently.** Studies show that people will spend more time at a site that changes regularly. Add new information often to motivate potential buyers to return to your site and build trust. It may take from four to seven visits before they buy. Remove outdated information regularly.
5. **Make it easy to contact you.** Provide contact information or a link to your contact page on every page. Include the name of a contact person, business name, email address, 800 number, fax, and street address. Give them a local phone number (international prospects can't use 800 numbers).
6. **Make purchasing easy.** Convenience and instant access are the most attractive features of doing business on the Internet. Make your order form easy to find. Provide plenty of links to your products/services page and order form and lead your prospects to your order form. Accept credit card payments. Give your customers several ordering options, including a

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secure online order form, and ordering by phone, fax, email, and regular mail. Some people won't trust posting their credit card online but will provide their credit card information over the phone or fax. Overcome buyer resistance with a money-back guarantee.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** If you are not accepting credit cards online via a secured server, you will lose sales.

7. **Boost credibility with testimonials.** Testimonials from experts and satisfied customers demonstrate the benefits of your products and are a powerful way to boost your prospects' confidence. Testimonials are much more effective than you touting your products. They convey benefits and confirm your claims. For maximum effect, provide the full name, title, company name, city, and state of the people providing testimonials.
8. **Use correct spelling and grammar.** Typos will weaken your credibility and sabotage sales. Spellcheck all documents and any changes you make. Remember that words like your, you're, their, there, its, and it's are not caught by spell checkers. Read your web site carefully. Have others read it too and consider hiring a professional proofreader.
9. **Use quality images to support your sales message.** Don't clutter the page with graphics that have nothing to do with the content. Your product image is important. For example, if you're selling an ebook, make your book look real with a targeted ebook cover. If you're selling a CD, show a CD image. You can turn a mediocre web site into a stunning web site by adding or revamping the quality images.

Apply these strategies to build trust and increase sales.

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## Avoid These Common Web Site Mistakes

Let's look at some common web design and marketing mistakes that will reduce your web sales.

### Web Design Mistakes

- Poor navigation and faulty navigation links that make it hard for visitors to find the information they are looking for.
- Missing images.
- Low-quality images.
- Slow-loading pages. Prospective buyers won't wait for your pages to load.
- Dark, multi-colored and distracting backgrounds that make text hard to read.
- Error messages. Visitors won't come back if their system crashes or they're getting JavaScripts error messages when visiting your site.
- Underlined words/sentences that can be confused with links.
- Special characters such as curly quotes, curly apostrophes, n-dashes, and m-dashes. These characters are unique to different operating systems and may convert into bogus characters on web sites.
- Pages that are wider than your visitors' computer monitors force your visitors to scroll left to right. (Create the width of your web page to fit your typical audience's monitor to avoid horizontal scrolling).
- Background music on your home page. Visitors will be tired of hearing your music when returning to your home page. Have a "Stop Music" button. If you are a musician and have music on your site, make listening to the music optional.
- Flashing banners, animation, scrolling text, irritating blinking text, distracting messages in the browser status line, and other features that can annoy visitors.
- Under construction pages. Put your pages up when they are ready.

### Web Marketing Mistakes

- Lack of marketing. You need to market your web site for visitors to find you.
- Lack of unique content. Without valuable content, visitors and buyers don't have a reason to return to your web site.
- Me-oriented content to satisfy the ego of the company CEO, Web designer, or programmer. Instead provide content that focuses on the customer.
- Starting a page with "Welcome to my Home Page" instead of providing a benefit-oriented headline. For example, "Eight Ways to Boost Credibility and Online Sales."
- Outdated content. You need to continually add new information and update old information to keep visitors coming back.
- Lack of keywords in your web content, page titles, and description. This will result in poor

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search engines positioning.

- Missing META tags. Some search engines can't index you without META tags and your prospects won't be able to find your web pages.
- Missing or hard-to-find contact information. Mention your contact information on every page to build trust and make it easy to buy from you.
- Trying to be everything to everyone instead of having a unique selling advantage.
- Not providing an online order form. Make it easy to buy from you by providing several ordering options, including a secure online order form, an 800 number, and a fax number.
- Not accepting credit cards. Offer several payment methods, including major credit cards. The majority of sales will come from online orders paid with credit cards. If you are not accepting credit cards online via a secured server, you will lose sales.
- Typos. You'll lose credibility if you have typos.

Think like a prospective buyer who is visiting your web site for the first time. Your web site will be successful only if you provide what your customers need.

Ask for feedback from a professional web designer, customers, and business associates. Check your web design and content with these tips in mind. Correct the problems. It will pay off in sales and profits.

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## What Visitors Like and Dislike

How user friendly is your web site? Here's what Internet users and buyers say they like and dislike.

### What Internet visitors like:

- **They like pictures without sacrificing speed.** A slow web site will cost you sales. Don't make visitors wait for graphics they're not interested in. If you want to illustrate your products with large images, provide thumbnails (small graphics) and let visitors decide if they want to click on them to view larger images that take time to load.
- **They want easy and logical navigation.** Viewers want to find what they're looking for without having to go through numerous pages or clicking on numerous links. Use terms for your navigation buttons and links they will recognize such as Home, Order, and Contact. Avoid home pages or entry pages with animation that don't tell anything about the content and take a long time to load. Instead, provide plenty of links on your home page, giving an overview of your web site's content and choices.
- **They like being in control and having multiple choices.** Give them choices by providing many links.
- **They like sites they can interact with.** Web visitors like to be involved. Offer an ezine they can subscribe to. Add a blog where they can provide comments. Provide feedback forms. Bulletin boards (message boards) are a great way to get repeat traffic and visitor interaction. Involve your visitors by providing downloads, databases, search features, contests, quizzes, trivia tests, self-scoring tests, and animated movies or videos that include interactive elements. Other interactive web tools include chat rooms, free classifieds, Javascripts, search-engine submissions, and shopping carts.
- **They love content and freebies.** Useful, valuable, and entertaining content gets visitors to your site, engages them, builds credibility, and converts them into buyers. Valuable content can include how-to articles, reports, tips, links to useful resources, and freebies.
- **They love customer service** and will return to sites that treat them well.

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**What Internet Visitors dislike:**

- **They dislike hard to read, long pages.** If you have a long page, break up your copy into short, easy-to-read sections and use subheadings to highlight benefits. Break up text with white space, color, columns, lines, and graphics.
- **They dislike drop-down menus.** Newbies may not even know how to use drop-down menus.
- **They don't like receiving error messages or their computer locking up.** Be aware of programming errors when using Java or JavaScript and other features that may crash a user's computer.
- **They don't like difficult-to-use web sites.** When using sophisticated features, software, and programming, consider how your prospective customers will access your features. Test if the typical user can use your database or pull-down menus.

Follow these tips to make your web site user friendly. Give your visitors what they want and make it easy for them to use your web site so they'll refer your site to their friends, return often to your site, and buy your products and services.

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## Make Your Web Site User Friendly

Prospective buyers like web sites that are fast loading, easy to read, and easy to navigate. Follow these tips to make your web site user friendly.

- **Make it easy for prospective buyers to find what they are looking for.** Easy navigation is essential to keeping prospective buyers at your site. Provide plenty of links on your home page, giving visitors an overview of your web site's content and choices. Provide links to your home page and main sections (such as order form, contact page, products, and articles) on every page. Visitors may not visit your pages in the sequence you would like them to. Provide a site map (table of contents) if your site has more than twenty pages. Make sure all links are working.
- **Make your web pages easy to read.** An easy-to-read, professionally-designed web site can maximize your sales. Use color and spacing to make your web pages easy to read. Dark text on a light background is easy to read. A hint of color softens the screen. Avoid text on dark and busy backgrounds. Break up your sales copy into short, easy-to-read sections and use subheadings to highlight benefits. Split up long pages into several pages.
- **Speed up your web site.** Your web site's speed has a significant impact on user loyalty. A slow web site will cost you sales. Visitors won't wait more than 10 seconds for your web pages to load. Make your pages fast loading (especially your home page) to keep visitors at your site.

The next chapters will provide more details to make your site easy to read, easy to navigate, and fast loading.

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## Increase Sales with Easy-To-Read Web Pages

Make sure your web pages are easy to read. Web pages with readable text will generate more sales than fancy pages that are hard to read. Follow these design tips. Not only will your web pages be easier to read, but you'll keep potential buyers at your site and position yourself to increase sales.

### Break up Copy

- Break up text with white space, color, columns, lines, boxes, and graphics.
- Break up copy into easy-to-read sections
- Use subheadings and bulleted lists to highlight benefits.

### Layout

- Use left-aligned text rather than justified text.
- Write short paragraphs (4-5 lines).
- Limit the width of your web pages to fit your visitors' monitors. Your visitors don't want to scroll left to right to see your content or reach navigation buttons.
- Keep the look, layout, navigation, typefaces, and colors consistent on all your pages.

### Color and Contrast

- Use color sparingly. Too much color can be distracting.
- Select a background color that contrasts with the text color.
- Avoid blue backgrounds when using blue links (the standard link color).
- Avoid dark backgrounds. Dark text on a light background is easy to read.
- Avoid text on multi-colored background images. Most background images will decrease the readability of your text.
- Use web-friendly colors. Colors that look bright on your monitor may appear dark on someone else's and make your message unreadable.

### Typography

- Avoid small type, reverse type (white text on dark background), and italics.
- Use capital letters sparingly in your body copy.
- Limit the number of fonts in a web site to a maximum of three.
- Use a type size that is geared to your target audience. For instance, use larger type for older readers.

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- Emphasize important words, headlines, and sentences by using color, bold, and different text sizes but do so sparingly. Too much bold or color reduces the impact.
- Avoid underlining text. Readers might think your underlined words or sentences are links.
- Use standard fonts. If you're using fonts your viewers don't have on their computers, their browsers will show substitute fonts and your web pages can look totally different on visitors' computers than how you intended them to look. You can avoid this by using fonts most people have, such as Arial, Times New Roman, and Verdana. These fonts are also easy to read on computer screens.
- If you want viewers to see a special font, you must convert the text into a graphic.
- Avoid special characters like curly quotes, curly apostrophes, n-dashes, and m-dashes. These characters are unique to different operating systems and may convert into bogus characters in web sites. To avoid this, use a text editor such as Notepad (Windows) or SimpleText (Mac) and check your pages on several operating systems.

### Images and Graphics

- Use images and graphics that support your sales message.
- Use images to break up text.
- Use images to attract attention to your message.
- Keep animation, blinking text, and scrolling text to a minimum. They distract the reader from focusing on your text.

A VALUABLE  
RESOURCE

**Below is an example of how you can attract attention with images.**

Check out Copy Doodles, a collection of hand-drawn and hand-written drawings, symbols, expressions, and direct response triggers that you can drop into copywriting projects *INSTANTLY* and can increase your sales conversion immediately! Both the border and the text "A Valuable Resource" has been created with Copy Doodles. Get free copydoodle samples and video demos. Visit <http://www.copy-doodles.com/>

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## **Check Your Pages**

Web pages may look different on your visitors' computers, depending on their computer, monitor, browser, and fonts. What may look great on one browser may look unprofessional on another. View your web pages with different browsers, computers, platforms (PC and Mac), screen resolutions, and settings. Statistics indicate that visitors use a wide variety of browsers and platforms.

If you're not experienced with web design, hire a professional web designer to design your web pages and convey a professional look.

Keep visitors, prospects, and buyers at your site with easy-to-read, interesting content. An easy-to-read, professional web site can maximize your sales. Apply these techniques now.

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## Increase Sales with an Easy-To-Navigate Web Site

Can your visitors find what they're looking for on your web site with one or two clicks? Easy navigation is essential to keep visitors at your site and turn them into buyers. Follow these 13 steps to make your web pages easy to navigate and compel prospective buyers to explore your web site.

1. Provide plenty of links on your home page, giving an overview of your web site's content and providing choices for your visitors.
2. Put clear navigation options at the top or left of your pages, so visitors see them right away. Users may not scroll through lengthy pages. In addition, repeat some links and add a "Go Back to Top" button at the end of long pages.
3. Provide links to your home page, main sections, order forms, contact page, and products page on every page. Potential buyers may not read your pages in the sequence you would like them to.
4. Use simple terms for your navigation buttons and links visitors will recognize such as "home," "order," and "contact."
5. Use standard underlined hyperlinks for recognition. The standard color for non-visited links is blue. (After visitors click on the link, the link color changes.)
6. Include a site map (table of contents) if your site has more than 20 pages.
7. Put your URL (e.g., [www.yourname.com](http://www.yourname.com)) and email address on every web page.
8. Make navigation simple and consistent throughout your web site. Keep the style and location of your navigation buttons and links the same on every page.
9. Turn links into benefit-oriented headlines and include action verbs to motivate potential buyers to click on your links. For example, Ten ways to increase your web sales immediately. Sign up now to get this \$29 report FREE.
10. Describe your graphics and navigation buttons in ALT tags (alternative text describing your images for visitors who browse your site with the images turned off). ALT tags can also improve your search engine rankings.
11. Avoid "splash" or "entry" pages (home pages with animation) visitors have to click on to enter the site that don't indicate what your site is about.
12. Avoid drop-down menus. They may confuse visitors.
13. Make sure all links work.

Make it easy and logical for potential buyers to get to the information they're looking for. Apply these steps now and watch your sales increase! If you need assistance implementing any of these strategies, turn to your professional web designer and ask for help instead of wasting your valuable time.

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## Speed up Your Web Site and Increase Sales

Your web site's loading speed has a significant impact on your visitors' loyalty. A slow web site will cost you sales. Most visitors won't wait more than 10 seconds for web pages to load. Apply these techniques to speed up your pages, keep potential buyers at your site, and increase sales.

### Five tips to speed up your web pages.

1. Give viewers something to read as quickly as possible.
2. Provide a lot of graphics or images only if you know your audience has fast Internet connections. (Your load time will vary depending on your visitors' access speed.)
3. If you're targeting the general public, avoid large and unnecessary graphics, animated graphics, sound, movies, Flash animation, and large banners -- especially on your home page. (Graphics slow your web pages down.)
4. Use graphics and images that support your sales message and illustrate the benefits of your products or services.
5. Avoid links to slow-loading pages.

### Visitors like pictures without sacrificing speed. Apply these tips to optimize your images.

- Keep images and graphics as small as possible, both in dimensions and file size. The larger the file size, the longer the images take to download.
- Don't make visitors wait for images they're not interested in. If you want to illustrate your products with large images, provide thumbnails (small graphics), and let visitors decide if they want to click on them to view larger images that take time to download.
- Crop images (cut off extra areas around the images).
- Keep the resolution of your images to 72 dpi, the maximum resolution a computer monitor can read.
- Reduce your file size by saving images in the proper graphic format (GIF or JPEG).
- Reduce the number of colors. Use solid colors rather than gradients. The more color in an image, the bigger the file size is, and the more time it takes to download.

Studies indicate that billions of dollars in online sales may be lost each year due to unacceptable download speeds. Don't lose sales with a slow web site. Apply these techniques now.

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## Is It Easy To Buy From You?

If it's not easy for prospects to buy, they won't. Use this checklist to find obstacles on your web site that cost sales.

### Navigation

- Are you leading prospects to your order form?
- Is your order form easy to find? Do you have an "Order" button or link to your order form on most pages?

### Contact Information

- Can prospects contact you if they have questions?
- Do you provide a link to your contact information on every page? Do you provide a phone number, email address, and mailing address?

### Product Information

Do you provide the information your customers need to buy your products or services? This may include:

- Product listing and pricelist.
- Testimonials, case studies, and customer list.
- Money-back guarantee.
- Answers to frequently-asked questions.
- Service information and warranties.
- What your products or services can do.
- Who your products or services are useful to.
- How customers use your products or services.
- Tips for buying your products or services (to help prospects make an informed decision).
- A photograph of your product or another image representing your product such as an ebook cover or CD cover.

Read article: How To Create eBook Covers. Visit <http://www.qualityebookcovers.com>

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## **Payment and Ordering Methods**

- Do you provide several ordering and payment options?
- Do you accept MasterCard, Visa, American Express, Discover, and Paypal? The majority of Internet users will order online with credit cards. Few people will mail a check, so if you're not accepting credit cards online via a secure server, you will lose sales.
- Can your prospects order online through a secure order form or shopping cart? Is your order form or shopping cart simple to use? Is every part of your form working?
- Do you provide alternative options for those who don't feel comfortable ordering online such as ordering by phone, fax, and postal mail?
- Can customers pay by check or money order?

Is it easy to buy from you? Eliminating obstacles will boost your sales immediately.

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## Turn Prospects Into Buyers With Autoresponders

It may take 4 to 7 visits before your web visitors buy from you.

Your prospects will be more likely to buy from you when you develop a relationship with them. To win their trust and motivate your visitors to go back to your web site, you need to stay in touch with them. The more frequently they hear from you and return to your web site, the more likely they'll buy your products and services.

Not creating email lists is the biggest mistake I see people make online. Very few people buy the first time they visit a web site. You spend money and time to generate traffic to your web site. Without getting email addresses, you won't be able to stay in touch with your prospects, and you will only have one chance at selling them.

So, how do you do get their email address?

It's simple. You motivate people to give you their email address by giving them something they're interested in. You can provide a free report, ebook, ecourse or subscription to your ezine (online newsletter) that is related to the topic of your web site. By subscribing, the subscriber gives you permission to send them email messages.

When you have their email address, you can follow up with a newsletter, offer more valuable information to establish credibility, inform them of what's new on your site, emphasize the benefits of using your products and services, and invite them to return to your site.

You can automate your subscriptions and follow up with autoresponders.

An autoresponder is an email address programmed to automatically send a pre-composed email message back to the sender when receiving email.

Autoresponders are one of the best online marketing tools. They will add your subscribers' names and email addresses to your database and send them one or more messages. They can automate your follow up messages at a preset schedule you choose.

You can use autoresponders to automatically respond to email subscriptions, send a free report upon request, send a series of newsletters, and send follow-up and promotional messages.

To do effective email campaigns, you'll need a sequential autoresponder that will capture your visitor's email address through a web form and can send follow-up messages. Free autoresponders won't do that.

A good autoresponder will build your list and automate your email follow up at a schedule you set. Autoresponders will save you a lot of time and help you manage your marketing campaigns on schedule.

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## Glossary of Web Design Terms

Following are definitions of terms related to the Internet and Web design. If some of the terms have several meanings, we are providing the meaning that is related to designing, navigating, and promoting Web sites.

### **Auto Responder/Mailbot**

An autoresponder is an email address programmed to automatically send a pre-composed email message back to the sender when receiving email

### **Bookmark**

A feature in some browsers that allows the browser to remember a Web address you visited and makes it easy to return to the bookmarked Web page later.

### **Browser/Web Browser**

Software to view and navigate Web pages. The current popular browsers are Internet Explorer and Mozilla Firefox.

### **CGI/Common Gateway Interface**

A service that provides functionality to Web sites by using scripts or programs that are executed on the server.

### **Domain Name**

The name that identifies an Internet site i.e. [www.fivestarwebdesign.com](http://www.fivestarwebdesign.com). The three digit suffix of a domain identifies the type of organization. A domain name ending with .com refers to a commercial web site. Domain names can also end with .net (network), .org (organization or non-profit), edu (educational), gov (government), .mil (military), .int (international), cc, and others suffixes.

### **FAA/Free-For-All Links Pages**

Pages where you can put up free links to your Web site.

### **FTP/File Transfer Protocol**

A method to upload and download files over the Internet. You use FTP to upload your Web pages from your computer to your hosting company's computer (the server).

### **GIF/Graphic Interchange Format and JPG/JPEG**

Image formats used in Web pages.

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**Home Page**

The main page of a Web site. The home page usually provides links to other Web pages on the site.

**Host**

A computer on a network that provides services to other computers on the network.. Unless you have your own server, you need a hosting company who provides a server or computer that is connected to the Internet and makes your Web pages available on the Internet.

**HTML/Hyper Text Markup Language**

The coding language that makes it possible to view Web pages with Web browsers such as Explorer or Netscape and allows to link text, words, and images to other pages.

**HTTP/Hyper Text Transfer Protocol**

A standard method of transferring data between a Web server and Web browser.

**Hyperlinks/Links**

Words or blocks of text or images on Web pages that take you to another page when you click on them. Internal links take you to a different page on the same Web site. External links take you to a different Web site.

**Internet**

A network of computers that is inter-connected around the world.

**Internic**

The primary registration service and directory for the American part of the Internet.

**IP Number/Internet Protocol Number**

Every computer that is on the Internet has a unique IP number. The number consists of four parts separated by dots, e.g.209.219.128.158. Most computers also have one or more domain names that are easier to remember. Your Internet provider will tell you what number represents your Web site.

**ISP/Internet Service Provider/Internet Access Provider/Dial-up Provider**

A company that provide Internet access.

**Meta Tags**

Meta tags are parts of your HTML code. They tell search engines what your Web site is about and help index your site.

**Search Engines**

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Search engines are databases that catalog Web pages and lets you search for Web pages. Popular search engines include Yahoo, Infoseek, Lycos, Alta Vista, Excite, and Hotbot.

**Secure Web Site**

A Web site that uses encryption to scramble sensitive information submitted online like credit-card numbers, and prevent unauthorized people to read it.

**Server**

The computer that contains your Web pages and makes them available on the Internet. The term can also refer to software, such as a Web server or the machine the software is running on.

**Spamming** (Also called spamdexing)

Search engine spamming is trying to fool search engines to get a higher ranking. Examples of spamming include repeating words excessively, using keywords that are unrelated to the contents of the site, and hiding text by using the same color as the background or making the text very small. Most search engines will penalize pages that use spamming.

**Spider**

An automated program that searches the Internet.

**SSL/Secure Socket Layer**

Secure Socket Layer uses encryption to make the sensitive information you are sending readable only by the merchant you are doing business with. You usually get a message that pops up when you are entering the secure mode, and another message when going back to a non-secure mode.

**Surfing the Net**

Exploring the Internet with a Web browser.

**URL/Uniform Resource Locator**

A URL is the address of your Web page you enter into a browser such as Explorer to get to a Web page. The URL identifies a location on the Internet and looks like <http://www.yourname.com> or <http://www.fivestarwebdesign.com/samples.htm>.

**WWW/World Wide Web**

The graphical part of the Internet that makes it possible to view Web pages with text, graphics, sound files, and other features with a browser such as Internet Explorer or Netscape.

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## Conclusion: Your Own Web Development Toolkit

Are you ready to start developing your web site and cash in on the Internet? We've covered an immense amount of information.

Now you understand what makes a web site successful, what attracts visitors to your site, how to keep them at your site longer, how to build trust, and how to increase sales.

You can start developing a successful web site and start a successful Internet business.

Here's a quick review of the powerful information you now have at your command:

### *How to:*

- What You Need to Design a Web Site.
- Choosing a Hosting Company.
- How to Accept Payments Online With and Without a Merchant Account.
- Web Design Software.
- Storyboard, Layout, Design Map, Flowcharts and Organizational Charts.
- Web Site Development Schematic.
- Plan Your Web Site for Profits.
- Planning a Profitable Web Site Worksheet
- Attract Buyers to Your Web Site with Valuable Content.
- Keep Attracting Prospects to Your Web Site and Turn Them Into Buyers.
- Design Your Home Page to Motivate Prospective Buyers to Explore Your Web Site.
- 9 Easy Ways to Skyrocket Your Online Sales.
- 9 Easy Ways to Boost Credibility and Online Sales.
- Avoid These Common Web Site Mistakes.
- What Internet Users Like and Dislike.
- Make Your Web Site User Friendly.
- Increase Sales with Easy-To-Read Web Pages.
- Increase Sales with an Easy-To-Navigate Web Site.
- Speed up Your Web Site and Increase Sales.
- Increase Sales with a Professional Web Site.
- Is it Easy to Buy From You?
- Glossary of Web Design Terms.

Does this mean that you have to do everything yourself? No! Becoming good at web design takes effort, time, and patience. You can cut your time to success significantly and rapidly accelerate your results by using the services of a professional web designer.

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Your time is better spent preparing your web site and developing your web content. I've invested a tremendous amount of time, effort, and money in learning to design successful web sites. You don't have to spend a year and a half (as I did) educating yourself. You can save months of effort and thousands of dollars by using the services of a professional web designer.

Now it's time to implement these successful web design and marketing strategies. It's important to strike while the iron is hot, to jump in while your enthusiasm is at its peak. I urge you to start today and put these techniques into action. Use the tools I've given you for success. Focus on your USP, target your ideal audience, provide lots benefits, and include powerful web content. Then have your professional web designer turn your content into a powerful and professional-looking web site.

One Request. When you get your first sale from your web site, would you please write or email me and tell me about it? I would like to include your success story in my newsletter. I would enjoy hearing how you've used these techniques to create roaring success.

Congratulations on your newly gained skills. I wish you all the joy of seeing your powerful web site on the Internet and the exhilaration of turning it into a successful online venture.

To your success!

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<http://www.FiveStarWebDesign.com>  
<http://www.ProfitableWebStrategies.com>

Go to <http://www.profitablewebstrategies.com> for the latest information you can use to increase your web sales. Subscribe to our FREE monthly ezine *Web Profit Strategies* providing powerful, non-techie web design and marketing strategies to increase your online profits.

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## Professional Services

### ***Web Design Built on Proven Marketing Strategies***

Studies have shown that users will spend more time exploring a professionally-designed web site. Not only will it enhance your image but it will increase your profits.

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Visit <http://www.profitablewebstrategies.com> for updated information and new articles.

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<http://www.QualityEbookCovers.com>

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## Resources

Web Design

<http://www.FiveStarWebDesign.com>

Internet Marketing

<http://www.ProfitableWebStrategies.com>

How to Create Header Templates

<http://www.QualityHeaderTemplates.com>

How to Design Ebook Covers

<http://www.QualityEbookCovers.com>

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Hosting

<http://www.profitablewebstrategies.com/lunarpages.html>

<http://www.profitablewebstrategies.com/sitesellvideo.html>

<http://www.profitablewebstrategies.com/proof.html>

Shopping cart

1Shoppingcart - <http://www.profitablewebstrategies.com/1shoppingcart.html>

Comparison of shopping carts:

<http://qualityheadertemplates.com/reprint/merchant-fee-comparison.html>

Third party payment processors

PayPal - <http://www.profitablewebstrategies.com/paypal.html>

Clickbank - <http://www.profitablewebstrategies.com/clickbank.html>

2checkout - <http://www.profitablewebstrategies.com/2checkout.html>

Hand-drawn images and hand-written text to boost results of your copy.

<http://www.copy-doodles.com/>

Clipart

<http://www.qualityheadertemplates.com/clipart-images.html>

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Autoresponders

<http://www.profitablewebstrategies.com/aweber.html>

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