

Net Solutions

25 Reasons to Put Your Business on the Internet

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1. To Establish A Presence Before Your Competitors Do

At the start of 1996 approximately 50 million people worldwide were accessing the Internet – and surveys showed that in America, roughly 1 in every 10 people were using it. By the end of 2001 this number was over 400 million worldwide - and is predicted to reach 500 million (yes, one half of a billion people) by the end of 2002! Surveys now show 7 out of 10 Americans are using the Internet. No matter what your business is, you can't ignore any market of this size. To be a part of the community and to show that you are interested in serving them, you need to be on the Internet. And if you don't, you can be certain your competitors will.

2. To Network With Others

A lot of day-to-day business involves nothing more than making connections with other people. As the saying goes, it's not what you know; it's whom you know. Passing out your business card is part of every good meeting and everyone in business can usually tell more than one story how a chance meeting turned into a major business deal. Well, what if you could pass out your business card to millions of potential clients and partners? A card that says: "This is what I do and if you are ever in need of my services, this is how you can reach me". Well, now you can - 24 hours a day, worldwide, inexpensively on the Internet.

3. To Make Your Business Information Available

What is basic business information? Think of your Yellow Pages ad. It tells people what your hours are, what you do, how someone can contact you, your location, and the methods of payment you accept. But that's about all it does (or can ever do) because the information it conveys is static. It's the same 12 months of the year, just like everyone else's. But now imagine a Yellow Pages ad where you could have instant communication of regularly changing news. Things like today's interest rate, today's special, next week's sale or this month's newsletter. Don't you think that if you could keep your customers informed of every reason why they should do business with you, you could do more business? Well you can - on the Internet.

4. To Serve Your Customers

Making business information readily and easily available is one of the most important ways to serve your customers. But if you look at serving the customer, you'll find even more ways to use Internet technology. How about making forms available to pre-qualify loans or have your staff do a search for that rare spare part your customer is looking for without tying them up on the phone to take down the information? Why not allow your customer to punch in sizes and check it against a database that tells him what color of cloth is available in your store? All this can be done, simply and quickly, on the Internet.

5. To Heighten Public Interest

You won't get a major national magazine to write up your local store opening, but you might get them to write up your Web page address if it contains something new and interesting. And even if a major magazine did write about your local store opening, you wouldn't benefit from someone in a distant city reading about it - unless of course, they were coming to your suburb sometime soon. But with Web page information, anybody anywhere who can access the Internet and hears about you is a potential visitor to your cyber store and a potential customer for your information. At the moment - and for the next few years at least - there is no quicker way to draw attention to what you do than to put your business onto the Internet.



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6. To Release Time Sensitive Materials

What if your materials need to be released no earlier than midnight? The quarterly earnings statement, the grand prize winner, the press kit, and the merger news? Well, if you sent out the materials to the press with standard "do-not-release-before-such-and-such-time" statement you can only hope for the best. And sometimes (too often these days, it seems) this doesn't work. But now your information can be made available at midnight - or any other time you specify - with all related materials such as photographs, plans etc. released at exactly the same time. Imagine the anticipation of "All materials will be made available on our Internet site at 12:01 AM". The scoop goes to those that wait for the information to be posted, not the one who releases your information early. Yes - this is very, very feasible on the Internet.

7. To Sell Goods and Services

Many people think that this is the most important reason to mount their business on the Internet, but we pushed it way down the list to emphasize that you should consider the many, many other uses and benefits your business can draw from the Internet apart from sales. Why? Well, the answer is complex but the best way to put it is this: Do you consider the telephone the best place to sell things? Probably not. Like most people, you probably consider the telephone to be a tool that allows you to communicate with your customer, who in turn helps you sell things. Well, that's how we think you should consider the Internet. The technology is different, but before people decide to become customers they will always want to know about you, what you do and what you can do for them. You can accomplish these tasks very easily and inexpensively on the Internet. Then you might be able to turn these inquiries into customers.

8. To Make Pictures, Sound and Film Files Available

What if your widget is great, but people would really love it if they could see it in action? What if your album is great but with no airplay, nobody knows just how great it is? A picture may be worth a thousand words, but you don't have the space for a thousand words? Well, the Internet allows you to add sound, pictures and short movie files to your company's information. And in the next few years, you'll be able to include live video too. No brochure will ever do that for you. But the Internet will.

9. To Reach a Highly Desirable Demographic Market

The demographic of Internet users shows that - as a whole - the Internet constitutes probably the wealthiest market on the planet. Although individual studies vary on the details, it's safe to say that the majority of Internet users have 4 or more years of tertiary education, a high disposable income, fit in the 25 to 55 age bracket, have access to credit cards and like using them. It's no wonder that Wired magazine - the magazine of choice to the Internet community - has no problem getting high-end companies to advertise. And it's no wonder that many very highly priced goods and services are already freely traded on the Internet. The Net is an affluent market, and will stay that way for many years to come.

10. To Answer Frequently Asked Questions

Whoever answers the phones in your business can tell you that a large slice of their time is usually spent answering the same questions over and over again. These are the questions that customers and potential customers want to know the answer to before they deal with you. Post them on an Internet page and you will have instantly removed another barrier to doing business with you - and freed up some time for your phone operators as well.

11. To Stay In Contact With Salespeople

Your employees on the road may need up-to-the-minute information that will help them make a sale or pull together a deal. If you know what that information is, you can keep it posted in complete privacy on the Internet. A quick local phone call can keep your staff supplied with the most detailed and up-to-date information without long distance phone bills and without tying up staff at the home office. And your remote staff can access the complete company files online, if you wish, to allow them to travel light and fast.



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12. To Open International Markets

You may not be able to make sense of the mail, phone and regulation systems in all of your potential international markets, but with an Internet presence you can open up a dialogue with international markets as easily as with the company across the street. As a matter of fact, before you go onto the Internet, you should decide how you want to handle the international business that will come your way - because your postings are certain to bring international opportunities to you, whether it is part of your plan or not. The Internet is inherently global, and no other media can provide you with the facility to broadcast your products and services to the entire planet the way the Web can.

13. To Create a 24-Hour Service

If you've ever remembered too late or too early to call someone interstate, you know the hassle. We're not all on the same schedule! Business is worldwide but your office hours aren't. Trying to reach Asia, the USA or Europe is even more frustrating. But Internet pages serve your prospects, customers and trading partners 24 hours a day, seven days a week - when it suits them! You can customize your information to precisely match your customer needs and you can collect important information that will put you ahead of the competition, before they even get into their office. Best of all, you can become a 24-hour-a-day operation - through the Internet - for less than the cost of a suburban newspaper classified ad.

14. To Make Changing Information Available Quickly

Sometimes, information changes before it gets off the press. The result? You're left with a pile of expensive, worthless paper. But electronic publishing on the Internet changes with your needs. No paper, no ink, no printer's bill. You can even attach your Internet page to a database which customizes the page's output - and you can change the content as many times as you need to. No printed piece can match that flexibility. Ever.

15. To Allow Feedback From Your Customers

You pass out your brochure, catalog or booklet. But it doesn't work. No sales, no calls, no leads. Nothing. So what went wrong? Was it the wrong color, the wrong price, the wrong market or a mixture of all three? With traditional marketing you need to scrap everything and try again (...and again, and again) until you get it right. But it's very, very expensive to do this - and even then, you're never sure you'll get the feedback you need. But with an Internet page you can ask for feedback and get it instantaneously at no extra cost. An instant e-mail response can be built into your Internet pages and can get the answer while it's fresh in your customers mind, without the cost and lack of response of business reply mail. Instant feedback like this can allow you to rapidly fine-tune your offerings until you DO strike the successful formula. Again, it's something that's only possible on the Internet.

16. To Test Market New Services and Products

Related to the reason above, we all know that the costs of rolling out a new product are exorbitant. Advertising and PR are expensive! But once you've been on the Internet and know what to expect from those who are seeing your page, they are the least expensive market for you to reach. They will also let you know what they think of your proposed new product faster, easier and much less expensively than any other market you may reach. For the cost of a page or two of Web programming, you can have a crystal ball into where to position your product or service in the marketplace. Amazing. But true. And only on the Internet.

17. To Reach The Media

Every kind of business needs the exposure that the media can bring, but what if your business is reaching the media already as a newswire, a publicist or a public policy group? The media is the most wired profession today since their main product is information and they can get it more quickly, cheaply and easily. On-line - and on-line press kits are becoming more and more common since they work with the digital environment of more and more pressrooms. On-line publicity means that digital images can be put in place without the stripping and shooting of the old pressrooms and digital text can be edited and output on tight deadlines. All the these can be made available on an Internet page.



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18. To Reach The Education and Youth Market

If your market is education, consider that most universities already offer Internet access to their students and most primary and secondary schools will be on the Internet within the next few years. Most in America already are - even as you read this. Books, athletic shoes, study courses, youth fashion and anything else that would want to reach these overlapping markets needs to be on the Internet.

19. To Reach Specialized Markets

Do you sell tropical fish tanks, art reproductions, flying lessons, and hand-made rugs? You may think that the Internet is not a good place to be. Well, think again. The more specialized your product or service - the more unique it is - the better you're likely to do. If you sell commodity goods (like tins of baked beans), people can buy them from anywhere - and will. But if you sell something unique, you can attract more interest through the Internet than anywhere else. People look to the Internet for hard-to-find things they can't get locally. And they'll get them from you - if you're there too.

20. To Serve Your Local Market

We've talked about the power to serve the world with a cyber store on the Net. And how about your own neighborhood? If you're located in or near any of the country's capitals, there are probably enough local customers with Internet access to make it worth your while to consider Net marketing right now. And naturally, if your clients have Internet access you should be there too. Your competition certainly will be.

21. To Create New Businesses

We haven't mentioned this so far, but one unique advantage of the Internet is that it also allows you to create completely new business opportunities that may not be feasible - or even possible - in the day-to-day world. For example, you might create and market an electronic newsletter that may not ordinarily be economically feasible (because of the heavy costs of advertising, postage and packing) but quite feasible on the Net (where you can advertise and distribute effectively for nothing, and easily reach specialty niche groups previously considered unreachable). Many new businesses have already arisen on the Internet in the last few years that really have no parallel in the everyday world but their owners are doing very nicely with them, thank you. Why not you too?

22. To Provide A Personal Touch

Many people prefer to meet others face-to-face. And when they can't do that, they prefer the telephone. But when a prospect or a client is overseas, a telephone is usually out of the question - and the post is way too slow. However, if you're on the Internet, you can use email to provide quick, effective, personal contact with your prospects and customers - and they can do the same with you 24 hours a day. It's worth pointing out that most people largely enjoy email the same way they enjoy a personal letter - because it's direct, one-to-one communication that they can send when it suits them and read when it suits them. And because they like it, it has high impact. But this form of communication is only available to you if you're on the Internet.

23. To Do Pro-Active Marketing

If you're in a business-to-business service area, having a cyber store on the Internet allows you to pro-actively market your services to other businesses that are already on the Net. And you can do it more economically than any other form of marketing available to you. No one is ever offended if you tell them you have a service or product that might interest them and the address of your cyber store if they'd like to look it over...and many new business contacts have been acquired this way. But of course, if you don't have your business on the Internet, you can't do this. Your competitors who are on the Net already can, though - and probably are.



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24. To Take Advantage of New Opportunities

At the moment, the Internet is still in its infancy. And right now is the best time to take advantage of all the unfilled niches and services that demand to be filled. Because every day, those opportunities are being filled - by other people who saw how wonderful the Internet is for business and who acted on it. The Internet is still growing exponentially. You can be a part of it or you can sit on the sidelines until you're forced to be a part of it - by which time you'll enter a market where all of the best opportunities have gone.

25. To Survive In The 21st Century

The Internet is rapidly pushing us into a global marketplace. Whether we like it or not - and whether we want to be a part of it or not - the Internet is turning the Earth into a very small planet where anyone can go anywhere and buy, sell or swap anything from anyone else they wish. The barriers that isolated countries and people in the past are being blown away.... and so will the businesses that duck their heads in the sand and try to pretend that none of this is really happening. Sooner or later, every business will have to be on the Internet. It's just the same as needing to have a phone and a fax, a mobile phone and a 1-800 number too.

To find out more about how Net Solutions® can help your business enterprise contact:



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