

Setting Up Your Custom Web Site

Your Custom Web Site may be used for personal information (e.g. a family genealogy site) or for business. If you are creating a business oriented site, you must first decide on the products or services that you will market on your site.

In addition, if your business site will market

1. custom products or services (where you do not have standard prices),
 - a. the site will need to have phone, e-mail and mail addresses so that your prospects can contact you to discuss their needs and then receive a quote.
 - b. describe the types of products or services that you can provide, indicating the materials, colors, etc. from which the prospect can select. Remember that you must provide enough information so that your prospect will want to contact you.
2. standard products or services,
 - a. your site will also need phone, e-mail and mail addresses, and
 - b. a price list or mini-catalog, listing each product or service with a description and price.

Pictures are appropriate for at least a few of the products, but if many of the products are similar, pictures of each item may not be needed.

There are several basic types of pages that may be a part of your Custom Web Site. (For simplicity, we'll refer to it from now on as just your *site*.)

If you have a computer of your own, the fastest way to get your site set up is to supply the wording and pictures in the form of computer readable files. These can either be forwarded as e-mail attachments to **support@netace.us**, or sent to us on standard 3½" floppy diskettes or on a CDROM. We can also handle ZIP-100 or ZIP-250 disks. (see **Limitations on Computer Readable Files**).

If you have an existing website, see **Transfer of an Existing Web Site**.

Your Home Page

The home page is the entry to your site, the main page. It should say much more than simply "Welcome to My Site" or words to that effect. This is where you have the opportunity to make or break the surfer contact, so you need to be sure that the surfer that found your site does not leave! Be certain that the wording is clear, using good English. In addition, the wording on this page must support the keyword phrases so that you will achieve ranking with the search engines. If you leave the color choice to us, we'll try to pick an attractive color theme that fits your logo and products or other artwork.

A Landing Page?

If you are using email marketing techniques, a "landing" page (also known as a "squeeze" page) is often used as a gateway to the main site or simply to gather opt-in

email information (typically name and email address) for a mailing list. Depending on your needs, this may be followed by an order page or a thank-you page. It's a good place to re-iterate the fact that the user has opted in (given his/her permission for contact via your mailing list autoresponder).

Additional Pages

Other pages do not necessarily have a particular sequence, though we tend to put the links to them in sequence like this: Home, Products (or Services), Order, About Us or Contact Us, and optionally, Video.

The About Us page is generally used to tell the prospective customer about you or your company and your/its background. It's basically where you get to tell the prospect why he or she should buy from you and can also optionally provide contact information.

The Products (or Services) page should describe the product(s) or service(s) which you are selling, with sufficient detail for the prospect to determine the suitability to his or her needs. Products should have pictures, descriptions with dimensions, colors, prices, and shipping / handling costs if appropriate. Use sales-oriented wording that makes the product or service seem attractive and desirable to purchase. PayPal shopping cart (add-to-cart) buttons can be used on the Products or Services page(s) if needed.

The Order page should provide an order form and, preferably, allow for credit card payments by PayPal, the most widely used merchant account system on the web. You should always have an e-mail address for receiving orders and questions about your products or services. Free e-mail accounts are available thru Yahoo.com or Hotmail.com (Yahoo has twice the storage capacity of Hotmail at the time this was written). For your personal safety, the Order page should show a business or PO Box address, not a home address. The phone number you provide should have voicemail, so that when you are on the phone, the system can still take messages or orders for you. If you provide a Fax phone it should be either a full-time access fax number, or a regular phone with an auto-sensing fax-modem or fax machine. We can handle merchant accounts thru PayPal or PlugNPay.

You can generate a mail-in order form as a .PDF file directly in Corel WordPerfect 10. PDF files use the format developed by Adobe and require the free Adobe Acrobat Reader or FoxIt software to display and/or print the file. We can include a link to the Adobe download page for users to get the free software.

If you use a video clip, it should be limited to about 50-60 seconds long. You may submit it in the form of an .AVI, .MPG or .WMV file on a CD-ROM. (.AVI usually takes less space and thus loads faster). Remember that your video is a sales tool, so it needs to make sense, look good and sound good. Flash videos (.FLV or .SWF) are also popular. Please include the complete object or embed link code to properly access your video. A brief professional video may be a valuable asset to a Landing Page, giving the user a feel for you and your products or services, and your integrity.

Important Notes:

- It is your responsibility to be certain that all e-mail addresses and website addresses (URLs) that you supply are correctly spelled and punctuated!
- E-mail addresses do NOT contain "http://" nor "www." nor is there a ".com" before the @ sign.
- Website URLs do NOT contain an @ sign. When used in a link or HTML Anchor statement, the FULLY QUALIFIED URL must be used, beginning with http:// ...

Web Page Templates

We use 2 standard page templates that you may choose from. Type **L** has the page link "buttons" on the left side of the screen. Type **B** has the link "buttons" on the bottom of the screen page. The disadvantage of Type **B** is that the surfer will need to scroll down to the bottom to choose another page. If you have a very long page, say 30 products with pictures, we recommend using both link sets on that page to make it easy for the surfer to navigate. If you prefer, you may request that we use text links instead of graphic "button" links.

Browser Issues

Keep in mind that the browsers are NOT word processors, and they do NOT behave like word processors. For example, some browsers do not support so-called "Full Justification". The only fully supported options are Left Justify, Right Justify and Centered. The format of the web pages will be adjusted to fit the most widely utilized computer and browser settings (1024x768 display, with Internet Explorer 7 or FireFox 3). Secondly, the browsers are all different from one another, and the individual configuration options, which users may choose, serve to further complicate the differences.

While the most commonly used browsers are MS Internet Explorer and FireFox, Flock 2 and Opera are also widely used. MSIE constitutes about 42% of the Internet browsing usage, FireFox about 46%. Thus it is important that we test the web sites using MSIE and also with FireFox. In setting up custom web sites, we strive for full functionality in both browsers. (Note: support for the Netscape browser was ended 3/1/2008, but many still use it.)

Monitor Resolution

Another factor affecting web site appearance is the display monitor resolution setting. The most commonly used video setting (about 70%) is 1024x768. 640x480 resolution is largely obsolete and much of the software presently on the market will not function properly with settings less than 800x600. For this reason, we test all sites with 1024x768 resolution. Many new monitors are wide screen with 1440x900 or 1680x1050 resolution. Higher resolution settings can be used but may result in strange visual results, due to the way the browsers behave.

Visual Results

Visual results also are a function of a number of other factors, including font size and style, color combination and appropriate white space. The use of serif-style fonts (such as Times Roman) in small character sizes are much harder to read than

sans-serif fonts (such as Arial). In addition, the available fonts vary with the specific version of Operating System, Browser and additional fonts that the user may have optionally installed. There are essentially 3 fonts that can be universally relied on - Courier, Times Roman, Arial. Windows also has a table of font equivalents, so that, for example, if Helvetica is available and Arial is not, Windows will substitute the similar font Helvetica for references to Arial. Use of fonts in a logo does not count, since the logo is saved as a graphic (.GIF or .JPG file).

In color combinations, we strive to use appropriate contrast and avoid black on dark grey, blue on black or yellow on white. Because of color blindness issues, we also avoid red or pink on greens, and vice versa. Black backgrounds should also be avoided as they give a 'dead' image. Use dark blue, deep purple, or forest green if you want a dark background. We also try to find suitable patterned backgrounds that fit with the color scheme.

We also strive to make good use of the screen "real estate" and avoid when possible excessive scrolling. We place "navigational aids", clickable links to other places within the same page, when appropriate.

Photographic Images

Pictures are often the best way for your prospective customer to evaluate the item you are selling, so you want the product to look as good as it can. If you do not have an adjustable camera that is capable of taking good close-up shots, you might consider having a professional photographer, or someone whose hobby is photography, take pictures for you. If you have the film developed by a mail-order photo service, such as Seattle Filmworks, or by many one-hour photo services, there is usually an option to have your pictures sent to you on a CDROM, or supplied as files that you can download over the Internet (you have to supply a username and password, of course). If the photos in question are existing prints, they might be usable if they are clear, with soft highlights and a reasonable degree of contrast. Your local copy center can usually scan photos for you. (See further info below.)

When scanning photographs, typically there's about a 10% reduction in clarity, so your pictures should start out as clear as possible (i.e. in perfect focus) and about twice the size you expect to see on the screen. This way we can crop and/or re-size the image to fit the web page space and still have a clear picture. Pay special attention also to brightness and contrast, since this makes a tremendous difference in visual impact.

If you need to use a flash, try to avoid the flash directly hitting shiny surfaces - that causes glare and excess contrast. You might try a thin sheet of gauze or see-thru silk or nylon fabric to soften the glare. If you take the photos in natural light, consider a flash fill. Avoid direct bright sun. Light cloudiness actually gives the best light. When taking pictures indoors near a window, don't place the subject in front of a window - instead, put the window behind the camera and use a flash fill.

Supplying a Banner or Text Link

A text link (or Anchor in HTML terminology) looks like:

```
<A HREF="url_to_link_to_goes_here">text goes here</A>
```

A banner link (or Anchor in HTML terminology) looks like:

```
<A HREF="url_to_link_to_goes_here"><IMG ...></A>
```

In other words, between the <A ...> and tags may be either an IMG tag (graphic image or banner type link) or text (text link).

The URL to link to must contain "HTTP:// ..." or "HTTPS:// ...". In other words, the fully qualified domain name must be used. The <IMG tag will have a SRC= parameter which supplies an address that is generally a location reference to pick up a banner or graphic image that the surfer can click on. The separate and distinct URL in the <A HREF tag is the site address to which control will transfer to when the click happens.

Limitations on Computer Readable Files

Because there are many different file formats, we require that all documents be supplied as either:

1. ASCII text file (.TXT) Most text processors and word processing programs can save files in this format, including Notepad and PFE. Or,
2. MS Word document file (.DOC) Several word processors can save files in this format, including Wordpad, WordPerfect and Star Office. Or,
3. Corel WordPerfect document file (.WPD) This usually takes less space than a .DOC file.

Documents **MUST NOT** be supplied as .PUB, .WEB, .WPS or other file formats typically generated by MS Works or MS Publisher. We do not use those software packages because of the many incompatibilities involved.

All File names MUST NOT have embedded spaces. This is because the Unix servers do not allow blanks or spaces in the file names. For example, if a file on your system is named `Johns car.jpg`, rename it to `Johns-car.jpg` or `Johns_car.jpg`, or something else without spaces, before you copy it to a disk. Also, while Windows is not case-sensitive, Unix is!

Graphic images, whether photos or artwork, must be supplied as either:

1. .GIF file, (gif 89a interlaced format) or
2. .JPG file.

.PNG files will work, but they are 5 to 8 times larger than a comparable .GIF and take much longer to load.

Images MUST NOT be embedded in document files! They must be separate and individual files. The images must be clear and with appropriate brightness and contrast. It is better to supply larger images than small ones. Large images can be cropped and resized to fit the web page, but small images cannot be enlarged without loss of clarity. An optimal size picture is generally somewhere between 3"x3" and 8"x10". If you supply pictures that are of poor quality, we reserve the right to include a disclaimer on your site.

Product images should not contain wording which obscures the product. If you need prices or other information, don't put it in the picture! Put it in the separate text file that accompanies the picture. For example, if your product number is 643, then your image should be saved as 643.JPG and the text as 643.TXT. An added benefit of this is, if the price changes, only the text needs to be modified, not the graphic image.

For your legal protection and ours, graphic images, if not clearly of your own products or services, **should be accompanied by a copyright release** stating that you have been granted the right to use the images in your website, and whether or not a copyright notice is required on the website.

Transfer of an Existing Web Site

If you have an existing website, you may submit it for review and upload - BUT, besides meeting our basic standards, the web page files **MUST BE** .HTML files and all graphics **MUST BE** .GIF or .JPG files. There will be absolutely NO exceptions to this rule!

Important Note:

Pages generated by MS Publisher or MS Works will NOT be accepted (this software generates huge quantities of useless wasted code). In addition, all links must be valid clickable links to working sites, and e-mail addresses must be clickable e-mail links.

Completed Forms

Send your completed forms, together with any disk(s) if needed, to:

Netace.US Web Enterprises
3264 W Yellow Peak Dr
Queen Creek, AZ 85242

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