

American Horse Publications

Web Sites 101

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What we will cover

- ❑ Assume you have a first generation web site or are building your first site
 - ❑ How to approach building a web site
 - ❑ Questions to answer before beginning
 - ❑ Site building considerations
 - ❑ The process of building a site
 - ❑ Launching the site
 - Domain Names
 - Hosting
 - Maintenance
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How to approach building a web site

- ❑ Building a web site a process that is never completed
 - ❑ Site must be constantly maintained and updated or site visitors loose interest
 - ❑ Web sites are no longer static – they should be used to conduct business
 - ❑ Think about a phased approach
 - Introductory site
 - Adding business processes
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Questions to answer before beginning

- How are you going to maintain the site?
 - Do you have the skills?
 - Web graphic design
 - HTML coding
 - Programming/database development – dynamic sites
 - Web site Marketing
 - Do you have the time?
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Web Site Building Tools

□ Tools for Developing web sites

- Preferred tool for HTML Coding is Macromedia's Dreamweaver -

<http://www.macromedia.com/software/dreamweaver/?promoid=BINR>

□ Tools for Graphic Design

- Adobe's Photoshop

<http://www.adobe.com/>

- Flash -

<http://www.macromedia.com/software/flash/?promoid=BINT>

Hiring a Professional

- Look at their work and areas of expertise
 - Some developer use latest technology to gain experience instead of having a good business reason
 - Look for a good mixture of technical savvy and business savvy
 - Look for companies that have long term relationships/partnerships with customers
 - Talk to references
 - Ask for a quote
 - Inquire about easy to maintain dynamically driven web sites if you want to handle day-to-day maintenance
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Determine Objectives

- Determine what are the main objectives of your web site?
 - Build your brand
 - Provide product information to drive local sales
 - Sell advertising
 - Sell products or services directly over the Internet
 - Earn affiliate commissions for sales and leads
 - Provide customer service and support
 - Save money
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Identify Audiences

- Identify each audience type and what information they are looking for...
 - Example: Breeders, Riders, Farm Managers Employees, etc.,
 - Outline all audiences and related content
 - Identify content that is interrelated so it can be cross linked
 - Identify what content exists and what needs to be developed
 - Common mistake – structuring your web site the same as your organization vs. how your customers interact with your company!
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Site Building Considerations

- Determine Site Layout
 - What categories and sub-categories
 - What services/forms/information is used in multiple sections
 - Draw of Flow Chart of site
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Graphic Design/Look and Feel

□ Graphic Design

- Graphic Design for the web is very different from traditional graphic design – low resolution
 - Every page should load quickly – no more the 60K on any given page
 - Design should support visually navigation
 - Color consistency and palette
 - Ex: <http://www.ibm.com/us/>
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Build Web page templates

□ Top

- Home
 - Search
 - Contact
 - Subscribe
 - Sign-In
 - Banner Ads
 - Top navigation
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Build Web page templates

Bottom

- Privacy Policy
- Copyright notices
- Text links of all navigation

Left menu – typically navigation

Right – Advertising, affiliate links, products/services

Search Engine Optimization

- ❑ Page Titles – 80 characters
 - ❑ Meta tags
 - Description – up to 250 characters – include important keywords in the description
 - Keywords only used by Yahoo
 - Text – contain keywords
 - Images – alt text
 - Hyperlinks should contain keyword
 - ❑ Resource:
<http://searchenginewatch.com/webmasters/article.php/2167891#keysupport>
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Search Engine Optimization

- No Frames
 - No Flash menus
 - Text links – minimally bottom of page
 - Database driven content – static pages in front of each main section
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Content

- ❑ Write more casually
 - ❑ Use keywords
 - ❑ Shorter is better
 - ❑ Test first draft against rating service
 - Resource: <http://www.web-positiongold.com/The-Page-Critic.htm>
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Communicate with your customer

- Build two way communications
 - Contact Us
 - Listserv
 - Online Chat
 - Opt-in email
 - Newsletter
 - Tailored content
 - Announcements
 - Instant Messaging (IM)
 - FAQ – Frequently Asked Questions
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Phase 2 – Transferring Business Processes to the web

- Subscriptions
 - Sales
 - Advertising
 - Members Only
 - Registrations
 - Job Applications
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Launching Your Web Site

- Register domain names with one registrar – Network Solutions or Register
 - Determine what services you need to pick a web host:
 - Web site hosting
 - Email/forwarding
 - Database support
 - Middleware support
 - Credit card processing – shared digital certificate
 - Audio/Video
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Launching your web site

□ Resources for selecting a web host:

□ <http://www.hostindex.com/>

□ <http://webhost.thelist.com/shared.php?pgid=sp&fg=1>

Site Maintenance

- Keep the site content current especially front page
 - Change information regularly
 - Delete or archive old information
 - Add new pages
 - Resubmit to search engines and directories regularly
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Marketing Basics

- Advertise with Yahoo or Google
 - Allocate small budget and experiment with results
 - Cross link your site
 - Use URL on all printed material
 - Refer customer to the site for information
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