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Five Essential Steps to Set up Your Author's Web Site

By Judy Cullins

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You may already have your web site up. You may be ready to create one. The biggest mistake most people make is that they don't write their Web site to sell before they contact their web master. Here are five solutions.

Step One. Get Organized.

Just like anything else, you need to get organized first. What do you need to learn to put up an attractive, professional, book-selling site? Start a new folder called "Web Site To Do's." Include in a file called "My web site's purpose." What I can do for my readers, and what money results do I want? Make another file called "Sales letter for Book" and "Home Page Elements."

Put these and other topics in your computer files and if you like, hard copy manila folders placed in your "Online Marketing File."

Author's Tip: Save only important papers or computer files, which include files on your book and its contents. Your Offline and Online Marketing Plans should be vertical and alphabetical in folders in hard files, or placed within a main computer folder, within which you place different related files.

Step Two. Know your web site's purpose before you hire a web master.

Do you want to sell products and services, generate leads, generate interest for your book, establish credibility as the savvy expert in your field, improve communications, provide customer service, follow up on leads or sales, and get people to revisit your site to get more information that helps them make that all-important decision—to buy? While it's good to offer a lot of free content, you must also remember your book is a business and you want to make sales.

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Step Three. Preplan your Site for Selling

Think of your web site as your virtual office. You need to design each part of it to titillate and inspire your visitor to locate quickly what they want and eventually buy from you. It needs to be fast loading, and to be easy to navigate. You must know your site's purpose before you design it.

What is the purpose of your web site? Sales? Build credibility? Show that you're the expert? What do you want to sell? (All sites want to sell something) Answer these questions in writing now.

What visitors do you want to attract? (target audience)

Will your Web site have a theme? What is it?

What should be your visitors' action and reaction once they arrive at your site?

What's challenge or problem does your target visitor have?

What's on your site such as your book to solve that challenge?

By the end of five months, what do you want to achieve? Money? How much? Clients? How Many?

What's your technical expertise, and are you willing to learn something new, or delegate it to your inexpensive computer assistant or Web Master?

Step Four. Create an Audience Profile

Do you know who should visit your site? Which of these audiences are yours? —the targeted for your special topic, the one who wants special skills fast and easy, the general audience like The Chicken Soup series who want inspiration, or the online audience—who are primarily business people, but want all kinds of information. They may want to make a home better designed, build a better relationship, find Mr. Possible, build business income, become healed, raise spiritual awareness, prioritize goals for financial or personal success, build internet marketing skills, and more.

Before you design a word, get a visual, and mental picture of your preferred audience. What do they want? Are they internet savvy? What magazines do they read? What do they spend discretionary money on?

Step Five. Write a Sales Letter for your book and any other product or service.

If you aren't making the book sales you want, then you either don't have a sales letter for each book, or your present one lacks pizzazz and motivation. This is the time to leave your "writer of book self" home, and bring out your "writer to sell your book" self.

Author's story—

My first Web site had twenty+ fine books and kits in personal growth, book writing, and marketing. Sales never went over \$200 a month. To correct that, I created a new site that focused on bookcoaching to include the ten eBooks I wrote on book writing, self-publishing, online promotion, web copywriting, and marketing. For this second web site, I paid special attention to sales letters (without hype) for each teleclass, eBook, and bookcoaching opportunities to suit each visitor's income and

need.

Sales were \$75 the first month, and in four months they reached \$2265. The next year they went to \$3000 a month. Four years later, sales are over \$4500 each month, and I still work only ten months and take four vacations a year.

Your bookcoach learned it all the hard, slow way, but you don't have to. Just be willing to open your mind to different skills you can certainly learn. You wrote a book, didn't you? And you experienced a learning curve there too.

You have choice. Put a sales letter on your home page if you only want to market one thing—your book. Or, if you also want to promote a service and other books, put a strong headline on the number one benefit of each book or service on your home page and link it to your sales letter on another page.

Some experts write long sales letters because they think you need to give enough information to help your potential buyer make an informed decision to buy. For email promotion use shorter sales letters and for the web site, longer ones.

Yes, you can post your book on other web sites, but as an author/business person who is serious about promoting your book and creating a web presence, you will eventually want to create your own web site.

Judy Cullins, 20-year book and Internet Marketing Coach, Author of 10 eBooks including "Write your eBook Fast," and "How to Market your Business on the Internet," she offers free help through her 2 monthly ezines, The Book Coach Says...and Business Tip of the Month at <http://www.bookcoaching.com/opt-in.shtml> and over 170 free articles. Email her at <mailto:Judy@bookcoaching.com>.

9 Steps to Successfully Switching to a New Web Hosting Company

By Mary Hedden

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Switching to a new web hosting company can be a difficult task, but we have provided you a list of things to do that can make your transition much smoother.

1. Before you sign up for your new web hosting services, make sure that your new plan offers all of the same features that your web site is currently using. Do you have enough disk space? Does your new plan offer enough bandwidth? Is it using the same operating system (Windows or Unix)? Also make sure that your new plan supports any programming languages that you are currently using.

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2. Once you have researched the company and verified that the new web hosting company will support your website, go ahead and sign up for your new web hosting plan.
3. Set up your existing e-mail accounts on your new server. Make note of the new POP3 and SMTP that you will soon need to start using.
4. Upload your website files to your new server. Since your domain name currently points to your old hosting account, you will have to use your new IP address to do this.
5. Test to make sure that your site looks good and functions properly on your new server. Most web hosting companies can provide a link to preview your site before the domain name has been transferred over.
6. Once you are satisfied that your site looks and functions OK, you can go to your registrar and change the DNS settings to point the domain to the new web host's nameservers. You should be provided this information after signing up for your account.
7. You will see your site on the new server 24–48 hours after you modify the DNS settings. Your e-mail will also start going to your new account at this time.
8. Modify your e-mail client with your new POP3 and SMTP e-mail settings.
9. Verify that your new website is working OK. Make sure that all of the files were loaded properly and that all scripts are running fine.

You have now successfully switched to a new cheap web hosting company!

Mary Hedden is the owner of

– Cheap Web Hosting Central

is dedicated to helping you find the best web hosting services for less! Permission is granted to reprint

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