

Making the Web Work for You

Includes a Case Study on Delta Pecan Orchards,
a current Microsoft customer.

Find out how Delta Pecan customers reaped the
benefits of Microsoft® Online Services.



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Introduction

The purpose of this Microsoft white paper, “**Making the Web Work for You,**” is to help you understand how to put the Web to work for your business and how to make your online business successful. It will offer guidance in how to establish your objectives and goals when creating a Web site, and provide a list of marketing vehicles to consider that will communicate product benefits and help increase sales.

The white paper is divided into four sections:

- What to Consider When Building a Web Site
- How to Improve Online Marketing Effectiveness
- Case Study: How Delta Pecan Orchard Increases Online Sales
- Glossary of Terms

After reading the white paper, you will have gained insights on how to:

- Build a successful Web site
- Do business on the Web
- Develop breakthrough marketing ideas
- Execute successful marketing campaigns
- Test marketing tactics
- Measure your cost effectiveness

Pindaro Demertzoglou, an adjunct professor at the Lally School of Management at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, recently suggested in an *Ecommerce Times.com* interview (Mon., April 28, 2003) that a good way to avoid hidden business costs is to read case studies and executive summaries of other companies that have traveled down the e-commerce highway. He also recommends visiting Web sites, such as the Microsoft Small Business Center, that provide tools, articles, advice, products and services for businesses planning to create an e-commerce presence. “Get some real-world examples and see what other companies have faced,” Demertzoglou said, “and then you won’t find so many hidden surprises.”

We hope you find this guide to real-world methods of building an online presence, as well as marketing your product and services, a valuable tool in creating your successful online business. While it is not intended as an all-inclusive guide to online marketing, it will offer ways to define and refine your business goals and your marketing plans. Throughout this white paper, we will also provide the location of additional helpful tools and resources on the Small Business Center site to augment the information you will find here.

What to Consider When Building A Web Site

Four Questions that Help Define Your Online Goals

It seems everyone has a Web site these days, including your competitors. To grow your small business, you've decided to establish an online presence and need additional information before you proceed. Ask yourself the following four fundamental questions. The answers will establish the groundwork for a successful online business.

- ‡‡ Why do you want a Web site?
- ‡‡ What do you want your Web site to do?
- ‡‡ Who are your customers?
- ‡‡ How much time and money are you willing to spend to develop and keep your Web site current?

Why Do You Want A Web Site?

You can establish a professional, trusted image by having a Web site. An online presence can perform many functions to help support your business, and all of them should incorporate the following three top-level goals:

Enhanced Customer Service. The Web offers unprecedented ways to improve service to your customers. You can give buyers the ability to check the status of their orders or accounts, and to handle transactions electronically anytime. Customer loyalty can be enhanced through interactive discussions and surveys designed to assess public reactions and gather honest feedback about products and services. FAQs and e-mail can reduce the volume, and therefore the expense, of toll-free calls. If you sell products online, you can use e-mail to confirm orders.

Reduced Sales and Marketing Costs. Online operating manuals and troubleshooting guides can reduce telephone time and streamline operating efficiency. You can provide information on special offers without incurring the cost of brochures, direct mail, long-distance charges, travel or other business expenses. You can stretch your marketing dollars by including your Web address on print materials targeting potential customers. If your site is designed to process orders, you can make sales around-the-clock, seven days a week, regardless of staffing levels and without the extra costs of toll-free telephone lines, regional sales offices or distribution centers.

Opening New Markets. A Web site allows you to explore new ways to sell your products. Wholesalers can open a retail channel (provided their own retailers don't object), and local businesses can tap into national and international markets that were previously out of reach.

What Do You Want Your Web Site To Do?

The more successful Web designs put the needs of the customer first. Target your Web site towards one or more of the following functions:

Online Sales. If your primary business is selling products, focus on creating an online store where customers can easily find what they're looking for and purchase it with little difficulty.

Marketing. If your primary business is delivering an off-line product or service, you will still want an online brochure that delivers practical information about your service, projects a positive image, and builds trust and customer loyalty.

Online Service. If you deliver an online service, you must build an infrastructure for the delivery of that service. You'll need to determine what to feature in your product catalog and how to handle online payments and orders.

Information Delivery. If your primary business is publishing information, determine how to charge for your content. You can charge through subscriptions or on a per-use basis. Or you can deliver the product by e-mail once the transaction is complete, or give buyers access to a special Web site upon payment.

Customer Support. Whether you're selling directly from a Web site or from a storefront (typically called "brick-and-mortar" site), providing new product information and a way to track orders keeps customers coming back.

Who Are Your Customers?

Before you establish your Web presence, it's important to know who your customers are. Identifying your audience will determine what information to include on your site and how to organize it. Study your market. Determine your target audience's wants and needs by visiting your direct competitors' sites, as well as those of companies selling related products. Decide how you'll make your site stand out in your customers' minds.

How Much Are You Willing To Spend To Develop And Keep Your Web Site?

Determine how much time and money to spend on your Web site. Set a budget for development, building and maintenance. Ask yourself questions such as the following:

- ▶▶ Are you going to create your Web site or hire a team of professionals to develop and maintain it for you?

- ▶▶ Will you need to invest in new computers and special programs to handle HTML coding, graphics and database functions?

- ▶▶ Are you planning on setting up your own Web server, or will you be using the hosting services of an Internet Service Provider (ISP)?

- ▶▶ Have you considered hiring a contractor or using a turnkey solution to maintain and upgrade your site?

Determine Your Business Model

Understanding your business model will allow you to easily estimate your Web site's bottom line. The three common models below can help you identify your own:

1. **Product Sales.** A Web site based on product sales is about selling a physical, shippable product online. You can design a storefront operation online, build a Web "mall" that offers products from different vendors. or you can sell your products at online auction Web sites.

2. **Service Sales.** Services, as well as products, can be sold via the Internet. You can develop online brochures that describe your service and provide contact information, online malls that offer services from different vendors on one site, and service sites that bring an automated version of an off-line service to the Web.

3. **Information Delivery.** One of the biggest benefits of the Internet is that it presents a fast, efficient and practical way to share information around the world. The two common Web models for information delivery are online publications and *portal* sites, information centers or gateways to other sites.

Internet Access and Your Domain Name

Choosing Internet Access and Server Space

1. Before you can put your Web site online, you must have access to the Internet. Set up an account with an Internet Service Provider (ISP) who typically provides at least one e-mail address and often a small allotment of disk space on their servers for your Web site.
2. You will also need server space, a place where your Web site is housed. Obtain at least 10 megabytes of disk space on your ISP's server. If you plan to grow, you'll need more space and also more substantial storefront services. Some ISPs offer larger disk space allotments, site and store-building services, and e-commerce functions. If yours doesn't, you'll need a hosting service catering specifically to Internet business needs. Selecting a Web host can be tricky if you don't understand the terminology. Read carefully and ask questions to choose a service package that fits your business goals.

Creating and Locking in Your Domain Name

A domain name is more than your Internet address—it's your identity, your online brand. Choose a Web address that represents your company name or brand. If you move your site to another location, you'll want the domain name to travel with you. Prices have dropped in the past couple of years as the number of domain name registrars has exploded. As a result, you can now buy a domain name for as little as \$15 (U.S.) per year.

Your domain name affects how people perceive your company, how they find you, and how they ultimately do business with you. A successful domain name gives people an intuitive sense of the business you're in. You can incorporate your business name or your product name, or you can use a snappy word or phrase.

Registration is a fast, simple process. The domain name registration service, or registrar, asks for some information about you and your requested domain name. The registrar keeps a copy of this data and sends the information to a central public database, which allows the public to see who owns any domain name.

Domain name registration isn't permanent; once the initial registration period ends, you'll have to pay a renewal fee. Mark the expiration date on your calendar as a reminder. If you fail to reregister your domain, it becomes available for others to buy.

Marketing Tip: For a personalized domain name, visit the Microsoft Small Business Center at www.microsoft.com/smallbusiness/products/online/wh/dnr.mspix.

What to Consider To Drive Revenues

You've planned your Web site and established how you're going to present it to the world. It's time to consider the most important aspect: how are you going to make money? Some of the components you'll need to generate profits include the following:

Merchant Account. If you're selling a product or information on your Web site, you'll need a merchant account to accept credit card payments online. A merchant account provider (MAP), bank or independent service organization (ISO) verifies the credit card, processes the transactions, and deposit the results into your account, usually within two to four days. MAP charges can include fees for application, software licensing and/or purchase, purchase or lease of

a point-of-sale (POS) terminal, transactions and monthly service, discount rates on transactions, and chargebacks.

Order Fulfillment. Ensure you can deliver the product to your customers quickly and without problems, regardless of their locations. Assess your order fulfillment requirements and determine whether you want to hire an order fulfillment house or a drop shipper to complete online orders.

Database Software. Database software captures customer and product data. Some turnkey solution providers include this as part of their package. If you build your Web site using off-the-shelf software, choose one that will enable dynamic access to databases.

Payment Options. Options include payment by check or credit card. Provide a form for customers to print and send in with a check. Some merchant accounts offer services to process check orders via phone, fax or e-mail. Credit card payments can be made by phone or e-mail, or processed via the Internet. You can also process credit card payments off-line, using online forms to gather customer information, then process the transaction on your POS terminal when the product ships.

Payment Gateway Software. This refers to code embedded in your Web site, or stored on your Web host's server, that allows your customers' orders to be transmitted to and from your bank's transaction-authorizing agent. In most cases, this will be your MAP. Your MAP or other authorizing agent most probably will provide you with the code to use on your site. This payment gateway usually includes a Secure Sockets Layer (SSL).

Affiliates. You can significantly increase Web site revenue and traffic by starting an associate or affiliate program. This involves choosing or developing your software, setting up agreements with your associate sites, and deciding how much commission to pay.

Marketing Tip: Visit

www.microsoft.com/smallbusiness/products/online/cm/detail.msp and check out Commerce Manager, a service that lets you build online catalogs and sell across Internet marketplaces and auctions.

Building Your Web Site

Your site should be as user-friendly as possible, based on visitors' anticipated needs rather than on your company's needs or structure. Because you need to be able to enhance and update your site without having to start over, it's important to map out how pages within your site relate to each other. Here are **10 design tips** to make your Web site as user-friendly as possible:

- 1) *Keep your pages fast loading.* Always provide a Skip or Stop button when using long introductions or multimedia events.
- 2) *Avoid dead-end pages.* Link all of your pages to the home page so your visitors won't get lost. People might enter your Web site from an outside link that routes them to one of your subpages, so make it clear immediately where they are on your site and how to access your home page quickly.
- 3) *Make scanning easy.* Don't expect people to scroll to find information on your site. Most people scan, rather than read, Web pages. Break up text with headings and subheadings; use text links that allow them to jump from section to section.

- 4) *Avoid overusing graphics.* To speed up downloading, use thumbnail images. These can be linked to more detailed images by customer choice. Limit the number of images on each page.
- 5) *Don't assume everyone uses the same browser or font default.* Avoid designing for a certain browser or force a certain look. Your customers might choose a different default font, or they might not have a particular font at all on their systems. If you must use a special font, embed it in a graphic.
- 6) *Provide a text option.* Browser preferences allow users to turn off graphics. Older computers and slow modems might make viewing graphics time-consuming. Provide text links and navigational buttons or bars in addition to graphics.
- 7) *Delay registration.* Don't put your customer registration form on the first page. Show your content first to persuade users that registration is worth their while.
- 8) *Make your forms flexible.* Online forms are excellent for placing orders or setting up accounts. Make forms flexible by limiting the number of required fields. Make errors easy to find and correct. Include a Help link in case customers run into problems.
- 9) *Avoid "under construction" signs.* Don't publish pages on your Web site until they're ready for business.
- 10) *Provide a clear path for customers to make a purchase.* Display your products, descriptions and prices prominently. If you offer information about a product your company sells, explain how to order it. Even if you aren't processing transactions online, include a telephone number or a retail location to allow customers to complete their purchases.

Marketing Tip: Want just the right Web site for your business? You'll find it at www.microsoft.com/smallbusiness/products/online/wh/detail.aspx. Just look for Web Hosting and E-mail.

It All Begins with Content

Content defines your Web site's personality and brand: the actual text, products, words, information, graphics and data that your site contains. Your content will distinguish your business from your competitors, so you'll need to create a content strategy that reflects the goals of your site. If the goal of your site is **superior customer service**, your content strategy would include specific customer service tools such as:

E-mail notification to let your customers know their products have been shipped, etc.

Order tracking so customers can see where they are in the purchasing cycle.

Shipping costs and options to let customers know what to expect, which may affect their buying decision. Provide express and regular delivery times and associated costs.

Online manuals to help your customers understand how to get the most from your products.

Community involvement with chat rooms, Web-based forums, discussion groups and newsletters to keep your customers up-to-date with changes in the site's content or sales.

Privacy policy to establish trusting relationships with your online customers. Prominently display a privacy policy that details how customer information is collected and used.

Returns policy to make merchandise returns as painless as possible and build consumer confidence.

Customer testimonials and complaints. Most sites publish customer testimonials, but posting complaints as well shows your visitors how you resolve problems if and when they arise.

Make it easy for your customers to do business with you. Consider:

Online forms to collect information about your customers, to run online surveys, create opt-in email, and to process orders.

An on-site search engine so your customers can find what they're looking for quickly and easily.

A product catalog so customers can see what they're buying.

Shopping carts to keep track of and record customers' purchasing decisions.

A downloadable brochure that might be an exact replica of your hard-copy brochure, in a program that can be downloaded, saved or printed for future reference.

Do It Yourself or Hire a Professional?

Are you comfortable with HTML coding? Do you have time to learn a new program, or would you rather leave all the work to professionals? How good is your sense of layout and design?

If you're confident in your Web-building skills, you can create a professional-looking site using WYSIWYG programs such as Microsoft FrontPage®. You can purchase and download these programs from the Internet or buy them in a store. Some are available for a limited time as free trial copies.

You'll want to set up e-commerce tools so that you can sell products and services online. Storefront-building software is available that allows your customers to browse your products, keep a record of what they're buying with a shopping cart system, calculate tax and shipping costs, and securely purchase the products. Most software titles track visitors to your site, store information in a database, and provide sales reports.

Other programs you may want to incorporate into your site include **customer service software**, which stores customer information (e.g., past repairs and calls) in a database for future reference; **site monitoring software**, which allows you to keep track of visitors; an **onsite search engine**, to help visitors find information faster; and **community software** to help create permission-based direct marketing via e-mail, regular newsletters and forums.

If you'd rather put your Web site in the hands of a professional, you can add permanent staff members, contract work out to freelancers, or hire a design house or consulting firm. Web design firms typically provide full service (writing, layout, creating and/or editing photos and graphics, designing and setting up databases and several types of programming), and have their own high-end computers, saving you time and money.

Turnkey packages provide the entire infrastructure (hosting, Web design and merchant account), and are ideal if you don't want to hire new or additional staff or spend time learning new programs. They allow you to concentrate on your business while leaving the technicalities to someone else.

Marketing Tip: Visit www.microsoft.com/smallbusiness to work with a professional designer to build a Web site that's right for your business. Editing tools, marketing consultation, and more! Check out our Small Business Consultant Directory at www.microsoft.com/smallbusiness/buy/resellers.mspx.

How to Market Your Web Site

Marketing and advertising are fundamental to the success of your business. In the off-line world, you can advertise your products using everything from direct mail to Yellow Pages. Online, you can get the word out quickly and effectively for surprisingly little money. Here are some tools:

Search Engines and Directories

There are two basic kinds of search engines:

1. Directories, such as MSN, organize information about sites into hierarchical listings, much like a telephone directory. Editors categorize each site and qualify it before it goes into the directory.
2. True search engines, such as Google, AltaVista and HotBot, regularly scour the entire Web and index everything they find, creating a more comprehensive, though less qualified, listing of Web sites. The computer programs that do this, called “spiders,” “robots” or “crawlers,” constantly and automatically browse the Web looking for pages to index.

When you use a search engine, it looks in its database—not on the Web—to find sites that match your query. To maximize your chances of appearing in a search database:

Identify Keywords. Think about how potential customers perceive you. That perception will guide their choice of terms when they use a search engine. A brief list of five to 15 keywords should include your company name and the most relevant topical keywords that describe your company. Use keywords wisely. For any page you want indexed with a search engine, be sure to include keywords in the page’s title, in its meta tags, and in the first few hundred characters of page text.

Structure HTML Documents Properly. Each search engine indexes pages a little bit differently. In order to cover all your bases, you need to effectively use three HTML tags:

☛ All search engine spiders look at the <TITLE> tag, so be sure to include your company name as well as the most important keywords for your site.

☛ Many search engine spiders look at the <META> tags in your site. The most important ones to include on your pages are the “description” and “keywords” tags. The Internet has excellent pages on how to use meta tags, and there are also a number of sites that will help you create and test the meta tags for your page.

☛ Be sure to include the <BODY> tag in your pages and to put your keywords within the first few lines of text that follow the tag.

Many search engine spiders can’t read frames-based sites. If you use frames, it’s important to include alternative copy that includes your keywords in a <NOFRAMES> tag on pages you want indexed.

Submit URLs to Relevant Search Engines. Most search engines accept suggestions for new additions to their databases at no cost. Some respond by sending a spider to index your Web site almost immediately; others might take three weeks or longer. Many search engines now offer a quicker response—usually several days—in exchange for an upfront fee.

An alternative is to use a **submission service**. These services submit information about your site to major search engines, specialized search engines, awards sites, and others, in exchange for an upfront fee. There are also several software programs that let you manage the submission process on your own computer.

Monitor Results. Search engine placement is a never-ending process, so you will need good tools to monitor your search position on an ongoing basis. Working with search engines is a crucial piece of your online marketing plan. You can have the most useful, beautiful coin collecting site on the Web, but if it doesn’t show up in the main search engines’ results when someone types in “coin collecting,” you’ll have wasted all that site development time.

Marketing Tip: Want to get listed on search engines and ensure that your listings stay up-to-date? Visit www.microsoft.com/smallbusiness/products/online/si/detail.aspx and check out Submit It!, a Microsoft service that will submit and automatically re-submit your Web site to multiple search engines.

Other Online and Off-line Marketing Opportunities

Use your signature file. Most e-mail and news-reading programs allow you to create a “sig file” that appears at the bottom of your outgoing messages. Anyone who reads your e-mail or newsgroup postings will see your sig, so it’s a great opportunity to promote your business. Your sig should include your name, your e-mail address, your URL and a catch phrase that describes your business.

Work discussion groups, forums and chat rooms. The online world has numerous forums and chat rooms. Find a conversation you can contribute to and jump in. Participating in interactive discussions will bring visitors to your site.

Promote your URL. Your URL should be as visible and as widely available as your phone number. Prominently display it on your e-mail correspondence, letterhead, business cards, invoices, print ads, radio and TV ads, Yellow Pages ads, delivery vans, answering machine messages, and any other place your customers might see or hear your name.

Swap links with other sites. Links from other Web sites are an important way people find your site. Swap links on a casual and informal basis. Ask anyone who seems interested—and to whom you wouldn’t mind being linked—if they would like to include your URL on their site, in exchange for you including theirs on your site.

E-mail Marketing

E-mail can be a cost-effective, high-response-rate tool for communicating marketing and promotional materials, and updating your customers with information and promotional campaigns involving newsletters, surveys and sweepstakes.

E-mail can also provide real-time response tracking and analysis. At its most rudimentary level, e-mail can tell you how many individuals received your message and how many messages “bounced,” or could not be delivered.

Marketing Tip: E-mail marketing can work for you! At www.microsoft.com/smallbusiness/products/online/lb/detail.aspx you can learn more about List Builder, a Microsoft service you can use to catch customers and keep them coming back to your site.

Manage and Protect Your Web Site

Once your Web site has gone “live” and you’re in business, your job hasn’t finished. You’ll need to maintain your site on an ongoing basis.

Keep your content fresh. Update your Web site regularly. Set aside time to review content and make sure it’s still relevant. Keep customers returning for new content.

Check your links. Changing content on your Web site may involve adding and editing your links. Make sure you’ve modified your site map and table of contents, too. If you update your site frequently, consider installing a “new additions” area on your home page so your customers will

know where to go. Test internal links and those to external Web sites. If other sites have links to your pages, let them know so they can keep their content accurate.

Plan for the future. Once your Web site is online, you'll need to monitor it for problems. Whether you're building it yourself or outsourcing the work, plan a budget for ongoing and regular maintenance. Use monitoring software to check your site's performance to make sure it is always accessible.

Security. The very nature of the Internet will always make your business vulnerable to attack by those with malicious intent. To maintain strong security, use a reputable Web host that updates its servers' security protection programs and uses high-level hardware and software to keep its customers safe. Protect your transactions using a Secure Sockets Layer (SSL). Stay on top of new patches, updates, upgrades and fixes to your operating and security systems, and regularly check with your vendor for reports of flaws or bugs. Constantly change passwords, making sure that they are not common or easily accessed. Always use encryption to store your vulnerable data. Destroy unwanted disks, hard drives, tapes and paper. Erect a firewall and install and regularly update an anti-virus program. Back up your system nightly, weekly and monthly.

Marketing Tip: Check out the solutions provided by our partners in the Security Guidance Center on www.microsoft.com/smallbusiness in the Business Challenges section.



How to Improve Online Marketing Effectiveness

You've planned your Web site, chosen your vendors, and brought your site to market. You've implemented a process for ongoing site monitoring and management. Here are some ways you can improve your online marketing effectiveness.

Determine Your Marketing Objectives

The goal of any advertising campaign is to promote sales by getting the right message to the right audience at the right time. You start this process by *identifying your target audience* and *finding the online media* to reach them, then *setting your marketing objectives*, *developing awareness* of your brand, *attracting potential customers* to your site, and, finally, *making sales*.

Identify Your Target Audience

The best approach to identify your target audience is to write a statement that describes exactly who you wish to attract with your ad. For example, "I want to reach 18- to 34-year-old women who are interested in kickboxing." Taking the time to name and label the groups of people you want to reach will help you identify appropriate places to place your ad.

Find Online Media That Reach Your Target Audience

Once you have identified your target audience, you need to find online media whose demographics match your needs. Start with Web advertising registries. Online advertising is a lot more than banner ads on Web pages, so consider other options that include text-based ads in e-mail newsletters and discussion lists, and classified ad sites.

Marketing Objectives

It's important to come up with specific, measurable objectives to guide your campaign. Ask yourself, are you trying to:

- Develop awareness of your brand?
- Attract prospective customers to your site?
- Make sales?

Your efforts might lead to all three results—a campaign designed to build your leads database will also result in some branding and some direct sales—but your goal for any one campaign should focus on one of these areas.

Develop awareness of your brand. The objective of a branding campaign is to impress your firm's brand identity upon potential customers, not to result in immediate sales. By putting a message about your company in front of enough people for enough time, they will think of you when they do decide to buy.

Attract prospective customers to your site. The objective of a traffic-building campaign is to get as many people as possible to click on your ad and visit your site. The advertisement is really just the teaser that brings your prospective customers through the door. If you hope to develop loyal customers who visit again and again, your ads and your site must be both engaging and customer-friendly.

Sell. The main objective of a direct-sales campaign is to get visitors to buy your product. The typical direct-marketing campaign begins with a potential customer receiving an offer in the mail. The first challenge for the direct marketer is to get the customer to open the envelope; for you, it's

getting the customer to click on your ad. While a traffic-building campaign focuses on getting customers to view your site's terrific content and bookmark it for subsequent visits, the success of a direct-sales campaign is measured in dollars. You not only have to attract visitors, you have to motivate them to buy something.

Plan Your Marketing Campaign

Once you've identified your target audience, found the online media to reach that target audience, and set your marketing objectives, you can plan your marketing campaign.

Establish Your Budget: Four Terms That Help

The best way to determine your online advertising budget is to decide how much you're willing to pay for each new customer. For example, if you want 1,000 new paying customers, each of whom will spend \$50 at your Web site, and you are willing to pay 20 percent of that gross revenue to get their business, your ad campaign budget would be \$10,000 (1,000 x \$50) x 20%. Here are four terms you need to be aware of when buying media:

1. CPM or cost per thousand ("m" from the Latin "mil", meaning thousand). You buy a number of impressions of a banner ad on a Web page and pay for them in units of a thousand. For example, 30,000 impressions of a banner ad on a Web site that charges \$20 CPM would cost \$600 (U.S.).

2. CTR or click-through rate. The click-through rate refers to the percentage of people who click on a particular Web banner ad and visit a site.

3. CPV or cost per visitor. For example, if you paid \$600 for 30,000 impressions of your banner ad and had a click-through rate of 4 percent, your CPV would be 50 cents (\$600 divided by 1,200 [4% of 30,000] = \$.50).

4. CPS or cost per sale. For example, if you paid \$600 for a campaign that brought 1,200 visitors to your site and 10 percent of them ultimately bought your product, then your cost per sale would be \$5 (\$600 divided by 120 [10% of 1,200] = \$5). The industry range for CPSs is between \$1 to \$15 and ranges between 5 percent and 30 percent of the purchase price.

Evaluate Your Pricing Options

Online advertising pricing options generally correspond with the goals that were discussed earlier. If you're trying to develop awareness of your **brand**, paying a **CPM** (cost per thousand) for banner ads makes sense. If you're trying to **attract** prospective customers to your site, a pricing model based on the **CTR** (click-through rate) makes sense. If you're trying to make direct **sales** with your campaign, a model based on **CPS** (cost per sale) makes sense. Media sellers tend to favor the CPM model, which corresponds to traditional print advertising models, while media buyers prefer the click-through and cost-per-sale models.

Develop Your Campaign Plan

Your campaign plan will outline specific, trackable objectives that support the overall goal you decided earlier. Determine whether to plan and implement your campaign yourself or to hire someone else. Unless you're completely comfortable with your creative skills, you might want to consider outsourcing at least some of these tasks to professionals.

Buy and Place Your Ads

Making sure your ads run when and where you intend can make or break your campaign, so it makes sense to hire an agency to handle ad insertion orders.

Track Your Results

You will want to track your progress toward the goals and specific objectives you set earlier as well as test banner ad designs, media placements and other variables.

Marketing Tip: Visit

www.microsoft.com/smallbusiness/products/online/tb/detail.mspx and check out Traffic Builder, a set of online tools that can get you strong listings on search engines and help you create e-mail newsletter campaigns.

Banner Advertising

Define Your Customers

Earlier, when you defined your marketing objectives, you identified a target audience: “I want to reach 18- to 34-year-old women interested in kickboxing.” Now that you’re placing ads, it’s time to be more specific: “I want to reach 18- to 34-year-old women with disposable annual incomes of at least \$30,000 who are interested in kickboxing.” Going to this next level of detail will help you pinpoint the absolute best sites on which to place your ads.

Identify the Web Sites Your Customers Visit

Place your banner on those sites whose visitors fit your target demographic. Boost your return on investment (**ROI**) by gathering reliable information on visitor demographics and on site metrics. Many sites provide this information themselves. Keep in mind, however, that it’s in their interest to present the data they supply as favorably as possible.

Consider also banner ad exchanges. Banner exchange networks are collections of Web sites that swap banner ads with each other. The number of ads you are allowed to place on the network in exchange for displaying an ad on your Web site is called a ratio. For instance, if you display two ads and get one in return, the ratio is 2:1. If you display four ads and get three back, your ratio is 4:3.

Many exchange networks allow you to set preferences to prevent your ad showing up on sites you might find objectionable (e.g., porn sites); networks offer placement options for optimal viewing, targeted categories and sophisticated tracking and reporting.

Marketing Tip: Get some exposure—advertise on well-known sites with Banner Network Ads, a service you can get at www.microsoft.com/smallbusiness/products/online/bannerads/detail.mspx.

Design for Popular Browsers and Connections

Make sure you design your banner ads with browser compatibility, standard specifications and customer sensibilities in mind. Ads are only effective if potential customers can view them. Unless you’re targeting a highly specialized niche market, such as Web developers, you should design a banner ad that downloads quickly and is easy to view with the most common connection types and browsers.

The most widely used browser is Microsoft Internet Explorer.

Not everyone has ISDN, ADSL or cable connections. Most Web users are still dialing up through a modem at speeds ranging from 28 Kbps to 56 Kbps. You want your ads to reach as wide an audience as possible, not just those who have the latest browsers or the fastest connections.

Design Within Standard Banner Ad Specifications

Below are some guidelines to help in your banner ad design.

Dimension Guidelines. Current size standards for banner ads are really just recommendations. The Interactive Advertising Bureau (formerly the Internet Advertising Bureau or IAB) and the Coalition for Advertising Supported Information and Entertainment (CASIE) have compiled a list of the most popular and most effective banner ad sizes:

Type:	Dimensions (in pixels):
Full banner	468 x 60
Full banner w/ vertical navigation Bar	392 x 72
Half banner	234 x 60
Square button	125 x 125
Off-rectangle button	120 x 90
Rectangle button	120 x 60
Micro button	88 x 31
Vertical banner	120 x 240
Skyscraper or side panel	120-150 x 400-800

File Size Guidelines. File size guidelines have yet to be standardized by the IAB. For guidance, look to a cardinal rule of Web usability: Smaller files mean faster-loading pages and faster-loading pages mean happier viewers. Use animated graphics only if they're more effective than static graphics, and use graphics only if they're more effective than text. If you incorporate large, complex files into your ad, make sure they're "optimized" or streamlined to take up the fewest bytes possible.

Animation Looping. Animated graphics, usually specified as GIF89a, contain a set of images in a specified order. The series can be presented, it can loop endlessly, or it can loop just once (or a few times) then stop. Certain choices might increase file size. For example, faster animation requires more bytes, as does continual looping. Some sites that sell advertising space have restrictions on looping. Make sure you know the policies of your banner ad's potential home.

Rich Media Limitations. Rich media, such as streaming audio or video and Java applets, are by far the largest files and will therefore slow your banner ad considerably. They are also the most elitist, because a significant number of browsers don't handle streaming or Java well, if at all.

Many sellers of ad space severely restrict the use of rich media in banner ads. Determine whether it really makes sense, given your campaign goals and target market. Do extensive user testing on subjects who represent your intended audience. Test the ad on older browser versions and slower connections for a true reality check.

Make Sure Banner Ad Style Meshes With Audience Sensibilities

Answers to questions that determine what appeals to your audience will dictate the style of your banner ad. Here are some places to start.

Gathering Internal Data. Start with your company's advertising history, if one exists. Even if they weren't Web-based, previous ad campaigns can reveal what worked stylistically—and what didn't. If your target market hasn't changed, you can take cues from earlier successes or failures.

Gathering External Data. You can use some rudimentary questionnaires before you have a banner ad design in mind. All you need is a group of test subjects fitting your target demographic. To pinpoint these subjects' sensibilities, show them various existing ads, font styles, layouts, shapes, phrases and color palettes. Then use their preferences to guide you stylistically.

If you don't have existing data about your particular target audience's sensibilities, or if you want to supplement such data, you can turn to national or international marketing studies. Because

they might not reflect your ideal market, they're best used in conjunction with your own, more targeted, studies. Many marketing research firms offer demographic reports; most are for sale, but some are free. Check out the Interactive Advertising Bureau's market research page for related links.

Testing Your Ad. Finally, use the testing phase of banner ad development to assess stylistic preferences as well as technical effectiveness. Along with testing for usability, include a questionnaire that asks participants to elaborate on exactly why one ad worked while another didn't. These responses will give you invaluable information about how subtleties of style affect your target audience.

E-Mail Advertising

E-mail has many benefits over more traditional forms of marketing. It is cost-effective, with an average cost per contact of less than 10 cents. It has a significantly higher response rate than most other forms of direct-response marketing, generally between 5 percent and 15 percent, depending on the form of the e-mail and its offer. And it can provide real-time response tracking and analysis.

Increasingly, e-mail marketing tools can provide even more detailed information, including how many recipients opened the message and the subsequent "click-throughs" generated. Typically, it's used for ongoing customer communications, often in the form of an e-mail newsletter; or for promotional campaigns or one-time activities, such as customer surveys or sweepstakes. It is also used for direct marketing to large numbers of potential customers, inviting them to visit your Web site for more information about your product. For effective e-mail marketing campaigns:

Use a short subject line. Your subject line should be a maximum of five words.

Keep text short. Ten lines is a perfect length.

Link from the e-mail message to a Web page bearing the real pitch. Use your e-mail to sell your Web page. Then use your Web page to sell your product.

Watch out for the "spam" issue. Although there is no formal legal definition of "spam," a number of U.S. states have passed e-mail laws. To remain legally safe, you should ensure that your e-mail message contains a valid "from" address. You can use a from address that is not your own company, provided it is used with permission, and so long as it's a valid domain name. The other legal requirement is to provide an opt-out or unsubscribe address that recipients can use to prevent future mailings.

Marketing Tip: Get the word out about your business and build a customer base with List Builder, a Microsoft service that lets you send e-mail newsletters and maintain customer database and mailing lists. Visit www.microsoft.com/smallbusiness/products/online/lb/detail.msp.

Search Engine Placement

Your marketing strategy will include an understanding of search engines, and how they work. See the section on Search Engines within "What to Consider When Building a Web Site" for more details.

Other Options

Other steps to raise your Web site's profile as well as customer awareness of your product include affiliate programs, online communities and discussion groups, an advertising message in the signature file at the end of your e-mail, e-zines, and Web rings that link similar sites together and encourage people to visit each in turn.

Testing and Monitoring

To ensure your efforts are bringing your company the maximum possible return, follow these suggestions of tasks you'll want to perform on a weekly, monthly or quarterly basis.

Weekly Updating Tasks

Post to e-zines and newsgroups you participate in. Send out your regular e-mail marketing messages. Request, review and act on statistics from last week's ad campaigns. Clean your e-mail distribution list of any defunct accounts.

Monthly Updating Tasks

Send out your regular e-mail marketing messages. Schedule public relations activities for the next month. Plan your editorial calendar for next month's weekly newsletter.

Quarterly Updating Tasks

Resubmit your URL to those search sites that haven't been performing. Check for new informal link possibilities. Integrate upcoming off-line promotions with your Web site. Review returns from affiliate programs and determine their contribution to your bottom line. Evaluate the overall creative effort for your ads and develop new testing programs.

Refining Your Campaign

No ad campaign is perfect the first time; results tracking, evaluation and course correction are critical. Once your tracking programs are in place, you'll need to turn the raw data they generate into meaningful statistics. Interpreting these statistics will help you improve your results.

Understanding the Statistics

You know how to convert raw data into statistics, but how do you determine what the statistics mean? Compare your numbers to the industry standards for ad campaign results. These are readily available. If you consistently fall short of industry averages, start looking for ways to improve your campaign.

Improving Your Site Based on Statistical Results

Be prepared to turn those statistics into improvements. Sometimes barely perceptible changes in ad strategy can greatly improve effectiveness, but you have to pinpoint those changes.

Marketing Tip: Visit www.microsoft.com/smallbusiness/products/online/fs/detail.msp and check out FastCounter Pro, a service that allows you to monitor your visitor traffic to your web site in real time, and analyze the patterns, behavior, and referrals, allowing you to enhance and optimize your Web site on an ongoing basis.

Coming in the Future

The Internet is growing and changing quickly. Faster connectivity, new forms of Web access, and changes in Internet telephony will influence how you gain access to and use the Internet, as well as how the Internet affects society as a whole.

In the future, a significant percentage of people will gain access to the Internet using cable modems, high-speed phone lines and wireless technology rather than relatively slow dial-up connections. Interactive television already allows viewers to play games, check the latest stock quotes, send e-mail, or order merchandise. As new technologies make it possible to gain access to the Internet at very high speeds, you'll be able to equip your site with more vivid, lifelike features that can help you sell your product or service. Multimedia applications, such as video and sound files, are larger than simple text documents, and take longer to travel via the Internet. Faster connections will offer more lifelike experiences to large numbers of Internet users, similar to watching television or participating in a live teleconference. You'll be able to offer live video chats with prospective customers, show tours of your office or factory floor, and put your sales or customer service representatives on a live video connection to help solve problems.

Delta Pecan Orchard finds the recipe for online sales with Microsoft Small Business Center

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“We’re smack in the middle of the Mississippi Delta—it’s gorgeous, but we’re talking the middle of nowhere,” says Suzanne Powers of Delta Pecan Orchard, a wholesale and retail supplier of gourmet pecans and specialty pecan gifts. When Powers bought the orchard in 1997, she knew that customers weren’t going to be coming to her, so promoting and selling her products online wasn’t just an option—it was a necessity. While waiting for her first pecan harvest, she launched deltapecan.com, using a local Web hosting service, and then subscribed to a separate service for selling her products online. She was not happy with the combination. “My site looked great, but because of the poor hosting service, it was constantly down,” Powers says. “And the shopping cart program didn’t even process credit cards. I ended up having to do all of them by hand.”

In her search for a more integrated solution that could handle her Web hosting, e-commerce, and customer relationship needs, Powers found Microsoft online services. “I liked the idea of an all-in-one solution—and I’ve always been a big Microsoft fan,” she says.

Product Details

After signing up for subscription-based Microsoft services, Powers was able to re-launch her site, manage sales start-to-finish online, develop an e-mail newsletter subscriber list, and submit her site to top search engines. The small business products she uses include the following:

Microsoft Web Hosting: Since switching from her local provider to Microsoft Web Hosting, Powers has enjoyed the benefits of a reliable hosting service that lets her update and maintain her site with her favorite Web authoring tool, Microsoft FrontPage. Because Microsoft Web Hosting integrates with FrontPage and Microsoft Commerce Manager, Powers also was able to build a user-friendly e-commerce site. “If I’m going to build a site for the average user, it has to be easy, easy, easy,” Powers says. “Users don’t want to drill down to find what they are looking for. On my site, it only takes one click and you’re using the shopping cart.”

Microsoft Commerce Manager: Powers uses the online product catalog feature to display all her products. Every product listed includes a full description, a part number, a picture, and up-to-date pricing information. She also lists seasonal products and special offers, which she can add and remove from the catalog with a few mouse clicks.

With the online shopping cart and integrated card processing, Powers knows that orders will be managed efficiently and accurately. When customers decide to buy, Commerce Manager processes the entire transaction automatically and then sends the customer an e-mail order confirmation.

Microsoft List Builder: To keep in touch with customers, Powers uses List Builder to manage an e-mail “Recipe of the Month” club. Customers and site visitors can sign up for the club through a link on deltapecan.com. They also can opt to receive the weekly e-mails that Powers sends out to a list of more than 800 subscribers. With List Builder, Powers can customize e-mails sent to specific

Overview

Customer Profile

Delta Pecan Orchard sells gourmet pecans and specialty pecan products to small bakeries and individual customers all over the world.

Business Situation

Delta Pecan Orchard’s only viable resource for selling large amounts of pecans is through the Web. Owner Suzanne Powers needed a solution that not only would help her run her business online easily and affordably, but also let her keep in touch with her customers. Powers found the answer for her business needs in Microsoft online services.

Business Benefits

- Sales revenues have increased by 25 percent.
- Sales and customer service processes integrate into an all-in-one solution.
- Customers keep coming back—to a powerful, easy-to-use Web site that now sells across the globe.

Products & Services

- Microsoft Submit It!
- Microsoft List Builder
- Microsoft Web Hosting
- Microsoft Commerce Manager
- Microsoft FrontPage Server

contacts, as well as track how many people have opened the e-mails and clicked back to her site. "It's so easy to add that special touch," Powers says. "I send out a blanket e-mail to everybody, but each one has the subscriber's name to give it a more personalized feel."

Microsoft Submit It!: When prospective customers search for sites that sell pecans, Powers wants to be sure that deltapecan.com gets returned as a top listing. With Submit It!, Powers can pick optimal search keywords and submit URLs to the search engines that will send paying customers to her site. And because she's often too busy to revisit her listings, she's taken full advantage of the automatic resubmission feature. "I like how Submit It! checks my listings and resubmits my site," she says. "After I enter my keywords, it takes care of everything."

Benefits

Increased revenues

Since using Microsoft online services, Powers has seen a 25 percent increase in revenues. At a time when small companies find themselves having to do more with less, Powers has leveraged Microsoft Small Business Center services to handle growing demand for products without increasing business costs. "I've actually been able to increase the number of products I sell," she says. "Before, I might have only been able to offer 5 types of gift baskets. Now, I can sell 10 or 12 types, and I can also make good on new ideas for revenue, like seasonal gifts."

Efficient sales processes

Like any other company operating with a small staff of employees, Delta Pecan needs efficient, streamlined sales processes to stay afloat. With Small Business Center products and services, Powers can automate time-consuming, error-prone processes within one integrated solution. Reliable Web hosting and Commerce Manager help ensure that her online shopping area is up and running 24 hours a day, and she's able to manage automated sales processes from her Web browser. "Before using Microsoft, I would spend hours shuffling papers with credit card work. Every order had to be processed manually," she says. "Now, when a customer clicks 'finalized,' it's done—everything is handled by Commerce Manager."

Improved customer relationships

Delta Pecan customers also reap the benefits of Microsoft online services. Powers' customer base has grown steadily every year, and her existing customers keep coming back to buy her products. "I ship to customers all over the world," she says "There are lots of different Web sites for pecans, but people tell me they always like coming to mine because it's so easy to use!"

"There are lots of different Web sites for pecans, but people tell me they always like coming to mine because it's so easy to use!"

Suzanne Powers

For More Information

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Glossary of Terms

bandwidth: The amount of electronic data that can be transferred through an electronic connection in a given time. For modems connected by telephone to the Internet, the modem's "speed" represents the maximum possible bandwidth of the connection, such as 56.6 Kbps (kilobits per second).

banner ad: An image file that displays an online advertisement, typically sized for placement at the top or bottom of a Web page, and linked to another page.

browser: A software program used for locating, requesting, and displaying Web pages (e.g., Microsoft Internet Explorer).

CPM: Cost per thousand (the m is from "mil," Latin for thousand).

CPS: Cost per sale.

CPV: Cost per visitor.

CTR: Click-through rate. The percentage of people who click on a particular Web banner ad and visit a site.

database: A file or file system containing organized information and, most commonly, a filing and retrieval system for storing information. Most database software also includes tools for data analysis. Microsoft Access is an example of database software.

discount rate: A percentage fee paid to the merchant account provider or ISO for handling an electronic transaction. This fee includes the interchange rate. Most Web merchants pay between 2 percent and 10 percent of their revenue from online credit card orders.

domain: A designation for a particular location on the Internet. A domain (e.g., "Merchantworkz.com") contains the files that make up the content of Web pages under that address. Merchantworkz.com/intro.htm and Merchantworkz.com/report3.htm are different Web pages located within the same domain. Domain names are associated with IP addresses. See also **domain name**.

domain name: An Internet address in alphabetic form. Domain names must have at least two parts: the part on the left (the second-level domain name), which names the organization, and the part on the right (the top-level domain name), which identifies the highest subdomain, such as the country (".fr" for France, ".uk" for United Kingdom) or the type of organization (".com" for "commercial," ".edu" for "educational," etc.). The domain name server translates the IP address into the domain name. See also **domain**.

download: To transfer files or data from one computer to another. To download means "to receive"; to upload means "to transmit."

e-commerce: The processing of economic transactions, such as buying and selling, through electronic communication. E-commerce often refers to transactions occurring via the Internet, such as credit card purchases at Web sites. See also **Internet commerce**.

encryption: Putting data into a secret code so they are unreadable except by authorized users. Encryption uses a key to jumble data. The only way to use the information is to decrypt it with the same key.

FAQ: A list of answers to frequently asked questions.

firewall: A set of related programs located at the entry point to your PC, network, or server that can be customized to protect your data from hackers, viruses, and unwanted visitors.

Flash: A bandwidth-friendly and browser-independent animation technology that uses geometrical formulas—rather than patterns of dots—to represent images. As long as different browsers are equipped with the necessary plug-ins, Flash animations will look the same when viewed by any of them.

fulfillment: The act of getting an ordered item from the warehouse shelf to the customer. This can include any or all of the following: order call management, warehousing, pick and pack, packaging, printing literature, hang tags, labels or stories, any manipulation such as label removal or addition, shipment waybill preparation, and shipping.

GIF (graphic interchange file): A file type that contains a graphic, a photo or another image. GIFs tend to take less memory and bandwidth than JPEGs and can contain animation. JPEGs offer greater image clarity, especially for photo images.

host: Any computer directly connected to a network that acts as a repository for services, such as e-mail or FTP, available for other computers on the network.

HTML (hypertext markup language): A set of codes that determine how a Web page will appear, including graphics, links, and text characteristics.

HTTP (hypertext transfer protocol): The protocol most often used to transfer information from Web servers to browsers, which is why Web addresses begin with “http://.”

hyperlink: A link from a point in one document to a point in the same or another document. A browser usually displays a link in some distinguishing way, for instance, in a different color, font or style.

Internet commerce: A broad term covering all commercial transactional activities via the Internet.

IP address (Internet protocol address): A designation for a particular location on the Internet, such as “140.23.719.6.” IP addresses are associated with domain names.

ISP (Internet service provider): A firm that provides access to the Internet, including Web browsing and e-mail.

JPEG (or JPG): A file format used for storing graphic images, usually photographs. JPEG files are larger than GIFs of the same image but offer better color control and clarity. See also **GIF**.

keyword: A word or phrase used in a search engine query to find Web documents relating to a particular subject.

MAP (merchant account provider): A bank or other institution that provides merchant accounts and processes online credit card transactions. The term is also often used broadly to include any credit card processing service, including independent service organizations (ISOs).

merchant account: A bank account established by a merchant to receive the proceeds of credit card purchases. By establishing a merchant account, the merchant bank agrees to pay the merchant for valid credit card purchases in exchange for the right to collect on the debt owed by the consumer.

merchant bank: A bank that holds a merchant account. After a consumer buys a product using a credit card, the merchant bank places funds into a merchant account in exchange for the right to collect on the debt owed by a consumer. See also **MAP**.

meta tag: A special HTML code that provides information about a Web page such as who created the page, how often it is updated, what the page is about, and which keywords represent the page's content. Many search engines use this information when building their indices.

modem: A device or program that enables a computer to transmit data over telephone lines.

network: A group of interconnected computers, including the hardware and software used to connect them.

network address: The host number, network number, and socket number of an entity, constituting its address on the Internet.

online auction: An auction via the Web. Buyers log on to the auction site, look over the products, and enter their bids. Notification is sent explaining how their bids compared with those submitted by other bidders. Bidding continues until the auction's time limit expires. The goods are then offered to the highest bidder, and a method of shipment is determined.

online brochure: A brochure that provides useful, practical information about your service and enables you to develop your image and build trust and customer loyalty.

online publication: A site that provides news and how-to articles in exchange for a subscription fee or a per-item price.

payment gateway: The code that transmits a customer's order to and from a merchant's bank's transaction-authorizing agent, usually a MAP. See also **payment gateway provider**.

payment gateway provider: A company that provides code and/or software for an e-commerce site to enable it to transfer information from its shopping cart to the acquiring bank and on through the rest of the credit card transaction. See also **payment gateway**.

portal site: An information center or gateway to other sites. Portals do not typically sell products or services but make money selling advertising space.

POS terminal (point of sale terminal): An electronic device used for verifying and processing credit card transactions. If the credit card is available, the merchant can swipe the card through the terminal.

program: An organized list of instructions that, when executed, causes the computer to behave in a determined manner. Without programs, computers are useless. (When you buy software, you normally buy an executable version of a program.)

protocol: A set of rules that regulate the way data are transmitted between computers.

ROI: Return on investment.

reserve account: A portion of the revenue from a merchant's credit card transactions held in reserve by the merchant account provider to cover possible disputed charges, chargeback fees and other expenses. After a determined time, funds in reserve accounts are turned over to the merchant.

search engine: A program that lets you perform keyword searches for information on the World Wide Web or for information within specific Web sites.

secure server: A Web server or other computer connected to the Internet that is capable of establishing encrypted communication with clients.

server: The computer in a client/server architecture that supplies files or services. The computer that requests services is called the client.

shipper: The company that sells the product being shipped to the receiving party or consignee.

Secure Sockets Layer (SSL): A system for encrypting data sent via the Internet, including e-commerce transactions and passwords. With SSL, client and server computers exchange public keys, allowing them to encode and decode their communication.

spider (also known as a robot or a crawler): A software application that automatically finds and retrieves information from the Web. Used by search engines to find and index Web sites.

storefront: A Web site that has all the qualities of a brick-and-mortar business, that is, a display of products, shopping carts and a checkout stand, except that everything is online. Customer service tools such as FAQ pages, search engines, and discussion groups allow customers to get information and provide feedback. Profits are made by charging your customers for goods you provide to them.

turnkey: A business solution in which the provider assumes total responsibility from design through completion of the project. For example, you can have a turnkey Web site, a complete site built according to your specifications; a turnkey e-commerce solution, which would include all the software and merchant accounts required to enable an e-store to accept credit cards; or a turnkey search engine submission service, which writes your keywords and submits your site to search engines and directories for you. Many consulting firms refer to themselves as turnkey solution providers, meaning they can assess your needs and do all the coding required to build an entire e-commerce-capable Web site.

turnkey application: Software that requires little or no modification when inserted into a Web site. In e-commerce, many MAPs and ISOs offer turnkey applications for processing credit card orders online.

URL (uniform resource locator): An address for a file (or a page) located on the Internet (e.g., "http://www.Merchantworkz.com").

Web (short for World Wide Web): The entire collection of files written in HTML and similar mark-up languages available via the Internet. Clients on the Internet use their browsers to request these files from Web servers then display them as Web pages. The Web is only a portion of the Internet; other parts include e-mail communication and FTP.

Web host: A company that leases services and server space to other companies and individuals who wish to maintain a Web or e-commerce presence without maintaining their own servers. Cost

structures are determined by amount and complexity of services offered, such as scripting tools, credit card processing, etc.

Web mall: A one-stop shopping place where a number of merchants occupy the same Web site and sell their goods to the public. If you're one of the merchants, profits are made from the sale of your products. If you also own the Web site, you can charge the companies a fee for giving them an outlet to sell their products.

Web server: A computer dedicated to storing the files that make up Web pages and the protocols needed for communicating with other computers via the Internet.

WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get): What an onscreen document will look like when it is printed or what a Web page you're creating will look like when it is viewed in a browser.