James Martell's
Online Success
for NON-TECHIES

How To Take Your Business, Hobby or Profession to the Internet

The Changing World of the Internet

Please Read First

This manual was compiled with great care to provide up-to-date strategies and techniques that small to medium sized business owners and hobbyists can use to create a strong online presence.

Everything taught here is based on the overall approach developed by James Martell, during a 7-year period, in which he taught thousands of entrepreneurs and business owners how to create revenue-generating websites and how to make profits on the Net.

Never one to depend on others, Martell has painstakingly produced a guide that can be used to achieve your unique online goals by developing your very own website, without the help of a costly professional web team or an expensive graphics designer.

Instead, using the nine steps outlined in this manual, you or someone on your team is going to build and maintain a successful website.

So put your mind at ease right now – this is certainly something you can do yourself.

However, if you are more comfortable overseeing two or three good technically minded people that you know (within your own business, perhaps); you have that option, too.

And, there's a third.

Information in this guide can also be used to assist you in hiring a "techie" and will show you exactly how to work with him/her to produce the very best results.

So, if you're a non-techie (and most of us are), this manual was written with you in mind. Using it, you can single-handedly develop, launch, and maintain a website that is sure to make you proud (and the competition jealous).
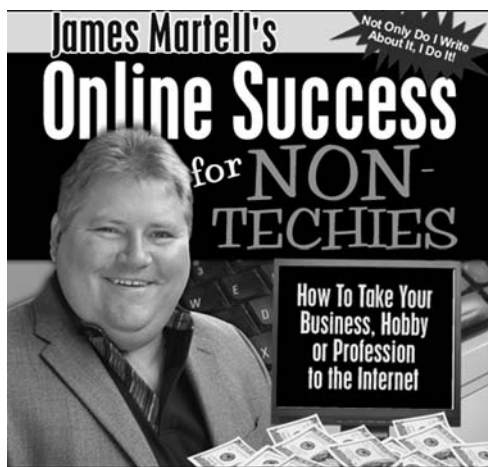
Online Success for NON-TECHIES (Video Edition)

The Online Success for Non-Techies Video Edition is the video version of the manual, led by author James Martell. To learn more or to purchase your copy, go to:

http://www.jamesmartell.com

See back of this book for other products and services offered by James Martell.

About The Author

James Martell is a Canadian businessman who resides with his wife Arlene and four children Adam, Justin, Shelby and Victoria in White Rock, a beautiful little seaside community 45 minutes south of Vancouver on the British Columbia-Washington state border.

Although a carpenter by trade, James has been in business for himself most of his adult life.

Immediately before his foray into website publishing in 1999, he owned and operated two successful telecom services in the Vancouver area. It was in this capacity that James first learned about the Internet.

In fact, in 1997, James came to realize the unlimited potential the Internet provided for marketing his telecom services. Working in Microsoft Windows '95, James set up his first email address and started communicating with customers and eventually used the Internet to streamline his business' internal communications.

Shortly thereafter, in 1999, a long-time friend walked into James' office and showed James the website he recently developed to generate revenue.

Intrigued, James began exploring what he refers to as "larger opportunities," which led him to develop his first personal site and to explore the affiliate marketing arena.

And as he quickly learned, he could earn revenue using his website to promote other businesses products that, looking to increase sales (and the traffic to their sites), were placing links on "affiliate partner's" sites and then paying their affiliate partners a commission for every sale they prompted.

Before long, James was getting a staggering 5000 visitors a day though natural search results at the major search engines.

He was so intrigued by this innovative and interesting web-based way to make money that he studied anything and everything related to the Internet.

Within the first six-months, he branched out with four additional sites, providing him and his family with an excellent monthly income similar to that from former traditional business, but without any of the operational overhead he was used to.

Whereas, most webmasters and some industry experts at that time tended to complicate matters, Martell was more inclined to discover the underlying structure of site design and traffic generation so that he could apply a set of basic rules and procedures to any site he built in the future – with the goal being to ensure repeatable success.

After first teaching a few of his friends and local business owners the basic rules he formulated, – and then witnessing their successes – James and former business partner, Chuck Anderson, joined forces to launch a series of $1000-$2000 workshops in the Vancouver area to train others on James' strategies and methodologies.

These classes were eventually discontinued because they took valuable time away from James' main business: publishing revenue-generating websites and teaching affiliates how to do the same.

But, as any listener to James' affiliate marketing audio newsletter, "buzz," knows, he gets a lot of personal satisfaction from seeing others succeed with his methods. So to replace his 2001-2002 classes, he released a downloadable training on May 10, 2002, that would be a "home-study" version of the live classes.

That downloadable training was entitled James Martell's Affiliate Marketers Handbook – 2002 and since then the Handbook has been revised and mostly recently re-released in 2006. Today, this downloadable training manual is known throughout the industry as the Bible of affiliate marketing.

Additionally, throughout these past seven years, James has taught countless business owners and hobbyists how to apply the same methods he continues to rely on every day to help them carve out similar online success.

His students have ranged widely in profession, from retail storeowners and physicians to lawyers, real estate agents and brokers, multi-level marketers, restaurant-owners and just about every profession in-between.

Although James has been teaching students how to develop content rich websites to profit through affiliate programs, a number of his students have applied the same techniques learned to their own bricks and mortar and service-based businesses with great success.

For instance, a professional real estate agent recently applied James' strategies and techniques to his own website and, in no time at all, he quickly moved his non-ranking website to the top of the world's leading search engine, Google.

Additionally, many of James' students have also enjoyed bringing their away-from-work passions to the web, creating enticing websites about their favorite hobbies.

The one thing this wide range of individuals now shares: successful websites, thanks to James Martell and his proven approach.

Although the information originally shared by James was great for affiliates, it simply was not tailored for the small- to medium-size business owner.

In this manual, that has changed. These same proven principles and profit-generating strategies are applied to ensure business owners can reap the online success James has helped his affiliate marketing students achieve. Likewise, this manual is written and organized so that a small- to medium-size business owner can understand it and apply it with great ease.

So, whether you're new to the Internet or perhaps have already spent a great deal of money on a website that continues to disappoint; or whether you like the look of your site, but want more from it; or perhaps you're just ready to be more involved – to take control of your business' online presence once and for all, the bottom-line is this: You're in the right place at the right time!

More importantly, using this manual, you can achieve your online goals – either single-handedly or with the help of employees, friends and yes, even a techie or two (but only if you so desire).

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank the many students who attended my 2001 live trainings in New Westminster, BC (near Vancouver), and both my live and online BootCamps since, for their enthusiasm and keen interest in the Internet and, in particular, affiliate marketing.

Their questions were invaluable to me in determining what a person needs to know to successfully get started.

It was their excellent feedback that provided the organizational basis for this manual and what led me to the belief that business owners and hobbyists like yourself are in need of a basic guide that can be relied on to help you take control of your online presence by developing and maintaining a website that truly reflects your needs and the needs of your unique target audience.

I'm also grateful for the editorial assistance of Charles Johnston, my long time friend and business associate, who collaborated with me on this project from the very beginning. Charles has so graciously shared his unique marketing style and wisdom with me since the very beginning and without him my story would surely be a different one. Thank you, Charles. Your input in invaluable and I cannot say enough good about you.

Thanks also to Rob McLean of Scribbles Media Inc. who has worked alongside me as an associate and friend, providing valuable business advice and brilliant ideas, as well as lots of hands-on help.

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Thank you Phil Watkins who has consulted with me on business development. Phil brings a wealth of experience to the table and I appreciate all of it. He has been instrumental in pulling key projects together, including this one.

And thanks to my lovely wife, Arlene. She is an eagle-eye editor whose support is unwavering. She continues to support me no matter which direction I run in, always making sure everyone's needs at home are attended to, oftentimes at her own expense. I could not have done any of this without her, for Arlene truly defines what a partner is. Thank you, Arlene, for being you and all that you are!

Contents

Arranging Your Thoughts   56

Step #3 Keywords Are Key To Site Success!   57

Step #4 Set up Your Website   83

Part TwoBuild Your Website   109

Part Two: Build Your Website   112

Step #5 Develop Your Content   113

Step #6 Create and Upload Your Pages 145

Part ThreeOnline PR 163

Step #7 Communications On The Net! 165

Step #8 Site Promotion 187

Foreword

Looking back, it's hard to believe that seven years have gone by since I sat anxiously in the basement of my home, tapping away at what has become my means for making a truly great living.

These seven years have brought about a lot of positive change for me and for my family. Thanks to the Internet, we are living out our dreams.

And, in teaching others how to apply my systematic approach, I have been fortunate to witness great successes both within my circle of family and friends and well beyond – another personal dream of mine.

Through it all, I have listened carefully to the questions my students have had along the way and this manual reflects that. Targeted specifically to small- and medium-size business owners, this manual is a concise, no-nonsense, how-to guide that cuts through the clutter (and the hype) and enables you to develop a website for your business.

As a business owner, you undoubtedly wear many hats. This is exactly why I have broken this manual down into three parts and into eight steps (and numerous "Action items").

This simple format allows you to take things one step at a time and to better understand the makings of a successful website – soon to be your very own.

I also use this manual to introduce you to Grace, a successful bridal shop owner.

As you will see as you get to know more about Grace, she is busy running a thriving business and has very little Internet knowledge. You will learn about her journey to creating a website and be able to avoid the trials and tribulations, or the stumbling blocks, if you will, that Grace painstakingly endured as she took control of her website (she originally had a very expensive "techie" design it) and change it so that it better met her needs and the needs of her customers.

You will also see how Grace uses her website today to better market her business and to help her meet (and exceed) her sales goals.

But, before we go any further, let's take a look at the Internet and examine more closely the reason(s) you want a website or, in some cases, to improve the one you have.

Like Grace, perhaps you have heard that your competitor has a website, but you're new to the whole Internet thing and not really sure where to begin.

You may be slightly intimidated by technology or just too busy to take on a project of this magnitude and, if you're not sure of the benefits it will provide you, why invest your time and effort, right?

Wrong!

Truth is, with a little time and effort, and by applying the nine steps outlined in this manual, you are sure to see enormous benefits. And, you can learn from Grace how this process can be fun, easy and highly profitable.

By implementing these steps, you can take control of your website and keep control of it or you can use this information to assemble a small team of professionals – a web designer, a copyrighter, etc. and steer this team in the direction you want your online business to take.

How, you ask? You're about to learn.

So, let's begin at the beginning by looking at the Internet and, more specifically, online marketing.

In today's widening marketplace, you no longer compete with other like businesses in your neighborhood or just in your hometown. Instead, you're up against like businesses in the next town over or, for some of you, perhaps even across the state.

Likewise, many small- and medium-size businesses are competing on yet even larger scales, crossing state lines and perhaps even international borders.

This explains why traditional means of advertising, such as the Yellow Pages, newspapers, and radio are becoming less and less effective.

Pair this with the fact that today's consumer is savvier than ever and thinks nothing of visiting local shops to touch and feel the "real" merchandise as they work to make a final decision and then head home (or to the office) where they log onto the Internet to purchase the same product at a lesser price.

That's right. Even your local, most loyal clientele are turning to the Internet for purchases. They are comparing prices, products, information and more with just a few quick clicks of their mouse.

Additionally, the efficiency and low-cost of shipping enables them to choose products from merchants outside of their local shopping area, and the ease with which goods can be delivered right to their front door (and in no time at all) makes keeping even your best clients all the more challenging.

This explains why more and more consumers are shopping from home (and financial analysts predict this will continue to grow, using the Internet to purchase everything from clothes to cars, from electronics to real estate).

The bottom-line is this: Online shopping is becoming more and more commonplace. It has been predicted that US online shoppers will double to 132 million in the next five years (according to iconocast.com).

And, with today's hectic schedules, consumers are looking for ways to save time and shopping online is a solution. In fact, in a recent study, it was found that 19% of Internet users shop online once per week and this number is expected to continue to grow.

I have a great personal story to illustrate that. I had to buy a birthday present for my mother who lives 350 miles away. I was overwhelmed at the thought of getting in the car, driving to the mall, finding a place to park then scouring store after store to find the right present.

Instead I sat down at my computer and went directly to my own pet website. My mother loves Sheltie dogs and I knew I could find something she would love. After a few moments, I had selected a nice sweatshirt, mug and a keychain and added them

to the shopping cart. I entered my credit card number and had them shipped directly to her address. It took me all of 10 minutes to complete the transaction. That was on a Thursday afternoon and by Monday morning the package was in her hands. It does not get any better than that!

Sure, consumers want to compare prices, compare goods and even compare companies, all in the name of getting exactly what they want, all the while getting the most bang for their hard-earned dollar and completing their purchases quicker and more efficiently than ever.

Welcome to 2006!

So, if you're in the retail business, this opens a whole new world of possibilities to you. And, because it's easier and cheaper than ever to have your products shipped directly to your customer's front door, the revenue opportunities are seemingly endless.

But, what about another type of business?

Perhaps you're looking to supplement your marketing efforts with an electronic brochure or update/change your company's image. Or, what about surveying your customers or rolling out a new product or service to the entire world?

Take a minute now to consider your business' unique needs and the goals you have in mind for your business' website. In doing this, spend some time considering the following:

- Maybe you want to provide information, or perhaps you want to generate new sales. Or, would you like to provide your sales team with electronic tools that allow them to streamline their sales process and concentrate on doing what they do best – selling?
- Maybe you're looking to reduce the workload of your customer service representatives or reduce the costs of shipping out company sales literature. Or, perhaps you're eager to set up a fully functional e-commerce site so you can sell, ship, and process payments, or sell deliverable downloadable software, e-books, etc.
- Maybe you want to have the means to survey your clients, make them aware of upcoming promotions, or to interact with employees electronically.

■ Or, if this is for your hobby, you may be more interested in creating an interactive blog that allows you and other like enthusiasts to have a voice and to share opinions.

The truth is that just about every business and every hobby greatly benefits from having a well designed, information-rich website, which is exactly what you are about to achieve.

Considering this, imagine that you already have a website that is up, running, and producing business on a daily basis.

This website is a proven catalyst for growth and you are taking advantage of the many online opportunities your website affords you and adding to your business' bottom-line every day - without being overwhelmed by tedious details and trying technical dilemmas.

Surely that brings a smile to your face.

So, sit tight. We're about to begin the exciting process of getting you from "here" to "there" with a formal introduction to Grace.

Case Study: Grace's Wedding Gowns, Santa Barbara, CA

Grace owns her dream business. She makes brides-to-be dreams come true with exquisite wedding gowns that range from the very affordable to the high-end designer.

Grace prides herself on personalized customer service and, although located in a fairly small Midwest town, Grace's reputation brings brides from several towns over (and even the larger cities) to her specialty shop, where she works one-on-one with them to ensure everything is truly perfect for their approaching special day.

Not that long ago, Grace was enjoying wine and cheese at a cocktail party when she overheard the owner of the town's only other bridal shop talking about her website and how, through her website, she was able to stay in-touch with her clients, let them know when designer wedding gowns were coming in and more. She even talked about a monthly newsletter that provided her clients with incentive to visit her again and to send other brides-to-be (and maids of honor, flower girls, etc.) to her shop.

Intrigued, Grace was eager to learn more.

The very next morning, Grace called her old high-school friend, Ron, who had helped her with the shop's computer system. Grace knew she could count on Ron to better explain the benefits of having a website. More importantly, she knew Ron would know the best person for the website building job.

After all, she was far too busy to take on anything else.

Ron put Grace in touch with Dave, a reputable graphic designer and after couple of weeks of batting back and forth what he thinks she needs, such as a shopping cart so online purchases can be made, a way to capture email addresses so she can build a client newsletter base, etc., Grace decides to give the graphic designer the go-ahead and the project is underway.

Grace is getting excited about all the possibilities she and Dave spoke about and the positive impact the new site could have on her business; however, she is getting a little concerned about the costs.

A few days later, Grace gets a call from Dave who has prepared a quote for her new site based on their previous discussion. Dave asks Grace to come in to his office so they can discuss the quote. They agree on an appointment the very next day.

Grace meets with Dave who carefully goes through the details for the look of the overall site, the use of graphics, the colors to match her logo, etc. and then presents the price of $3,150 and the terms: 50% down, 25% on the acceptance of the "mock-up," with the balance due upon completion.

Dave agrees to come up with two different versions for the "look" of the site, which makes Grace feel a bit better about the escalating fear she is dealing with over the price.

For Grace, $3150 is a lot of money, especially for something she knows so little about. This is a great deal more than she expected and her concern is mounting, but she decides to bite the bullet and gives Dave a deposit of $1,575.

Dave takes Grace's deposit check and tells her that her new website will be up and running in three to four weeks.

A week goes by and Grace finally hears from Dave. He calls to tell her that he has come up with a "concept" for her new website and asks her to stop by his office so the two can agree on the "overall look and feel."

Grace agrees to meet with Dave in a few days. Once at his office, Dave shows Grace the two "mock-ups" and, after much deliberation, Grace gives Dave the thumbs-up on the first design and pays the additional 25% ($787.50).

Despite her financial concerns, overall Grace is pleased. She can tell Dave has worked hard and she likes the photos he has chosen and the preliminary design. So, the two agree that they will "touch base" next week, allowing Dave the time he needs to complete the website.

The following week, Dave calls again and asks Grace to stop by that afternoon. Excited, Grace cancels an afternoon appointment with a new client to meet with Dave, who is too busy to schedule their meeting at another time.

Once again, Dave shows Grace the progress he has made on the site and asks for her input on the toolbars and the site's pages. Grace is not really sure what this is and Dave is rushed and gives her a quick overview. Grace begrudgingly agrees on what is there and leaves Dave's offices feeling a little let down and a lot confused.

Once back at the shop, Grace dives headfirst back into her work and the website takes a backseat until about a week-and-a-half later when Dave sends Grace an email and asks her for "content" for her new website.

Grace, who has been busy with a huge sale, checks her email three days later looking for a recipe from her mom when she sees Dave's email. She is surprised he did not call her as he had in the past and quickly opens up his email. She is surprised even more to learn that Dave expects her to provide him with "content." They did not talk about this during their meetings and this is the first she has heard about content.

Grace, unsure how to respond, ponders this for a few days while Dave, having yet to hear back from Grace, determines that she is busy and moves on to another project.

Finally, after several days have passed, Dave calls Grace. He politely reminds her that he needs "content" for the website, which he proudly proclaims he "has all flushed out."

Grace sheepishly explains that she doesn't know what he means by content or really what to do. This is Grace's first hint that she doesn't have control of this project, that there is a lot more to it than she first anticipated, and that the outcome may indeed not be a positive one (for the process is proving to be anything but at this point).

Dave explains that he needs a bit of information about the bridal shop and suggests that Grace include images of new dresses, a price list, SKU numbers for her new online shopping cart, etc. – none of which she anticipated.

At this same time, Grace's store is busier than ever, and, as luck would have it, one of her employees is away.

Needless to say, Grace is completely overwhelmed.

Finally, Grace shelves her pride and asks her little sister Sara to jump in and help. Sara wrote for the university newspaper and even wrote poetry and short stories, so she is perfect for the job, or so Grace assumes.

Sara agrees to help, but cannot even look at the website design or talk to Grace about the project until after the weekend, for she is busy studying for her real estate licensing exam. Once she has this out of the way, she can help Grace. In fact, she says she is even looking forward to it.

In-between job interviews and packing for a move to her first home, Sara sits down at her laptop and writes what she believes to be good content about Grace's business. Sara has shopped online for some time and thinks she knows what visitors to Grace's new website will want to read.

It takes Sara a few days and it is Friday before she gets everything to Grace. Already scheduled to work weekend over-time for two upcoming weddings, Grace gives the content a quick look before giving it her final nod of approval. She asks Sara to send it all to Dave in an email and gets right back to the work at hand – gown fittings.

So, well over a month passes by before Grace's website is ready. Grace likes the way it looks, but doesn't know anything about it and when new designer gowns come in, she has no idea how to change the pictures on the pages or how to add information on the new inventory.

In fact she has just figured out that every time she wants to change even the text she needs to contact Dave.

Dave, who is working hard on Grace's behalf and really wants to help, is busy and it can take days before he can get to Grace's updates and changes. Sure, he likes Grace and feels just rotten about charging her for 30 minutes of his time (his minimum) even though it only takes him a couple minutes to make a modification to the text, but business is business, right?

Meanwhile, Grace doesn't know how to "draw" customers to her site and has no idea how to send out a newsletter, much less an email campaign. She wonders why she isn't getting any calls from people visiting her site, or even if anybody is visiting her site.

Grace can't even find her own site on Google, or Yahoo or MSN. In fact she can't find it anywhere. (In Step #2, you'll learn what Grace didn't understand is that if you want to get the free traffic that's available from the search engines, you have to build your site from the ground up with the search engines in mind – and I show you exactly how to do this as you progress with the training.)

Frustrated, Grace finally throws her hands up and forgets about the website altogether, as do her well-meaning clients.

That is, until she gets Dave's bill for the remaining 25% she owes on the overall balance.

Now Grace is reminded that she has already spent thousands and owes several hundred more and despite this, she is stuck with a website that does nothing for her and worse, it does nothing for her clients.

Sound familiar?

The truth is that this didn't have to happen to Grace. Even with the little spare time that Grace has, with just a little help, Grace could have created her own website, one that is as unique as her business.

Grace could have easily developed a site that she could use to draw-in new customers and to stay in-touch with current customers – all by following some simple steps.

She could have created a website that provided her with an arsenal of tools that she could use to chisel out her own online niche.

But, Grace missed the boat here.

She has a good-looking site but she can't update it and she has no traffic.

Grace expected for people to be shopping online, to be calling and to be coming in.

What's wrong here?

Why "Online Success for NON-TECHIES?"

I regularly hear from business people who, like Grace, jumped into the website building process with little or no thought before and hired experts, who I refer to as "techies" to help complete the project, only to be disappointed.

Where I see people go astray is in not putting together a plan beforehand. You see, techies are highly specialized people but the onus for developing the website really falls on you (the business owner).

Because techies are so specialized, it simply is not fair to expect them to wear several hats. In fact, the ONLY way to work with techies is to develop your vision and your plan and then direct your team of techies, or your support staff.

In recent years, I have had so many people come to me with problems like those Grace has experienced that I finally started exploring ways to help.

This isn't to say that I have not experienced my own problems with techies. I have. But, from these problems I have learned what works and what does not and this is what this manual stems from.

Yes, you can enjoy a productive relationship with your techie team, and I am going to show you EXACTLY how to do this. I am also going to show you how to keep control of your business' website both in the beginning stages and throughout the development stages, and finally through the years that follow.

You should know upfront that I have a great deal of respect for techies. Generally, they tackle very difficult tasks – mainly because small- and medium-size business owners have no idea what they want and end up dumping it all on techies with little or no direction and definitely no clearly laid-out plan.

That said, techies can easily become difficult to deal with.

However, by simply understanding a bit about how they tick and what they are up against, you can make your relationship (and the outcome) pleasurable and profitable.

But, as a business owner, this is up to you!

In my mind, techies include any professional that you hire to complete a task that you cannot or choose not to complete yourself.

Techies may include the person who sets up your hosting or your domain name, the person who designs the graphics for your website, the person who develops the shopping cart for your website, a freelance copywriter, etc.

Understandably, these techies are faced with quite a challenge when the business owner they are working with does not know what they want or how all of these components come together.

Over the years and in my countless dealings with techies, I have noticed a few "tendencies," that are potentially troublesome, including a tendency to take control, a tendency to complicate, and a tendency to not listen too well.

Add all of these up and you can see that it's all too easy to follow down the same disappointing path Grace found herself on.

Often techies can play on the fact that you need them. For instance, they may decide to keep your username and passwords to themselves. I have even seen them register company domain names in THEIR names.

A techie may like to take control of the conversation by telling you how very busy they are (on your behalf, of course) and how they just solved your most recent problem (the one you may not have even known existed) and how confusing it all is, but that they will shortly have it all under control.

They have a tendency to explain that "things" are very hard to do and then take a lot of time to complete these "things."

They love all things technical (hence the name "techie") because it causes you to need them and, let's face it, they get paid when you don't understand something or when problems occur and sometimes because of this, they can take the long route to solving your problems.

And, unfortunately, quite a few techies are just not great listeners. They are so highly specialized and their minds work at warp speeds, making it difficult for them to slow down and to take the time to listen to you carefully, and to draw out the possible causes for the problem or situation.

Typically, they have a lot of things going on at once and this obviously works to your disadvantage.

I should point out here that this does not make techies bad people to work with; far from it!

And, you will need to deal with several of them as you develop your online presence. In doing this, you will soon see for yourself how most techies are very, very nice people who really do want to help. I am simply pointing out some traits for you to watch for when dealing with someone you have handed over important tasks to.

As you work through this manual, you will learn that the technical end of the business is just not that complicated if you know what to do (and by the end of this training, you will).

Even if you plan to hire technical people to support you in your online efforts, which I recommend that you do (and will show you how to do), you should still have a basic understanding of how all the pieces of the puzzle fit together.

Understanding that if you just hand over a technical job (graphics design, copywriting, etc.), without giving clear direction to your technical team, you will NOT get the desired result.

It's important that when hiring someone to do an important task, that you (or someone you trust completely) have a very clear understanding of what you want, when you want it, and exactly what you expect the finished product to look like.

A good techie will listen, and consult with you at length prior to engaging with the task, give you a firm quote and a definite date for completion of the task at hand. (It's your job to make sure they understand what you want, and you can only do that if YOU know what you want and then clearly communicate it to them).

And, this is where this manual comes in and how the idea for it came about.

You see, over the years, I have seen way too many business owners run into trouble when dealing with technical people.

And it is not always the techie's fault. In fact, the problem usually lies in the fact that the business owner does not know what they want or need and because of this, they wrongly assume that if they just hand over the task to the techie, he or she will take care of it.

Then, when they get the project back, they are surprised at the outcome, even though they gave no clear direction to the techie, who also failed to ask enough questions.

Working with techies is not a bad thing. On the contrary, your experience with a techie will be as good as you work to make it.

In fact, during the course of this training, I will teach you EXACTLY where to find great people, yes, great techies, who will make great resources for you and your website, by handling your technical needs on a project-by-project basis.

But first let's define the roles of the people typically involved in the development of a successful Internet presence (so that you won't make the mistake of asking your "graphics" person to do your copywriting or develop your marketing, like poor Grace did).

- Webmaster: A Webmaster typically manages the relationship with the hosting, domain name registration, shopping cart and payment processing companies. The Webmaster also manages the list of contacts for all people, has a basic understanding of how the site has been developed and how all the pieces fit together.
- Graphic Designer: A graphic designer is responsible for developing the look and feel of the website, adding photos and banners, navigation bars, etc.
- Copywriter: A copywriter writes the content for the pages of a website (as well as for other components such as for e-books, press releases, auto-responder email campaigns, sales letters, newsletters, etc.).

Next, let's define the types of companies you may need to employ the services of.

- Hosting: A hosting company uses a web server to provide storage space for many web sites. A good hosting company allows you unlimited access to your web site files and has their server online (up and running) 99% of the time.
- Domain Name Registrar: A domain name registrar is a company accredited by the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) to sell Internet domain names. Registrars compete with each other to provide the best support and services at the lowest price.

- Shopping Cart: A shopping cart is a piece of software that acts as an online store's catalog and ordering process. Typically, a shopping cart is the interface between a company's Web site and its deeper infrastructure, allowing consumers to select merchandise; review what they have selected; make necessary modifications or additions; and purchase the merchandise.
- Payment Processor: A company that attends to the actual processing of a credit card transaction, to be distinguished from the merchant account bank, which merely acts as the recipient of the transaction, proceeds.

You will learn more about each of these as you progress through this training, but this provides you with a bird's eye view of why I wrote this manual and exactly what you can expect from it.

Of course, I recognize that everybody has a preferred method of learning and many of my students over the years have written to me to let me know that they would like to be able to choose from printed materials, downloadable materials, live sessions (such as my BootCamps), and video training as they begin their online ventures.

Because of this, I have taken the time to also put together a streaming video course (www.jamesmartell.com) that details the information in this manual, in the same easy-to-follow step-by-step instructional format.
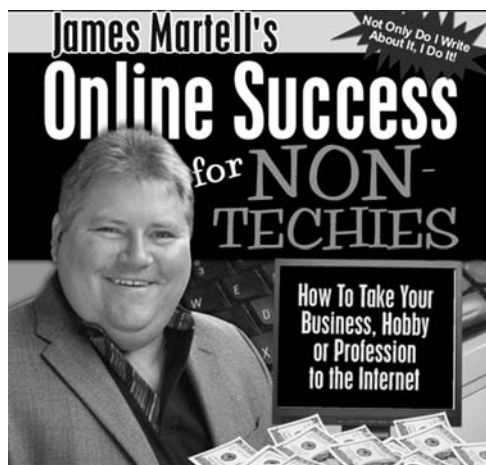
The Internet Comes Of Age

Over the last few years, consumers have flocked to the Net in record numbers, with the online shopping trend virtually exploding. In fact, online spending reached a total of $65 billion last year, jumping 26 percent higher than the previous year.

This type of growth can best be explained by rising consumer confidence in online shopping, which is the result of the increased security associated with using credit cards online, safe-shopping guarantees, and even quick and easy product return/replacement policies.

As touched on earlier, ease and convenience are also large contributors to the growth of online shopping. Consumers can shop from home in their pajamas, while the kids sleep, with coffee in hand, and even get all of their holiday shopping done with a few quick clicks of their mouse, then have everything delivered right to their doorstep – and many times all for less than they would spend buying the items at the local mall.

Likewise, banks are going the extra mile to protect online shoppers, for this is a trend financial institutions simply cannot afford to ignore.

According to MSNBC, banks worldwide have launched systems to protect online users and thwart identity theft, effectively protecting online spenders and their money, as well as protecting the financial institutions, creating a win-win situation.

And Webmasters are offering 100% guaranteed safe checkout solutions, which rely on secure server software (Secure Socket Layer, or SSL), so that important information (name, address, credit card number, etc.) cannot be read or copied as it makes its way across the World Wide Web, further ensuring customer safety and satisfaction.

Additionally, high-speed Internet connections have made online shopping quicker than ever, providing more ease and convenience, which appeals to almost everyone. And advances in technology are supporting the escalating online shopping trend, with consumers now able to make purchases using their cell phones, Blackberrys, Palm Pilots, etc.

For merchants, this opens up a virtually endless revenue stream, allowing storefronts to be open to the public 24/7, every day of the year, with no staff and no associated overhead.

Because of this, merchants can now reach consumers in every corner of the world and are even selling their goods while they sleep (via their websites).

All of this explains why the Internet has quickly "come of age," and why businesses simply must have an Internet presence if long-term success is the goal.

Considering this, you might be asking yourself about the Internet and its longevity. After all, you're a savvy business owner so this must have crossed your mind. I know it did mine in the beginning and, admittedly, many days since.

Let this put your mind at ease, while exciting you about the endless possibilities that now lie ahead for you and your business – all of which start with a professional looking website (which you will have at the end of this training):

- The long-term prospects for online retailing are strong. Demand for goods and services online will continue to grow as consumers become more accustomed to multi-channel shopping. Most of the growth will take place in the leisure travel, grocery, and clothing categories, according to a report from Boston Consulting Group (BCG), "The Next Chapter in Business-to-Consumer E-Commerce: Advantage Incumbent."

- U.S. holiday shoppers in the months of October, November and December spent $30.1 billion online in 2005, not including travel. That's up 30% from the previous year. Online shoppers spent $3.8 billion on clothing or apparel, for 16 percent of the total. Next came toys and video games at $2.5 billion, or 11 percent. Consumer electronics came in a close third, accounting for $2.3 billion, or 10 percent. Consumers spent $2.1 billion on computer hardware and peripherals this holiday season, up nearly a third over last year, according to Goldman Sachs, Harris Interactive, Nielsen/NetRatings.

- E-commerce spending over the November and December holiday season is expected to exceed $15.8 billion, up 29 percent from the year-ago period. Consumers spent $14.8 billion online between Nov. 1 and Dec. 26 versus $11.5 billion during the same weeks in 2003. Rising consumer confidence played a role in the last-minute surge in holiday spending online and offline, according to ComScore Networks, 01/2005.

Getting The Most From This Manual

Desired Outcome

At the completion of this course…

…you will have your own professional-looking website, one that allows you to effectively and efficiently promote your business and sell (if applicable) your products and/or services, a website that is EASILY found by your target audience because it will rank high at the search engines, a website that you can update in just a few minutes, allowing you to finally establish your online presence and control it as you and your business move forward on the path to online (and offline) success.

I've Been There

This manual details, in eight steps, a proven path to online success based on the techniques I use every day.

While learning-the-ropes of this industry, I read all that I could on the subject, but ultimately concluded that much that was written was counter-productive (or dated).

The hazard for anyone wishing to know more about building their own commercial websites can be summed up in one word…

…overwhelming.

Have you been there?

I know I have.

So, I would caution you to remain FOCUSED on this manual while learning.

And, complete the 8 steps sequentially, because the logic of each only makes sense AFTER the previous step is completed.

If you do this, I can assure you that you'll avoid the brain-numbing experiences that I had while trying to figure this thing out by simultaneously studying the works of numerous Internet "experts".

You Have to Start Somewhere

My guess is that most readers of this manual will either be "newbies" who are totally unfamiliar with the language of the Internet, or business owners who have struggled with building or updating their own website, or a business owner who already has a website and may be pleased with certain aspects of it, but from other aspects he or she is wanting more.

I would also bet that some are quite savvy with computers, while others are not.

Regardless of your Internet experience and, more specifically, your website building experience, you will be amazed at the simplicity of the eight steps I outline for you here.

That's because I teach fundamentals.

You will learn only the essentials.

This means I will assume nothing about your current knowledge and experience – except that you want a website for your business that performs, one that you can easily maintain control of, one that will draw new clients to your business – in short, one that will positively impact your business for many, many years to come.

Stick to the basics, over and over again

The great NFL football coach, Vince Lombardi, used to stand before his team at the beginning of training camp each year with a football in his hands and say, "Gentlemen, THIS is a football. Our goal is to get THIS ball over THAT line and prevent THEM from doing the same."

Of course, it gets more complicated than that in the NFL, just as it does in online sales and marketing.

But, if we focus on learning (and re-learning) the basics, as Lombardi taught, then we increase our chances of winning in any endeavour requiring the application of knowledge.

So, if I get overly simplistic (and repetitive), please remember the great Lombardi.

And take a step back and punt…

Before starting your training, it will be useful to peruse the entire manual before actually implementing any of the 8 steps.

This will provide a context and give you a sense of where you are headed. This printed version will also be a good place to scribble notes.

Celebrate the touchdowns

As you page through each module, pay special attention to the desired outcome of each section.

The achievements of these important outcomes indicate whether or not you are on course.

By reaching these milestones, you will not only move yourself closer to your ultimate goal, but you will also build confidence and a winning attitude, which are both crucial to your success.

In my live sessions, prior to getting started each week, I would ask the students to recap the previous week's activities.

It was always thrilling for me to witness and share in their pride of accomplishment.

But more importantly, it allowed them to acknowledge their own progress in public, which fortified their belief in themselves.

Even students who initially thought they were in-over-their-heads, soon arrived at a point where you could almost see the 'lights go on' and hear them say to themselves, "YESSSS, I can DO this"!

So, please take the time to acknowledge yourself at each step of the way.

In actual fact, you will be learning insider secrets that very few know about.

So, give yourself a pat on the back after the successful completion of each module.

Heck, you may even want to buy yourself something special, as a reward, at every step of the way!

Do whatever it takes to keep yourself motivated, because there will invariably be times when the frustration level grows – which is the case in learning any new skill…

…especially when working with technology in a brand new, ever-changing industry, – let alone, from a manual.

Set your game plan

When training my classes in Vancouver, we used to hold the sessions over the course of three consecutive Tuesdays and provide a list of things for them to do as homework assignments.

I believe that much of the success achieved by many of my Vancouver students can be attributed to the fact that they were on a schedule.

You, however, are on your own.

So I encourage you to set a pace for yourself before you begin.

There is no reason why all readers should not have a fully functioning website on the Net within a month or two.

Decide in advance what time of the day you'll get on your computer (without distractions). And also determine which days of the week are best.

Then stick to it.

Victory takes time (and persistence)

Normally, it takes between 4-6 weeks to become indexed by the search engines after your site is built.

So, if it takes you a month to build a site, you probably won't see revenues or other results you desire for three to four months.

And, it usually starts in a trickle, and then builds to a steady pace as your rankings mature and bookmarked visitors return.

Yet, many of my students are reporting much faster results because of the new techniques I teach on establishing inbound links for optimal rankings.

So, it's hard to say for sure exactly how long it will take you.

To some extent, we are at the mercy of the search engines in this regard.

So be patient.

You'll be on the Internet a lot

This is an action manual.

That's what sets it apart from the rest.

As you will learn in Step #1, How-to Get (and stay) Organized, you should get a binder and a three-hole punch or a larger spiral notebook, which you will use in almost every Step of this manual to record important information.

Throughout this manual, I will provide you with sites and screenshots so that you can have solid references, resources, and tools as you progress (both through this manual and afterward in the updating and maintaining of your new website).

Into this binder will go printed materials from the sites and resources I give you to ensure that you have easy reference points when attempting to gain clarity on a puzzling procedure.

As many of you probably already know, one of the Internet's most frustrating aspects is the lack of uniform jargon.

For a newbie like Grace this can be terribly confusing.

So, make it a point to linger a bit on the sites and reference points that I send you to and get familiar with the lingo, – but only as it relates to the specific task you are completing.

The trick is to broaden your knowledge and familiarity with specific procedures and terminology without swamping yourself with confusion.

And only you can know where that balance point is.

Start at the beginning

I purposely narrow your focus during the 8-step process of this manual.

But, I DO want you to know of other resources.

For this reason I have included an appendix of recommended resources at the back.

However, it might be counter-productive for you to dabble there UNTIL you've completed the program.

Trust me on this.

There is a lot to learn within the 8 steps themselves, – and premature attempts to broaden your knowledge too quickly might become counterproductive.

It's imperative, while learning, that you first use ONLY the resources described in each step, because I can't be there to guide you or answer questions if you attempt to do too much, too fast.

Once you have completed the 8-step process, though, you will probably amaze yourself at how proficient you have become, and how easily you will integrate new knowledge.

So, once again, I recommend patience (and so does Grace).

It's incremental learning that will take you to where you want to go, – not fast tracking.

Using recommended resources

One of my business mentors, Hubert Humphrey, used to always tell us "become a student of the business".

I remember taking that statement to heart.

And even though my association with Hubert is long over, I continually apply this "student of the business" mentality to everything I do.

And although I consider it to be extremely important to "follow the 8-step plan" carefully – I also want to encourage you to become students of your online business as well.

And my list of recommended resources located in the back of this manual is a good place to begin expanding your knowledge once you've got a foundation.

But don't stop there.

Once you are comfortable with publishing, maintaining and updating your business' website, I encourage you to take another look around. Check out your competitor's sites and other websites that have anything to do with your business.

TEST things. See what works best for you and your clients and take note of what does not work so well. And, make changes accordingly (not to worry this really will be very easy to do).

So once you get your feet wet and are getting the results you desire, I encourage you to spread your wings a bit.

Innovate and get good at what you do.

It'll pay off BIG time!

Become resourceful

What was invaluable to me as I grew in competence, was knowing when to stop struggling with something, – and just get away from the computer.

I also developed a network of friends and associates who could answer simple computer, Windows, or Internet-related questions.

And I learned to rely on the technical departments of my service providers.

I encourage you to do the same.

And, as many of you know, before preparing a downloadable training, I taught in a workshop setting.

I learned a lot then about the importance of preparing people to succeed after the class was over.

Regrettably, some in my live classes had developed an "attitude of dependency", which I feared would not serve readers very well in the long run.

I knew this would be especially detrimental for readers without access to personal coaching.

So in this manual I continually encourage readers to use the training as a self-teaching guide and from there to build on their new found knowledge.

Thankfully, most readers took to heart my admonishments to become resourceful.

Over the years, very few emailed with questions that could have easily been answered with a review of the manual, a search in our support desk database, or by doing a Google search.

But now I'd like to encourage you to take your resourcefulness to the next level.

You see, – although I want you to follow the 8 steps precisely, there is also some wiggle room.

My accountant likes to use the term "wiggle room", which I find hilarious. And indeed, thankfully, there is plenty of wiggle room in my financial affairs these days.

And yours too, I might add, if you get serious about this.

You've got wiggle room.

Same with buying templates.

As you are probably not aware, in 2002 my teachings featured a local designer. Now I feature a server-side publishing tool that allows you to choose the look of your website from thousands of templates, to customize the header with your own company logo or image (and to utilize the affordable services of professional graphics help if you so desire) and more – all through a single publishing tool found on the Internet.

This will save you immeasurable amounts of time and money, while allowing you complete creative freedom and control of your website.

However, if you are more comfortable with using FrontPage or Dreamweaver software as your publishing tool – go for it.

Or if you prefer a Mac – then you'll need to workaround some of my advice, which is based on my use of PCs.

And if you want you could just as easily use a server-side publishing tool (I provide you with suggestions on which to use as we progress) if it provides enough flexibility.

This is what I mean by becoming resourceful.

Now everyone's situation is different.

Some are totally new to most things dealing with publishing websites – and these people should stick closely to the plan.

But for anyone who has gained some proficiency – either with my training or with someone else's – I'd encourage you to attempt to discern when it's appropriate to experiment a bit.

I never intended that my readers should be clones of each other either.

Follow the plan – yes – but as you develop also become a student of the business.

Do things in your OWN way.

THAT will serve you best in the long term.

On your mark, get set…

Part One: Be Prepared

The first module, How To Get (and stay) Organized requires some shopping for supplies, so you might want to wait until you have a complete afternoon of uninterrupted time before beginning in earnest.

When you arrive back with your supplies, please take a few minutes to review these first few chapters, in order to set-the-stage before starting.

Then GO for it!

Step #1
How to Get (And Stay) Organized

Desired outcome

At the completion of THIS step…

…your workspace will be equipped with the physical resources needed to establish your online presence, you will have the supplies needed to develop, maintain, and keep your website up-to-date. You will be organized and ready to take control of this project and keep control, and you will have a basic set of software tools and procedures to assist you in better managing important details.

I learned the hard way, but you can forego the frustration…

In the winter of 2000-2001, after I began a serious effort to make online publishing a success, I quickly learned that if I didn't organize myself I could easily become sidetracked.

An important turning point occurred one rainy afternoon in February of that year.

I went to the login area of one of my website accounts, – which is a password protected area, – to obtain some status reports, but could not remember my username and password.

I notified them and they replied with the correct info.

But the delay was both frustrating and unnecessary.

Later that month, I wanted to move my existing domain name from my current website hosting company to another, when I again realized I couldn't remember my password.

But, this new situation wasn't as easily resolved.

That's because in the month prior, I had changed my email address. And, they would only send new codes to the email address they had on file.

So, I had to prove that I owned my domain name by having my birth certificate and photo I.D. notarized and sent by courier to California.

What a hassle that was.

Necessity is the mother of invention

So, that evening I developed a better plan to stay organized.

And over the many months that have followed, I have refined my methods, so that I rarely encounter these embarrassing and time-consuming situations.

In this chapter I will outline some easy steps I use to stay organized.

Each is deceptively simple, but essential, so please do not skip these procedures. (Especially if you like to fly by the seat of your pants.)

They are only offered here as a starting point, or a foundation from which you can build; and as a way to focus your attention on menial tasks that will hopefully form good organizational habits – which will dramatically improve your chances of success.

Action item #1 – Set up your work space

You may not be accustomed to spending a great deal of time in front of a computer. Before you do this, and before you begin with any aspect of your website, you will want to get organized by taking the time to carefully organize your work space, and this includes your computer.

As I said before, you are going to be on the Internet a lot and you will want to go ahead now and create a comfortable workspace. This may mean cleaning and organizing your office a bit, or calling in someone to take care of those nagging computer issues that have been driving you nuts the last few months, or simply arranging your space so you have resources dedicated to your new project.

Also, if you are on dial-up and an upgrade to high-speed is possible, go ahead and make that call.

Once you take care of these few preliminary issues, you will feel good about the tasks at hand and ready to move forward.

You should also consider purchasing the following (if you do not already have these items):

- Computer – get one you are happy with, along with a good mouse and mouse pad
- Printer – preferably one that allows you to print black and white and color
- Well-suited desk, comfortable chair
- Spiral notebook and binder
- Go ahead and shop for basic office supplies like printer paper, printer ink, file folders, hanging files, paper clips, etc.

The idea here is to go ahead and get everything you need and to create a very comfortable, well-organized work environment before you begin the training process.

And, keep in mind that, as I already pointed out, you may not be accustomed to spending a great deal of your time at your desk or in front of a computer. This said, you want to get your office space ready because you will be spending more time there and by doing this now, you ensure you do not waste your time later.

Action item #2 – Select a username and password

Before you determine your username and password, I want to stress the importance of security.

It simply is imperative that you keep your usernames and passwords (which there will be many of) safe.

You don't want your site to be hacked (illegally accessed by other people or systems with the intent of destroying, disrupting or carrying out illegal activities).

While I could go on and on about this subject, suffice it to say that the Internet is generally very safe, thanks to recent developments in technology; however, nothing is completely safe and I have found that the old adage "better safe than sorry" could not be more true when it comes to developing and maintaining an online presence.

That said, let's keep moving forward.

With a pen and paper determine a permanent username and a few passwords.

As for the username, I recommend selecting a single username that consists of letters and numbers, such as: 22max09.

Or, if you want to be even more secure, you can mix up the capitalization of the letters, such as: 22mAx09.

I also suggest you get a "little black book" so you can manually record important information like this and subscribe to Roboform, which we will cover next.

As for the password, I recommend coming up with a few different ones in addition to using numbers and a variation of upper and lower case letters, such as: 05Mags02, or 05mags02, or 0ma5g0s2, or M0A5G0S2.

The goal here is to have a SINGLE username that can be used for EVERYTHING from this point forward.

I suggest you use 4 letters and 4 numbers in each to make your username unique.

But, be careful of using one that others may have.

For example, MARK1234 runs the risk of being taken.

So, don't choose a name like this.

But, by using the SAME numbers and letters, you could use 12MARK34.

Then, do something similar for your password, such as: 05Mags02.

In many cases a username is not necessary, – just a password. But, often both ARE needed.

So, you need to be prepared.

In my mind, I always think of the username FIRST, as in, "username and password".

This makes it easy to remember which is which.

Trust me on this. It WILL make your life easier on the Net.

So, take the time to do this.

When decided, place them in your little black book.

Important: When assigned a password by someone else, – login and change it to one of your preferred passwords right away.

To get you started, – once you've chosen your permanent username and a few passwords, – you may want to change as many of your current usernames and passwords as possible.

Action item #3 – Set-up an Internet start page

You will be working in front of your computer a great deal more as you work through these nine steps, so making the most of the time you spend in front of your computer screen is paramount.

Yes, efficiency is key and you can completely customize your start page, the page you see every time you open up your browser, to help you make the most of your time and your efforts.

You will be visiting many of the same sites repeatedly (control panels for hosting and domain names, keyword generation tools, search engine submission services, etc.) and there is no point in continuously typing these URLs in manually when they can be right there in front of you.

All of these important sites and tools should never be more than two or three clicks away – right there on your very own start page.

Additionally, I strongly suggest that you use your start page to keep your goals in front of you. Sure, we've all heard the stories of how important it is to keep your goals written down where you can see them daily… but if you're like me, pasting scraps of paper with my goals scribbled down to the fridge or mirror just doesn't seem to cut it; however, what has worked for me is to keep my goals on my start page and I'd bet it all that this will work for you, too.

As a small business owner, I have my own goals, and I am sure you do, as well. I can also safely assume that your business is a catalyst for reaching your goals – whatever they may be – and an Internet start page helps keep these goals front and center, right where they should be.

You should know upfront that I attribute much of my online success to placing my goals on MY Internet start page.

More specifically, I am convinced that my start page is one of the main reasons my family and I enjoy the lifestyle we now do – my income, our home, numerous trips, and my dream-of-a-lifetime car.

Admittedly, when I started on the Internet, my expectations weren't that high. After all, I was a newbie and not sure what to expect, so I set my sights on making $100 a day as an affiliate marketer.

Once I hit this target, I simply raised the bar. Once I hit that target, I raised the revenue target bar again…and so on and so on.

Before I knew it, I was there! I had reached my revenue goals for my own small business and while I continue to raise this bar, I decided to add some different goals for myself, and my family.

So, two years ago, I decided I really wanted to go on a cruise, something I had never done before. Making this a new goal, I added a photo of a cruise ship to my start page.

And, before I knew it, I was there – with Arlene. And since our first cruise, we have taken two more. The last cruise we took was to the beautiful Eastern Caribbean and we took our four kids along for a memorable 10 days at sea.

I also added a photo of a 1965 Shelby Cobra to my start page, for owning one of these has been a life-long dream of mine.

Today, the cobra is no longer on my start page – it's parked in my garage!

The point is this: customizing your start page is a simple process – one that can yield huge results.

And, I can't say enough about the time and effort it saves you – everything you need, links to the sites you frequent and your goals – right in front of you every time you open a new browser.

Let's take a few minutes now to create a special start page that allows you to have links to all of the sites you visit regularly – and allows you to be reminded of your goals (and your achievements) every day!

What you see below is my start page.

Notice that I not only have the links that I need, but my goals listed in plain site, as well.

Like I said above, I know we have all heard how having our goals written out and in front of us will help us achieve them; trust me here, it's true.

What's more, I am living proof of this!

This single "tool" has helped me attain success at levels I only previously dreamed about, and continues to propel me to even higher levels of success as I work to further grow my own online businesses.

So, take a few minutes right now to put your most visited links and your goals on your own Internet start page.

http://www.my-start-page.net

Action item #4 – Become proficient with your keyboard

I remember a good friend of mine and former business partner, Chuck Anderson, taught me a few tricks to working in Microsoft Word, and a few keyboard shortcuts.

That was back in 1997.

It wasn't long after that he noticed me working proficiently in Word with my keyboard when he jokingly said, "You bring tears to my eyes."

Since then, I've taken note of how others type and must admit that I am particularly impressed at the speed with which my teenagers, Shelby and Justin, type. It's truly mind-boggling.

And this brings me to a quick story.

I had asked Shelby if she wanted to make some extra income by doing some typing for me. In my impromptu interview, I asked her how quickly she typed, when she instantly responded with a big smile, and said: "…way faster than you, Dad!"

And after hearing over and over, "We are faster than you Dad," I finally started taking note of what they were doing that I was not.

Unlike teens of today, who have grown-up with keyboards in hand, many of us who are a bit older and did not grow up with similar experiences have a little work to do to get more efficient with our keyboards.

I tell you this because I want you to know that, in the beginning, I was not comfortable with my keyboard, and to assure you that this "comfort zone" does increase in due time (and much, much faster than you might think).

In fact, you will find that you type faster every day and, using keyboard shortcuts, you will be able to achieve a great deal more in less time – soon.

This is something my teens realized long before I did.

Yes, they regularly use keyboard shortcuts.

Apparently all of their friends do, too.

It seems that it is we adults that are catching on late to this one. Kids are amazing on computers and watching mine, I have learned a thing or two, with keyboard shortcuts among my favorites.

However, if you are not used to working on a keyboard, learning keyboard shortcuts can be a bit like learning to play a guitar.

I am not going to spend a lot of time on this, but I have highlighted a few of the most useful keyboard shortcuts below so you can practice this now.

These are followed by a link to an online tutorial. I encourage you to take a quick look at this because what you will learn will save you a great deal of time.

You should also print out and practice the keyboard shortcuts outlined on the site below. I suggest you go ahead and print the following short list of shortcuts and paste them next to your keyboard.

Start using these shortcuts now and keep using them until it becomes second nature.

Here are five keyboard shortcuts. Practice these now and as you progress through the training:

> 1. CTRL+C: Copy
> 2. CTRL+X: Cut

3. CTRL+V: Paste
4. CTRL+B: Bold
5. CTRL+U: Underline

And here's the link to the nifty web-based tutorial:

http://support.microsoft.com/kb/126449/

Action item #5 – Upgrade your browser

Get the latest version of Microsoft's Internet Explorer.

Note: If you do not use Microsoft's Internet Explorer, you should make sure you have the latest, most updated version of the browser you do use (such as Firefox, Safari, etc.)

http://www.microsoft.com

Action item #6 – Download RoboForm

Sign-up right away for a free trial of the form-filling service offered below.

As a Webmaster, you will often be required to fill out tedious forms. By joining RoboForm, you'll have the option of letting RoboForm fill them in for you.

Now, before proceeding to the next step, I encourage you set-up the RoboForm software on your computer by simply walking through the downloading process, which is free.

This is important and you do not want to continue moving forward without a good understanding of RoboForm and how it can save you immeasurable amounts of time and effort!

http://www.roboform.com

Action item #7 – Set-up the Affiliate Organizer

The Affiliate Organizer is a software program that was developed by Jon Mills, a reader of mine, who intuitively saw the need for this, and I couldn't be more thankful.

Sure, the software was developed for affiliates; however, it is also perfect for small business owners.

It's not essential, but because you will need to track usernames, passwords, control panel logins, serial numbers, keyword lists, domain name renewal dates, memberships, outsourced work and the like, you can free up your time so you can focus your efforts on running your business, not searching for stuff that should be at your fingertips.

In short, it's a one-stop source for any online business owner, keeping all the information needed to run a successful online business in one place, and available with just the click of a mouse.

And, if you've ever lost data before, you know what a lifesaver this can be.

Additionally, Affiliate Organizer gives you the flexibility to create your own folders and sub-folders so you can organize the program in a way that works best for you.

Each folder contains input fields appropriate to that topic, with a Notes field as well to record any additional information you may want to keep.

All you do is input the information and save it – simple as that! Affiliate Organizer also includes a Task/Alerts feature to remind you of important jobs to be done or appointments to be kept - either by email, sound, or both.

And the best part about Affiliate Organizer is that it's all at your fingertips – no more searching through spreadsheets, documents or text files, or in my case, spiral bound note books, for that password or code – it's right there on your desktop.

Not only do I recommend this piece of software, I would say that it will help you dramatically in your efforts to create a winning website and carve out a successful place online for your business. This software is just that good.

http://www.affiliateorganizer.net

Action item #8 – Develop a realistic mindset

If you are very new to the Internet or computers in general, then you will need to expect a certain amount of frustration. Keep the end goal in mind, that of having a professional looking website that consistently performs.

The rate of change on the Internet can be breathtaking and dealing with technical issues can often be a burden – even for those with experience.

So you will need to learn to relax when things seem overwhelming.

Plus, do not set yourself up for failure by thinking you will have your website up and running overnight. This is just not possible.

This process will require some time, some patience, and the ability to step back, take a deep breath, re-evaluate and punt (but not too hard) – when needed.

Undoubtedly, you're simultaneously running your off line business as we work together to establish your online presence, as you should.

I understand that you have a full plate, which is why I have made the following eight-step process as simple as possible; however, you will need to invest a bit of time and,

as I explained before, set a schedule that you can live with and a mindset that goes with it.

Action item #9 – Complete the checklist for Step #1

At this point, prior to moving onto Step #2, I would suggest taking a moment and placing a checkmark beside the steps you have completed to date.

- Action item #1 – Set up your workspace
- Action item #2 – Select a username and password
- Action item #3 – Set up an Internet start page
- Action item #4 – Become proficient with your keyboard
- Action item #5 – Upgrade your browser
- Action item #6 – Download RoboForm
- Action item #7 – Set up the Affiliate Organizer
- Action item #8 – Develop a realistic mindset
- Action item #9 – Complete the checklist for Step #1

Once you have…

…your workspace equipped with the physical resources needed to run your business and you have a basic set of software tools and procedures in place to assist you in better managing important details, then…

…you are ready for the NEXT step.

Step #2
Arranging Your
Thoughts

Desired outcome

At the completion of THIS step…

…you will have a thorough understanding of what a visitor to your website is looking for, you will have determined what to sell them, you will choose a template for your website, you will understand your website publishing options and decide which is the best solution for your site, you will know more about outsourcing some of your website work and where to find the professional help you need to get the job done…

Just as you organized your workspace in Step #1 and obtained the basic supplies needed to develop and maintain your website, you are now going to arrange your thoughts and acquire the information you need to develop and achieve a successful online presence for your business.

Because, as I have learned, and as poor Grace so obviously learned the hard way, a bit of forethought and planning will go a long way to ensuring your end result meets your expectations.

And I hope you have high expectations for your website, for I sure do!

Rest assured that, armed with the information in this manual, we are going to meet those expectations, but there's some work to do beforehand.

Let's start by taking a look at what is undoubtedly the most important component of your website – the one that will make or break your online success.

Do you have any idea what I'm talking about?

I am talking about the visitor that comes to your site.

So it's safe to say that by getting to know your visitor now, and making a decision as to what products or services you plan to be sell this visitor through your website is perhaps the most important thing you can do to get your website started off on the right foot – and keep it there!

Once you take the time to brainstorm a bit about your online clientele (your site's visitor) and determine what you will provide to your clientele, you will be able to make an informed decision about the web-publishing software that will best support your online efforts, which is also covered in this step.

And last but not least as you arrange your thoughts in these areas, you are also going to determine how much professional help you need as you progress. Then, I am going to show you exactly where you can find this professional assistance quickly and easily and without breaking the bank.

Let's get started now for this Step is sure to be as enlightening as it is fun, and by completing it now, you ensure you have the information and tools you need to tackle the Steps that lie ahead with ease.

Getting to know your visitor

As I've touched on previously, the primary purpose for your site is to serve the needs of your visitor.

In doing this, it is absolutely paramount that you remember that every visitor to your site is a prospective customer that you the potential to serve for a long time – one that could refer others to your website and your products or services.

And this all starts with understanding what a visitor to your website is looking to find or accomplish when they stop-by, and then working backwards from there.

And a potential customer who visits your website is NO different than a potential customer that physically walks through the front door of your business, or calls you on the phone.

I cannot stress this enough.

The clients you deliver services or products to through your website are no different than the individuals you deal with one-on-one at your company's physical location. Of course, if your business does not have a physical location or if you are building a website for your hobby, the only impression your client or fellow hobbyist can form about you and what you do is from your website.

So by focusing intently on serving the needs of a visitor to your site, and thoroughly understanding what they are hoping to achieve or accomplish, the pages and features required to serve their needs will become obvious to you.

Once again, let's consider Grace and where she went wrong.

The truth is that if Grace had known in advance what she required to serve her visitor – her dealings with Dave could have been a lot more productive.

We are going to make sure this doesn't happen to you.

Action item #1 – Grab your notebook and make a list

Go ahead and grab your spiral notebook or binder (the one from Step #1).

We're going to do a quick and easy exercise.

You can use the "Brainstorm 21" list I provide for you at http://www.jamesmartell.com/checklists.html to help you here and after you have filled it in, remember to place it in your notebook or binder so that you keep it handy as we progress. ☺

It's now time to make a long list of things that you believe your customer or potential customer is hoping to accomplish when they approach your business – whether online, by phone, or by walking through your company's front door.

I want you to come up with a long list. If you're like me, once you start this process, you will quickly and easily come up with a dozen or so ideas, but if you push through

and come up with 21, I believe that you will truly start to identify what your customers are really hoping to accomplish.

But why "21," you ask?

The truth is that I actually learned what I now call the 21-method from a friend of mine who learned from a friend of his that by pushing yourself past listing the usual, more obvious 6, 8, 10, 12 or even 15 thoughts, you could really flush an idea out.

And the more I pushed myself to do this, the more I grew to believe what my friend told me about the 21-method, and that is that the real magic begins when you push to 21.

In the off chance that you are not sure you can come up with 21 thoughts for your list, not to worry. All you have to do is ask your customers. They're sure to tell you!

Or, grab a coffee, step back from your computer while you do this, and brainstorm with your business partner, a colleague, or your spouse.

In no time at all your list of 21 might turn into 40.

The more the merrier.

You really want to nail this and the only way to accomplish that is to get into the mind of your site's visitor.

Trust me here. This list will be gold.

You will even want to be able to share it with your writer (which I help you with later in this manual).

For now, however, let's just get it together for you.

In Step #7 – Communications on the Net, I teach you about survey software that you can use once your site is "live" that will allow you to actually ask your visitors what they want from your site.

For the time being, your site is not up and running and you certainly don't yet have visitors, so the infamous 21-method is the way to go.

As you put your 21 ideas to paper, make sure you place it in your notebook. You will soon see how extremely important this notebook is and as you progress through this manual. In fact, you will need to keep it handy at all times because it will contain documentation that you will refer back to over and over again.

You should do a really good job documenting the progress you make as you develop your website in your notebook or binder , as well as with the affiliate organizer software I recommended in Step #1- How to Get (and Stay) Organized.

Now, back to your list. If you have not already done so, take time to brainstorm and pen your 21 (or more) thoughts now.

You will want to keep your 21 points (or more) handy in your notebook or binder for when we get to Step #4 – Setup Your Website, where we work to develop the actual content for your website, this list will be invaluable (and it will also prove invaluable in the Steps that follow Step 4).

But, let's not get ahead of ourselves here. Before we can even think about content, we have to determine exactly what it is that you want to accomplish with your online presence.

So, let's take a look at this now.

Action item #2 – Determine what you want to accomplish

It's time to consider the goals you have for your site.

In doing this, you will find that you fall into one or more of the following four categories:

1) Will you sell products like Grace (perhaps a single product, multiple products, or even an entire catalog)?

2) Are you looking to create contacts and generate leads for your services, like insurance agents, mortgage brokers, real estate agents or network marketers do?

3) Or will you sell digital downloadable products such as e-books, software, music or a subscription based recurring membership like I do for my audio newsletter "buzz."

4) Do you want to deliver information, such as a sports team, hobbyist, or religious group might do? Are you looking to get the word out about your team, your hobby or your group without selling?

The truth is that your website may fall into one of these four categories, two or three of them, or maybe even all four.

And that's OK.

If you are selling a physical product like Grace, you need a shopping cart, product descriptions, images, and the capabilities to manage shipping and sales tax.

If you are looking to generate qualified leads, you will need a special lead capture form to collect the information.

If you are looking to sell digitally downloadable products, you will need an integrated shopping cart and digital product delivery system.

If you are looking to deliver information, you will not need a shopping cart and product descriptions, but you will need information-rich pages and the capabilities to manage these.

Take a minute now to consider what you want your online presence to accomplish, for you will need to know this before you progress to the next Action item, which is learning about your web publishing options and determining which is right for your website.

By knowing which of the four categories your site falls into, you will be able to make an informed decision about which web-publishing software you need.

Web publishing software

As I explained in the previous Action item, what you want to accomplish with your website (sell a product, generate leads, sell a digital product, disseminate information or a combination of these) determines the type of web publishing software solution you will need.

There are two types of web publishing software to consider:

1) Client-side web publishing software
2) Server-side web publishing software

Client-Side Solutions

Simply put, the client side is not as intuitive as the server side solution.

Using the client side solution, you have to manually install software and may even need to purchase other tools such as calendars and maps and then pay to have them integrated into your site, whereby server-side solutions include these tools, all of which can usually be installed with the push of a button.

The more popular client side options include:

FrontPage from Microsoft (www.microsoft.com)

Dreamweaver from Macromedia (www.macromedia.com)

These programs can also be purchased from your local Staples or Home Depot, if you choose to go this route.

While these solutions can be used to develop static websites, they offer no content management functionality, they require manual integration of tools (such as calendar, maps, photo gallery, blog, guestbook, newsletter tools, etc.) and there is a very steep learning curve associated with each.

Also, all the pages, graphics, text, images, audio, etc. reside on your computer, or the computer of your graphic designer, which turned out not to be such a good deal for Grace, who paid Dave for a full half hour of work every time a small change or update to her site was needed, and given the frequency with which new dresses came in, and all the seasonal changes in bridesmaid dresses, etc., this option was costing Grace a small fortune.

Using the client side solution, you will also be responsible for uploading your pages, graphics, content, etc. to the Internet via a special FTP software program, (File Transfer Protocol).

Server-Side Solutions

Given the steep learning curve and limited updating capabilities associated with client-side solutions, I suggest you use a server-side solution.

Despite knowing all about client-side solutions and having already scaled the learning curve (after years of use), I now use a server-side solution myself, as does Grace.

In fact, with the exception of a few legacy sites, I no longer build my sites on my computer, but rather by using an easy-to-use online 'website builder' that allows me to login to my "live" site from any computer with an Internet connection and make changes on the fly.

This website publishing software resides on an Internet-based server, which is why it is caller a server-side solution, allowing me to access it from anywhere in the world via an Internet connection.

The good news for you is that there are a number of server-based software solutions available and they have come a long way over the years in their simplicity to use.

Additionally, by choosing a server-side web publishing solution you can edit, maintain, and update your website without learning new software, just as both Grace and I do.

Let's look at a few of the other more important benefits this solution will provide you:

- There is no need to know or use HTML (the official "language" of the web). When building a site using a site builder, special editing software is already in place that lets you write, edit and update your files just like you do in Word.
- Adding a shopping cart is as simple as pushing a few buttons and following a few user-friendly wizards that walk you through the set-up process.
- Adding a blog to the site and arranging payment processing is also easy by following intuitive step-by-step tutorials.
- If you want to add an email or call back response form, a FAQ list, a visitor discussion forum, generate a customer survey or implement email newsletters using special software, you can do it easily without out the need to purchase or integrate third-party software because these powerful tools are already included.

■ Using a website builder, shopping cart and blog software include professionally designed and fully customizable website templates that you can use with just the quick click of your mouse.

Nice.

All of this will be covered in more detail in Step #6 – Upload Your Content, but for now, because of major advancements in online site builder technology, you can find comfort in knowing upfront that all of this is something you can do!

And help will always be close by, with website building and publishing solutions now offering 24/7 customer support via telephone and incredibly easy-to-follow and easy-to-understand tutorials that make this once complicated process a breeze.

While there is lots of help close by, as you will see in the next Action item, for those of you who want to really dig in here, you will be pleasantly surprised to see just how easy to use these advanced online software solutions are.

At this point, you are probably wondering about cost for these solutions.

Generally speaking, the site builder and blog software is included free-of-charge with your hosting package for as low as $4.99 a month and you can add a shopping cart for less that $20 a month.

Very, very affordable, don't you agree?

Now, as you proceed, there are just three things you want to keep in mind. If you want to:

1.) **Sell products** (including digital products) you need a shopping cart.
2.) **Generate leads** you need survey software.
3.) **Disseminate information** you need a website builder, and/or blog software.

The truth is that if you want your website to successfully compete for top rankings in the natural search results at the major search engines, then an information-rich website – one that is filled with great content, is a must. And you can accomplish this with a website builder and/or blog software.

Additionally, if you have a product or service to sell, your site will need a shopping cart and the capabilities to accept payment, as I have already pointed out.

With this in mind, it's easy to see how you may need more than a single website software solution; you may need to utilize two or even three types of website software.

Even so, there is no need to feel overwhelmed here, because I am going to keep this simple and help you choose exactly which solution is right for you, your business, and your visitor.

Action item #3 – Time to choose

If you're feeling a brain cramp, give your head a rub and take a deep breath.

You're doing great and you have already absorbed some very important information.

Good job!

Now, grab a coffee, tea or beverage of your choice and even a light snack if you want.

It's decision time.

But, no need to sweat it because, using a server-side solution, all of the features you need are easy to integrate (at the push of a few buttons in most cases) and you can turn them on or off as you get more comfortable with the technology and your own abilities. These include a:

- **Website builder:** This tool allows you to choose your site's look from professionally-designed templates and to build your website using point-and-click prompts and a built-in site editor.
- **Shopping cart:** This tool allows your site's visitors to make purchases on your site and allows your online business to accept electronic payment by credit card or e-check.
- **Blog:** This tool allows you to share information visitors to your site and creates an open forum through which you and your visitors can interact by posting conversations.

■ **Lead generation:** This tool allows you to generate leads by "capturing" contact information from your site's visitors. You can do this by offering a free product, additional information, a newsletter, etc.

These tools are all available to you through a server-side solution, which is what I recommend you choose. I really like the ease of use (point and click integration) and the fact that a server-side solution allows you to have access to your site and it's Control Panel from anywhere in the world.

Additionally, this is an affordable option and allows you to maintain control of your online presence.

So, what will it be?

Go ahead and make your decision before progressing to the next Action item, where you learn about outsourcing many aspects of your website building project.

Then, in Step #4 (just a step-and-a-half away), I provide you with detailed information about providers of the website publishing solution of your choice, along with information on resources you can use to help you create a website that is sure to rank at the top of search engine returns.

Action item #4 – Outsourcing Work

I mentioned "resources" at the conclusion of the previous Action item because you will need to outsource some of your website work, just as I do and just as Grace has learned to do.

This means that you will be hiring people along the way for two, three, or four different tasks. For instance:

1) You will need to hire a graphics designer if you want to personalize your website template (which we discuss in Step #6 – Upload Your Content). If you have images, graphics, logo work, or photos created to enhance your template, you will need to work with a professional in this area.

2) You will need to hire a writer that takes the time to talk to you and to get to know all about your business and your goals for your business. A professional writer will provide you with content for your many website pages (which we discuss in Step # 6 – Upload Your Content), articles for your website and for other websites that you exchange articles with, as well as regular press releases (which we discuss in Step # 8 – Site Promotion), a newsletter and more.

3) You may want to hire technical support to assist you if you stumble, hit a wall, or feel you encounter a technical challenge that is insurmountable.

I tell you this now so you will understand that there are a great deal of resources that you can rely on as you build, maintain and update your website.

And if you are accustomed to working with local professionals only, you are sure to be pleasantly surprised at the large international pool of talent you have to choose from and the low-cost, high-quality work you can expect.

For instance, I regularly work with freelance professionals at Elance (www.postnewproject.com), where you will find graphics designers and writers. I tell you all about Elance.com (and the following mentioned online service providers) in Step 4, so just sit tight.

I have also worked with the women at BlogMoxie (www.blogmoxie.com) to have my website template customized and polished to a perfection shine.

I also regularly work with the women at DotComCopy (www.dotcomcopy.net) to produce professional website content for my site pages, for articles, press releases, sales letters, etc.

And as far as technical assistance goes, I have really enjoyed working with the teams at RentaCoder (www.rentcoder.net) and GetaCoder (www.getcoder.net).

Additionally, you can do Google searches for these service providers.

For instance, if you want to find a graphics designer, simply type in "graphics designer" in the Google search box.

You should know that for years I hired professional writers and graphic artists locally and found these professionals by placing ads in the classified section of my hometown newspaper.

After learning how to find and work with online providers of these same services (which I am going to show you exactly how to do), I have to say that I was pleasantly surprised at how affordable the services are and the high quality results I consistently receive.

This is something I want you to be thinking about as we progress.

There are proven resources you can tap into and these resources are affordable and produce great work.

But, for now, complete the checklist for Step #2 before moving on to Step #3 – Keywords are Key to Site Success, where we learn about keywords, the very backbone of your website.

Action item #5 – Complete the checklist for Step #2

Congratulations, because you just made a huge leap and are well on your way to establishing a strong online presence. Make sure you completed all of the Action items in Step 2 before progressing, because an understanding of the terminology and technology sprinkled throughout this Step will become increasingly important as you progress.

Take a minute to pat yourself on the back for a job well done…

Now, use the checklist below to confirm you have completed everything in this important Step #2 now…

- Action item #1 – Grab your notebook and make a list
- Action item #2 – Determine what you want to accomplish
- Action item #3 – Time to choose
- Action item #4 – Outsourcing work
- Action item #5 – Complete the checklist for Step #2

Once you have…

… a thorough understanding of what a visitor to your website is looking for, what you want your website to accomplish, understand your website publishing options and decide which is the best solution for your site, and understand that you will be outsourcing some of your website work...

…then you are ready for the NEXT step.

Step #3 Keywords Are Key To Site Success!

Desired outcome

At the completion of THIS step…

…you will have developed a Keyword Chart for your website, visited, toured and learned to use Wordtracker, learned how to use Keyword Universe and have a thorough understanding of the keywords and how these can be used to catapult your website to the top of search engine results…

Before we begin this Step, I wanted to tell you that you just accomplished a great deal by completing Step # 2 and congratulate you. Now, we are going to keep the momentum going and get right down to creating your website!

In this step, you are going to learn more about the design of a professional website, the use of keywords, the overall look, feel and functionality of the site, graphics, navigation, selecting a website address, and the use of web-publishing software.

This may sound like quite a bit, but, as I tell my kids when they get started on homework projects such as large book reports and the like, "inch-by-inch, it's a cinch" and that's exactly how we're going to tackle this.

Let me start by pointing out that a website should be appealing to the eyes, each page should have a clear focus and goal, and be designed to serve your visitor.

After all, it would be a shame for a potential customer to arrive on your site only to be disappointed and click the ever-present and always looming Back button.

So, as we develop your website, we are going to do so with the search engines and your visitors in mind — keeping it simple (yet very effective).

And speaking of simple, you should know that the backbone of your website is its keywords.

Keywords are much like they sound, they are the "key" components that can literally move your website to the top of search engine returns.

Let's look at this now, for there is no better place to begin then keywords, especially when it comes to designing a site that packs the punch needed for long-lasting online success.

Know thy keywords

Socrates apparently recommended that his students cultivate self-knowledge as a way to enlightenment.

He said to them often, "Know thyself".

Good advice, I'd say.

And, my advice to anyone contemplating a commercial website is to "know thy keywords".

It is critically important that you determine, in advance, what words and phrases — keywords — are being searched on the Internet before doing any developmental work on your actual website.

This is because you will gain an AWESOME strategic advantage over your competitors by structuring your site around these keywords.

The truth is most sites are developed by designers who do not understand keywords, how keywords relate to site creation, and most important of all how the keywords relate to search engine results.

But I have a little insider's secret to share with you.

By using a low-cost service on the Internet, called Wordtracker, you can determine before you build your site the most popular keywords being searched for any given topic – including the topic or topics that will be covered on your website!

We'll be doing some things with Wordtracker in just a few minutes.

But, first – a search engine primer

It is said that MSN, Yahoo! and Google handle 92% of all search engine traffic.

Search engines are the most popular methods for surfers to locate information, and search is continuing to grow.

Most of my success has come from getting my sites ranked highly at the top of the natural search engines – especially Google.

You see when someone types in "wedding gowns, Santa Barbara" at Google, for instance, a lightening-fast search of its own database occurs, yielding a page of the top 10 results, also known as SERP, an acronym for Search Engine Results Page.

Along the top will be the total number of web pages (not sites) that contain the keyword "wedding gowns, Santa Barbara" somewhere within it, – in the title, description, text, or within a text link pointing to the page from another page on the Net (more on that later).

The goal of the search engine is to provide the visitor with a compilation of pages bearing some relevancy to the keyword phrase typed in by the surfer.

The first page (top 10 listings) offers the most popular sites, ranked in order of relevancy and popularity from top to bottom.

The following search engine return pages also contain lists of 10 pages, each with a decreasing relevancy according to each particular search engines' criteria.

And you don't want to be buried on page 200 (like poor Grace's site was) if getting traffic is important to you (and trust me, it is).
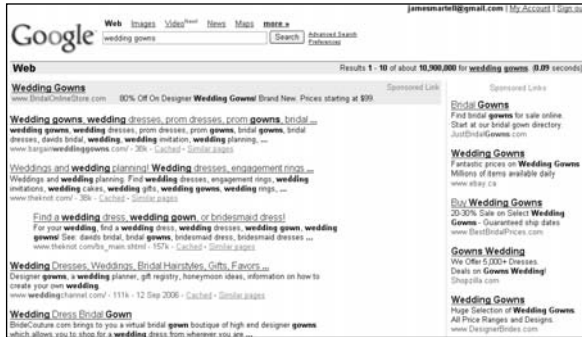
I am sure it's obvious to you that you'll get more traffic if you get your page ranked in the top one or two pages. You want your site ranked as high as possible for the most appropriate keywords for your industry.

Thankfully, most of your local competition will fail to get noticed at the search engines because no prior thought went into determining which keyword phrases were important as far as search engine rankings were concerned.

And because of their oversight, their pages get ranked poorly, much like Grace's, which results in very little traffic, meaning Grace's clients couldn't even find her on the Internet.

You, however, won't make that costly mistake.

Spiders feed on data

When I first started surfing the Net I was perplexed by how these search engines could so quickly scan the entire Internet and locate so many sites in seconds.

My confusion was cleared up when I learned about the role of spiders.

Spiders are software programs that scurry around the World Wide Web of interconnected computers – hence the name spiders – gathering up text, images, audio and video to retrieve, store, and then rank it in their massive database.

They "feed" on this data.

And, spiders return at regular intervals searching for fresh, new food.

So, any changes you've made between visits – such as the addition or modification of text, images, audio or video – can be retrieved, stored and indexed in their database.

Spiders love links

What makes the Web so effective is the ability to define links from one page to another, and to follow links at the click of a button. A single click can take you right across the world!

Spiders also love the *links* that interconnect web pages and scurry through them – making special note of who is <u>linking</u> to whom, and retrieving this information to again store in their database.

They gather up the linking information because the search engines also use this data to determine where they should rank each page in the search results.

We'll cover more on this later.

Spiders with a purpose

The mission of these spiders is simple.

They gather up all of the information on the Web – in its many forms: text, images, audio, video, and the linking data, and add it into the search engines' database.

They must determine what each page in their database is about.

Not unlike humans, they read to find out.

But, unlike humans – who can think – they substitute thinking with some quick math and **calculate** the main topic of each page.

Please feed the spiders

These little creatures devour the words of your entire page.

And, each page of your site has a score. Based on this score, your site is placed in the appropriate index.

You can score high or low, which is based, in part, on the strategic placement of keywords – on the page, and in the words linking to the page.

If it finds the words **wedding gowns** sprinkled throughout the page, instead of let's say, **garage doors**, then it concludes, "Aha, this page is about wedding gowns".

And if the spider finds other pages on the Internet linking to the page using the words **wedding gowns** to create the link, then it again concludes, "Aha, this page is about wedding gowns".

Then, it checks its database for ALL pages about **wedding gowns** and adjusts its search rankings accordingly.

Using a mathematical calculation called an algorithm, these spiders determine whether THIS page about 'wedding gowns' is more relevant than THAT page about wedding gowns.

And, it's not as simple as putting your keywords into every sentence.

You need to be careful. Use too many keywords and you're penalized with a low ranking.

In Step #4 – Develop your content, I'll offer some delightful recipes for spider food that are guaranteed to please the palate of even the most discriminating spider!

A common sense approach to keywords

Knowing that the spiders look for keywords to rank your pages, it becomes obvious that putting some time and effort into your site's keywords now will surely pay off later.

And, thankfully, there is a virtual arsenal of tools available on the Internet to help determine which keywords are being searched, and which are the most popular – all of which you can use to make this process simple and to get it right in the very beginning.

However, before delving into these tools it's important to understand that as the business owner, you know far more about the words that relate to your business than all of the tools combined.

Let's look back at Grace and what we know about her business.

Grace sells wedding gowns, and her shop is located in Santa Barbara, California. So right off, if someone goes to Google and searches for **wedding gowns**, **Santa Barbara**, it would be nice if she ranked in the top 10 results.

But, she did not.

And why none of the pages on her site ranked for those keywords is the question here.

The answer is quite simple.

Sure, Grace's site did have some content (written by little sister Sara, you may remember), that talked a bit about wedding gowns, but nowhere on the site could you find a single page that boasted both the keywords wedding gowns, and Santa Barbara on the same page.

Same for Santa Barbara bridal salons, or wedding gowns, Santa Barbara and so on.

The point is that it wouldn't take a special keyword tool to figure out the obvious words that people think of when they are looking to purchase a wedding gown in or around Santa Barbara.

Grace knows her business, and with a pen and a paper in hand, within just a few minutes she easily comes up with quite a list of keyword phrases she would love to use to see her site rank higher in the search engine returns, these include:

        wedding dress santa barbara
        wedding dresses santa barbara
        wedding gown santa barbara
        wedding gowns santa barbara
        bridal dress santa barbara
        bridal dresses santa barbara
        bridal gown santa barbara
        bridal gowns santa barbara
        bridal salon santa barbara
        bridal shop santa barbara

No rocket science there.

Grace is also aware that she sells a lot of formal gowns and would like to also rank high in the search engine returns for **formal wedding gowns santa barbara**, or **designer wedding dresses santa barbara**.

Note: Studies conducted on online shoppers who use the search engines to find what they are looking for have concluded that people who enter keyword phrases ranging between three and five words (i.e. **designer wedding dresses Santa Barbara**), are typically more predisposed to making a purchase, where someone who simply enters a short keyword (i.e. **wedding dresses**) is more likely just window shopping.

Additionally, it is usually much easier to rank for the longer keywords, which is exactly where search as it relates to the engines is headed with the introduction of Google's local search (http://local.google.com/), Yahoo's local search (http://local.yahoo.com/) and MSN's local search (http://local.msn.com/).

Local and regional search is where it is at, and where the emphasis will increasingly be heading, which is great news for you and your business!

And knowing this can give you a great head start over your competitors.

Note: Another interesting tidbit of information on all of this: The search engines look at lower case letters, such as wedding dress santa barbara the same as upper case letters, such as wedding dress Santa Barbara.

As you progress through this training, you will undoubtedly notice that I use the words "keyword" and "keyword phrase" interchangeably. In other words, I am saying the same thing any time I mention either of the words. ☺

And about Grace's earlier concern, as to why her site isn't ranking for any of those keywords, there is a very simple explanation.

Sure, her site did talk about wedding gowns, but nowhere on the site could you find a single page that has both the keywords wedding gowns, and Santa Barbara on the same page.

Yes, I pointed this out before, but there's more.

In addition, and more importantly, no other pages on the Internet were linked to Grace's site using the keywords wedding gowns, Santa Barbara.

In conclusion, if Grace's website had a nicely-organized page that contained the keywords "wedding gowns in Santa Barbara", and had a few other websites linking to her page using those exact keywords, there's a great chance that Grace would be on page one of the search engine results.

It's time for you to follow Grace's lead and come up with a list of your own keywords – keywords that will ensure your website ranks high on search engine returns.

Now, before you move forward to Action item #1 and develop your list of keywords, grab a coffee, a tea, or whatever your beverage of choice may be. And, go ahead and grab that spiral notebook you purchased back in Step 1, too.

Keep in mind that we are also going to check out the online "keyword tools" I told you about earlier, but for now, let's put pen to paper, just like we saw Grace do, and come up with a keyword list for your website.

Are you ready for some Action items?

Action item #1 – Develop a list of keywords

The goal here is for you to identify a *primary keyword* for your home page. These are typically one, two or three words, and are generally the primary product or service that is for sale on your website.

In Grace's case, the primary keyword for the home page is simple enough. It is **wedding gowns**.

In your case, it might be mountain bikes, kayaks, gardening supplies, office furniture, selling real estate insurance, or whatever your main product or service is.

Take a minute now to consider this: What are you selling? What primary words will your clients use to find your business and your products or services on the Net?

With this in mind, create your own Keyword Chart now. You can use the Keyword Chart I have provided for you at http://www.jamesmartell.com/checklists.html, open up a spreadsheet in Microsoft? Excel, or make a list in the spiral binder or notebook you purchased in Step #1 to put together your own Keyword chart now.

Now, first add the primary keyword for your business to your Keyword Chart. For instance, if you determine that your primary product is real estate, then you will write:

> real estate

If you own a cedar shake roofing company you might write:

> cedar shake roofing

If you own a pet food store you might write:

> pet food

Simple? Yes. Effective? You bet!

If you feel that you have more than one keyword, not to worry. For now, just pick the most obvious one. There will be time later to deal with the other words.

Keyword Chart

Before				After	Geographic
	cedar	**shake**	**roofing**		

Next, identify variations of the primary keyword for your home page by using a thesaurus (http://thesaurus.reference.com/) and some common sense to come up with other ways to say the same thing.

For instance, Grace found that the root word "dress" may be interchangeable with "dresses," "gown," or "gowns."

Just like 'cedar' could also be "wood," or "wooden," and 'roof' might be synonymous with "roofing," "shakes" or "shingles."

I would add them to the keyword chart.

You should do the same.

Keyword Chart

Before				After	Geographic
	cedar	**shake**	**roofing**		
	wood	shakes	roof		
	wooden	shingle			
		shingles			

Once you have written your own primary keyword in your binder, it's time to consider the geographical location of your market.

Or, let's determine exactly where your customers are located.

To help you do this, let's take another look at Grace.

On one hand, Grace has determined that brides-to-be think nothing of driving 20 to 30 miles to find just the right dress.

On the other hand, Grace's friend Carol, who owns the neighboring fitness center, tells Grace that her gym members, at least for the most part, live within a 5-mile radius.

But when Grace asks fellow storeowner Mike about the geographic location of his mountain bike store's clientele, she learns that while Mike is very much interested in targeting his local market, he also ships specialty mountain bikes and gear all over the continent.

I tell you this because your first step should be in targeting your local market and your second step should be to target a larger market, expanding to regional even national markets, if you so desire.

It's a natural progression, right?

So, take a minute now to consider the towns and cities in your physical area.

For instance, I live in White Rock, British Columbia (Canada) and my list looks something like this:

> White Rock
> Surrey
> Langley
> Delta

I would add them to the keyword chart.

Again, you should do the same.

Keyword Chart

Before				After	Geographic
	cedar	**shake**	**roofing**		Surrey
	wood	shakes	roof		Langley
	wooden	shingle			White Rock
		shingles			Delta

If you're not sure of the local towns in your region, simply check Google Maps (http://maps.google.com/). You will find more than enough information here to complete your own list in no time at all.

Last, but not least, I use a couple of keyword suggestion tools and identify popular words that may show up before or after the primary keyword (which, as you remember, is "cedar shake roofing") or its variations (such as "cedar wood roof").

For example, if I enter the keyword phrase "cedar roof" into the Google Sandbox (https://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal), or the Nichebot keyword tool (http://www.nichebot.com/), I quickly notice a number of words that show up before and after the root word such as treated, company, or companies, etc.

Now if I was to make a new, more expansive list, it might look like this:

> how to install
> red
> repair
> prices

cost

ratings

companies

company

I would add them to the keyword chart.

As do you.

Keyword Chart

Before				After	Geographic
red	**cedar**	**shake**	**roofing**		Surrey
how to install	wood	shakes	roof		Langley
treated	wooden	shingle			White Rock
		shingles		companies	Delta
				company	British Columbia

No need to feel uneasy here because you really can't get this wrong! Plus, there is room to make changes and additions to the list of words at anytime - and we'll go into more detail in Step #5 – Develop Your Content, when we work to develop the content for your website.

However, you should think this through and really take your time here.

Rest assured you really are creating your website's backbone here and that we will use this Keyword Chart over and over again as we progress through the following Steps and especially in Step #8 – Site Promotion, where you will see exactly how this Keyword Chart can be used to catapult your website to the top of the search results.

You should also know that it is possible to have your site's home page or any other page on their site rank in the top 10 search results, for many, many keywords - all at the same time.

Pretty neat, isn't it?

Now, let's put this all into perspective.

Imagine you own a cedar shake roofing company and your site's home page ranks in the top 10 search results at the major search engines in your geographical area for most or all of these keywords (which were developed using the Keyword Chart):

> cedar roof
> cedar roofing
> cedar shakes
> cedar shingles
> cedar shake roof
> cedar shake roofing
> cedar shingle roof
> cedar shingle roofing
> cedar roof shingles
> cedar roofing shingles
> cedar shingle roofing
> cedar roofing shake
> cedar roofing shakes
> wood roof
> wood roofing
> wood shakes
> wood shingle
> wood shingles
> wood shake roof
> wood shake roofing
> wooden roof
> wooden roofing
> wooden shake
> wooden shakes
> wooden shingle
> wooden shingles
> wooden shingle roof
> wooden shingle roofing
> wooden shake roof
> wooden shake roofing

Great work! And you already have knowledge that your competitors do not. This knowledge will only increase if you carefully follow the steps outlined in this manual.

In fact, the same steps you just followed to create first Keyword Chart will be used again in Step 8 – Site Promotion to make sure your site boasts a page on the top 10 results for almost any group of keywords.

And you can continue to use these steps and your Keyword Chart know-how for any other page you add to your website, as you work to leap-from over your competitors in search engine returns.

Apply this new knowledge with an understanding of word proximity, which is the next logical piece of the puzzle here, and you will be able to garnish a top spot for your website soon.

Better yet, you will be able to keep your website in front of all those people who are searching for what you have to offer and that's as good as money in the bank.

So, let's get going.

Understanding word proximity

In days gone by, it was very common for me to develop a list of keyword phrases that I would like to rank for at the search engines that went into the hundreds.

And I would create a page of content for each one of them.

This was because the search engines were not that sophisticated and that was the quickest and easiest way to obtain good rankings for each individual keywords phrase. As a result, it was very common for me to have websites that ranged from 200-300 pages.

Now, thanks to major advancements at the search engines, paired with their introduction of word proximity to the algorithm, it is no longer necessary to create so many pages to gain the desired natural rankings.

Today, instead of creating a page of content to rank for one or two keywords, it is actually easier to get that same page to rank for dozens of similar keyword phrases like you developed in your keyword chart.

You see, the search engines, tapping into their word variation algorithm, understand that the word **dress** and its variation **gown**, is essentially the same word said a different way.

And word proximity allows the engines to calculate the proximity of words as they relate to each other. For instance, **wedding gowns Santa Barbara** is essentially the same as **Santa Barbara wedding gowns**.

This also goes for keyword phrases that may contain other words that separate the keyword phrase. For example, Google understands that someone who enters **wedding gowns Santa Barbara** into the search results if they have a page that has the text; **shop for beautiful wedding gowns in beautiful Santa Barbara**, they probably have a match because of the proximity of the words.

Now that you understand this and have completed your own keyword chart, it is time to create a title for your site and to start having some fun!

Action item #2 – Visit Wordtracker

Go to www.wordtracker.com and click "Learn more".

Action item #3 – Read more about Wordtracker below

We compile a database of terms that people search for. You enter some keywords, and we tell you how often people search for them, and also tell you how many competing sites use those keywords.

Wordtracker helps you find all keyword combinations that bear any relation to your business or service – many of which you might never have considered.

You'll find out how popular these keywords really are.

Then for each major search engine, we'll show you the chances of making the top 10.

Action item #4 – Take the Wordtracker tour

Take a few minutes now to catch your breath, to relax, and to get ready to learn some really interesting (and profitable) information!

It's time to take the 6-step Wordtracker tour.

Read every word.

The Wordtracker Tour steps include:

> **Step 1** - What can Wordtracker do for my website?
> **Step 2** - Use Wordtracker to brainstorm
> **Step 3** - Discover what people are actually searching for
> **Step 4** - Cherry pick keywords
> **Step 5** - Manage your keywords
> **Step 6** - Take the free trial

Go to www.wordtracker.com and take the tour.

Action item #5 – Sign-up for a 1-day subscription

Your goal is to build a "keyword list" for your site.

It is vitally important that you don't meander on this site – or any of the others that you work on throughout this tutorial – because of the risk of acquiring conflicting information and thereby losing focus.

So, with your new site in mind, click on Wordtracker's 'Buy now' link.

It will be the best six bucks you'll ever spend.

In order to complete your keyword lists you will need a 1-day subscription for only $6.12 US (this is a U.K. company converting pounds into dollars, hence the unusual price).

Simply choose the 1-day option.

Action item #6 – Click-thru to Keyword Universe

As mentioned earlier, all the rest is irrelevant at this point for our immediate purposes.

However, once your site is built, you may want to familiarize yourself with Wordtracker's other services or subscribe for a longer period of time to take advantage of other services and benefits.

Action item #7 – Follow their 4-step process

In Wordtracker's Step-1 below, you simply enter a keyword phrase for the topic you would like to research.

This will provide hundreds of possible phrases – although many of them will have <u>no bearing on your business.</u>

Not to worry, though.

From this long list in the LEFT window you will select the words and phrases that DO make sense, – by clicking on the chosen word or phrase.

This action will automatically generate ANOTHER list in the RIGHT window (as shown in the screenshot that follows).

Those words that appear in the RIGHT window are <u>more</u> specific and become the basis of your eventual keyword list.

Now, let's take a step back for just a minute to make sure you *really* get this.

Before proceeding further with your search, go ahead and select 'Compressed' database that is shown in the bottom left hand column of the image above.

In the "wedding gowns" example that follows, you will see the process more clearly.

Here's the procedure:

- ■ In the left window click any words or phrases one at a time that make sense for your topic, as I have done above for the phrase 'wedding gowns'.
- ■ This opens a window on the right.
- ■ In the right window you will see the precise phrases – as well as their exact count – compiled from a search, by Wordtracker, of many of the largest search engines in the prior month. These are the keywords that make the difference to your rankings when strategically placed throughout your site – even if they are misspelled.
    - a. Note the Keyword
    - b. Note the Count and Predicted counts
- ■ Whenever you click on any phrase in this <u>right</u> window, THAT word gets added to your shopping cart, while a counter tallies them up.

```
🛒 Keywords for Wordtracker : 0
◀ Delete last term  ◀ Clear all
```
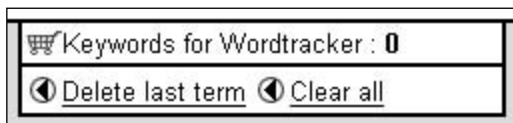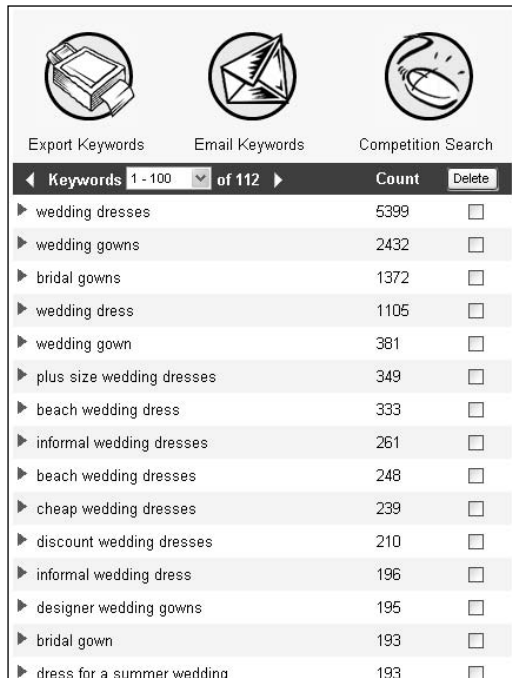
Simply review this list – selecting words and phrases as you go, that, at first glance, seem relevant to the theme of your potential website.

Each selection will be added to your shopping cart and increase your total count accordingly.

There is no cost per word, so take as many as you want. You can review and delete irrelevant choices later.

But, for now, – just build your list, – which becomes the raw material from which you will ultimately organize your content. Keep going back and forth between left and right windows – selecting one word or phrase at a time from the left window, – then choosing from the right column, which adds them to your cart in preparation for Step-3 (below) of the Wordtracker process.

In Wordtracker', Step-3 above, your chosen keyword list has now been organized numerically from top to bottom according to each keywords' popularity at the search engines.

Note the count of 5399 for the keyword: wedding dresses.

This means that this particular word has appeared 5399 times in the Wordtracker database over a 100-day period.

The keyword 'wedding gown' (not plural, as it was in the first keyword) just below it, appeared 2432 times.

This is GREAT information.

How many words?

You're looking for a list of between 50-300 or so keywords.

Each keyword offers you the opportunity to optimize a page on your site primarily about THAT particular keyword.

Note: You can use the Page Optimization Chart I provide you at http://www.james-martell.com/checklists.html to help you with this. I suggest you print this worksheet out now.

So if you build a list of 50 keywords, – and use each one as a primary keyword for a single page on your site, – then you will have a 50 page website.

If you use 300 words, then you will have a 300 page website.

I will go into more detail on how to use these keywords to your best advantage in Step #4 – Develop your Content.

For now, just become familiar with the Wordtracker service, by building a list of keywords for your website.

When you're done, simply email them to yourself from Wordtracker.

Then print the list for your reference.

Important Note: Before starting your second list in Wordtracker, hit "clear all" button to start a fresh list. If you don't clear the previous list, the new list will combine with your previous list creating one big mess.

Choose keywords with at least 10 searches

Many words will <u>not</u> rate as a keyword because they were not popular enough at the search engines.

For me, the threshold is 10.

I need to see at least 10 searches for any particular keyword before investing the time to optimize a page of content about it.

But, do not neglect counts <u>above</u> that threshold.

Many webmasters ignore words with counts of a hundred or so, thinking they are not worth the effort.

I have a different view.

For me, it makes perfectly good sense to get a high ranking for a relatively obscure keyword, – that my competition may be ignoring, – because although the visitors will be few in number, they are HIGHLY targeted, which means they are more likely to click-thru to a merchant.

Be specific

Think of your site as a specialty boutique, – not a mall or a department store, – so try to be as specific as possible in your choices of keywords.

Internet surfers do not look for malls.

They look for information, – *specific* information.

You want these surfers to land on pages within *your* site, – so that, hopefully, they will click through to your products and services…

…*related* to their search.

The more *specific* you get, the more *useful* you become to the visitor, – plus, you will have less competition from other websites because many try to be all-things-to-all-people, – like a typical mall.

Run that by me one more time

This really IS a simple process, once you get the hang of it.

Let's review Wordtracker's process:

       a. In Step-1, enter a search word that best describes your chosen industry, such as "wedding gowns".

       b. Peruse the list that appears in the <u>left</u> window and select those, which seem appropriate.

          1) This opens a window on the <u>right</u> with the exact count and precise phrases surfed at the search engines in the prior month.

          2) Choose the best ones by clicking on them once. You will see the numerical total in shopping cart counter increase after each click.

Before adding to your shopping cart, ask yourself: "Would my site make sense to someone surfing THIS phrase?" And, "Does it meet my count total criteria?"

       a. Then go back to the left column and select <u>another</u> word. Keep doing this – going back and forth – until you've built up a list.

       b. Proceed to Step-3 and give your list a final review, before deleting any keywords that might not seem appropriate upon further consideration.

       c. Email the complete keyword list to yourself and print it out.

Action item #8 – Complete the checklist for Step #3

Congratulations, because you just made a huge leap and are well on your way to establishing a strong online presence. Make sure you completed all of the Action items in Step 3 before progressing, because an understanding of the terminology and technology sprinkled throughout this Step will become increasingly important as you progress.

Take a minute to pat yourself on the back for a job well done…

Now, use the checklist below to confirm you have completed everything in this important Step #3 now…

- ■ Action item #1 – Develop a list of keywords
- ■ Action item #2 – Visit Wordtracker
- ■ Action item #3 – Read more about Wordtracker below
- ■ Action item #4 – Take the Wordtracker tour
- ■ Action item #5 – Sign-up for a 1-day subscription
- ■ Action item #6 – Click-thru to Keyword Universe
- ■ Action item #7 – Follow their 4-step process
- ■ Action item #8 – Complete the checklist for Step #3

Once you have…

… developed a keyword chart for your site, visited, toured and learned to use Wordtracker, learned how to use Keyword Universe and have a thorough understanding of the keywords and how these can be used to catapult your website to the top of search engine results

…then you are ready for the NEXT step.

Step #4
Set up Your Website

Desired outcome

At the completion of THIS step…

…you will have chosen your primary and secondary domain names, registered your new domain names, signed-up for your site's hosting, forwarded your secondary domain names to your new primary website address, and added an eShop and a blog to your website.

In January 2005, I was dealing with a hosting company I really liked. I loved their control panel and the tools they provided me with were easy to use. The hosting company also boasted reasonably good customer service.

Unfortunately, they went out of business without warning, leaving me to scramble about madly looking for a new hosting company.

I had to frantically move my 30+ sites and dedicate three weeks of my time and my staff's time to managing this unexpected crisis before everything was back to normal.

I also had to start over with email accounts (email is typically integrated into the hosting, so when the sites went down, so did our email... and as a result this reflected badly on us).

Needless to say I suffered from a substantial loss of Internet revenue for those three weeks, not to mention we didn't complete any of the projects we should have been working on because we were all in crisis management overdrive.

I tell you this to show you how I learned the hard way (and the expensive way) about the importance of dealing with large, financially secure hosting companies, for if the hosting company goes out of business, you lose your Internet presence instantly and it takes a great deal of time, patience, and valuable resources to re-upload websites, shopping carts, and the like.

I also learned that just because the hosting company has a nice control panel does not mean that it is stable or financially secure.

In fact, as it turned out, the hosting company I was dealing with (yes, the one that shut down with no warning) had only a few small servers, one technician, and one customer service representative.

Learn by my mistakes

Not long after this costly, frustrating experience, I attended an Internet marketing conference in Santa Barbara, CA. While there, I had the good fortune to meet Joshua Sloan and Alexander Raquet, both representatives from 1&1, the world's largest web hosting company.

Feeling freshly burned, I was eager to hear what these guys had to say.

Over the next few months I kept in touch with the 1&1 representatives and through our communications, I began to learn more about the company and the services it offered.

And the more I learned, the more impressed I was and the clearer it became to me that these services could help me, Grace, and small- to medium-sized business owners like you!

So, within 6-8 months of that initial meeting, I flew to Germany to tour 1&1's data center for its German customers (the US boasts a separate although equally impressive data center for its US customers) and then to headed on to Valencia, Spain to watch the company's yacht compete in the America's Cup Yacht Race.

It was during the tour of 1&1's data center that I *really* learned the difference between a small company (such as the one I previously dealt with) and 1&1, which has 30,000 servers in its data center (and the company I worked with before, the one that went under, had just two).

What I learned is that 1&1 is the world's biggest web host, and the fastest growing. It boasts a community of more than 5.08 million people (as of this writing). Additionally, 1&1 offers a complete range of web services for every need, every skill level, and every budget – which I really like!

Something else that is important to me: technical support is available to all 1&1 clients by telephone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

And, as I have pointed out before, I personally believe that telephone support (not just email support) is critical to handling your site efficiently.

Another important fact that I learned during my tour: 1&1 offers 99.9% uptime and is large enough to offer a fully integrated solution, which means that 1&1 is capable of managing your domain names, your hosting, your email, your shopping cart, your forum, your photo album, your newsletter, search engine submission for your site and even changes you make to your site – using a simple, yet effective point and click Website Builder.

World class services

1&1 brings together these services, the many services every website owner needs, and offers them via an easy-to-understand, easy-to-use Control Panel.

What this means for you is that you can choose and register your website's domain name through 1&1, you can set-up and build your website through 1&1, you can have

your website hosted through 1&1, and you can even set-up your email account with 1&1, as well as your online store, which 1&1 calls eShops.

Once set-up, your website can be managed through 1&1, which offers a truly integrated service, including the many tools we talked about in Step #2 – Arranging Your Thoughts and more, such as:

WebsiteBuilder: This tool allows you to choose your template and build your website using point-and-click prompts and a built-in editor. I strongly suggest you take 1&1's quick, engaging WebsiteBuilder Flash tour. This only takes a few minutes and really covers all the basics that you will need to help you as you progress through this Step.

Blog: This tool allows you to add a blog to your website, where you can publish your thoughts and ideas with a quick click of your mouse.

Photo Gallery: This tool allows you to put your digital photos in an album on your website and to manage and display your photographs with a click.

SimpleSubmission: This tool improves your website's ranking in search engine rankings with website submission and analysis tools.

Aggregators: This tool, called EasyRSS, allows you to add an RSS feed to your website, which allows visitors to get a sneak preview of the new content you add to your site.

Graphic Archive: This tool includes a virtual library of photos, graphics and animated images that you can use on your website.

WebStatistics: This tool provides you with in-depth analysis of data collected from your website presented through clear tables and informative tables.

WebDatabase: This tool allows you to create, maintain and integrate your own professional databases.

FormBuilder: This tool allows you to quickly and almost effortlessly create customer feedback forms and surveys (which we discuss in more detail in Step # 4 – Set-up Your Website.

And a lot more, such as **DynamicSite Creator** which allows you to create high-quality Flash websites; **Newsletter Tool** which allows you to provide visitors to your web-

site with current news and to foster contact with them and numerous other tools – all from a single Control Panel.

Now, if you've ever managed numerous control panels, you will really appreciate having everything in one spot, and dealing with one technical support department and having a single bill that covers it all.

For Grace, who is new at all of this, having every tool she needs so readily and easily accessible has made a huge difference.

Ask her and she'll tell you that there's no way she could have built her site, maintained it, added new gowns, changed prices to reflect sales, created and sent out a client newsletter, added her keyword-rich articles each month and kept up with her email if not for 1&1's robust, easy-to-use Control Panel that keeps everything organized neatly for her.

In addition to this arsenal of services, 1&1 provides customers instant access to 24/7 customer support.

And, you guessed it. Grace has made the most of this service, as well.

World class services

1&1 brings together these services, the services every website owner needs, and offers them via an easy-to-understand, easy-to-use Control Panel.

What this means for you is that you can choose and register your website's domain name through 1&1, you can set-up and build your website through 1&1, you can have your website hosted through 1&1, and you can even set-up your email account with 1&1, as well as your online store, which 1&1 calls eShops.

Once set-up, your website can be managed through 1&1, which offers a truly integrated service, including the many tools we talked on in Step #2 and more, such as:

- Website Builder – This powerful tool allows you to choose your template and build your website using point-and-click prompts and a built-in editor

- Blog – This tool allows you to add a Blog to your website, where you can publish your thoughts and ideas with a quick click of your mouse
- Dynamic Content Catalog – This tool allows you to add real time news and fresh web-content from a wide range of topics to your website automatically
- Photo Gallery – This tool allows you to put your digital photos in an album on your website and to manage and display your photographs with a click
- Simple Site Submission – This tool improves your website's ranking in search engine rankings with website submission and analysis tools
- EasyRSS – This tool allows you to add an RSS feed to your website, which allows visitors to get a sneak preview of the new content you add to your site
- Graphic Archive – This tool includes a virtual library of photos, graphics and animated images that you can use on your website
- Web Statistics – This tool provides you with in-depth analysis of data collected from your website presented through clear tables and informative tables
- Web Database – This tool allows you to create, maintain and integrate your own professional databases
- Form Builder – This tool allows you to create customized forms, such as tell-a-friend or feedback forms, and integrate them simply and conveniently into your website

And a lot more, such as **Dynamic Site Creator** which allows you to create high-quality Flash websites; **Newsletter Tool** which allows you to provide visitors to your website with current news and to foster contact with them and numerous other tools – all from a single Control Panel.

Now, if you've ever managed numerous control panels, you will really appreciate having everything in one spot, and dealing with one technical support department and having a single invoice that covers it all.

For Grace, who is new at all of this, having every tool she needs so readily and easily accessible has made a huge difference.

Ask her and she'll tell you that there's no way she could have built her site, maintained it, added new gowns, changed prices to reflect sales, created and sent out a client newsletter, added her feature articles each month and kept up with her email if not for 1&1's robust, easy-to-use Control Panel that keeps everything organized neatly for her.

In addition to this arsenal of services, 1&1 provides customers instant access to 24/7 customer support.

And, you guessed it. Grace has made the most of this service, as well.

World class support

As you will see on the 1&1 website, there are as many ways to receive customer support as there are tools to use to build and maintain your website.

While I prefer to login to my Control Panel and do a Search in 1&1's comprehensive FAQ section for the information I need, Grace prefers to use the Setup Guides and Reference Manuals.

The truth is that by combining these two support services with telephone access to the 1&1 Technical Support team, you have instant access to great support.

Just ask Grace. ☺

1&1's Technical Support team is available 24-hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week and can be reached by phone and email.

Grace, who readily admits that she has limited technical skills, is pleased to report that she finds 1&1 so easy to use that she has only called the Technical Support team once. And when she called at 2 am her time, she was pleasantly surprised to be greeted by a real person, one who was genuinely interested in answering her question, and not a recording or an automated menu.

Grace has also sent two emails to 1&1's Technical Support team and reports that both were answered in no time at all and provided her with all the information she requested.

Like Grace, you can also simply log in to your 1&1 Control Panel, select your contract and click "Help & Contact" to locate 1&1's support team Contact Form, as well as the phone number for 1&1's toll-free support line.

While Grace has not called this support line, she rests easier knowing that the 1&1 team has been very responsive to her needs and her questions.

She also printed out the 1&1 Easy Set-up Guides and Manuals (which you do later in this Step too) so she has all the important information she needs to maintain and update her website always within arm's reach.

My personal favorite means of accessing 1&1's support system is through its comprehensive FAQ section, which is organized by topic and boasts clear, concise information, screenshots and tutorials. This is a great way to get information quickly and can be counted on to help you fine tune your website; enhance your email features, and more.

Now that you know about 1&1's unparalleled services and support, it's time to start thinking about your Internet address. For your Internet address (your domain name) will have many purposes, which we are about to get into.

Your Internet address is a marketing tool

A properly selected Internet address is perhaps your very best marketing tool. It will serve as your business card for your new online address.

Considering this, your website address needs to be simple. You will use it in newspaper, phone book, trade journal, television, and radio – basically in every advertising medium you choose.

So, if it is not easy to read and understand and if people do not quickly relate it to your business, you're really shooting yourself in the foot (not to mention your business).

Think of it as another business card – a business card that contains just a few short words.

You do not want it to be too long.

Your website address needs to be easy to pronounce. For instance, my website address, www.jamesmartell.com, seems perfect, right? Wrong! It seems every time I tell someone my site's address, I have to also point out that it has 2 "L's". And if I am on the radio or being recorded "live" on the Internet, I have to point this out.

If I had known better early on, I would have also registered www.jamesmartel.com (with one "L") and forwarded it to my primary address the problem would have been solved.

Then I could simply say go to "James Martell" .com and it wouldn't matter if they entered either version of the address because they would still end up on my site.

Of course you want something that people will remember, but I caution you about being too cute here. When in doubt, keep it simple and choose an address that will be easy to understand when you say it and when people read it on your business cards, your letterhead, your Yellow Pages ad, etc.

I want you to now determine your primary website address.

To help you do this, I have provided some pretty nifty information, which follows, as well as some great examples of what to do and what not to do.

Note: The URLs provided here are for examples only. ☺

Action item # 1 – Make a list

Go grab your notebook or binder; it is time to make a list.

Domain names

As you have probably noticed, domain names end in a two- or three-letter suffix proceeded by a dot (.).

For instance, in Grace's case: GracesWeddingGowns.com, the domain name ends in .com (dot com).

Following are some of the most popular extensions (most countries, as you see below, have their own extensions now):

.com	commercial Internet sites
.net	networks and associations
.org	Organizations
.gov	Governments
.edu	universities and educational institutes
.biz	Businesses
.pro	Professionals
.aero	aerospace companies
.museum	Museums
.name	People
.ca	Canada
.us	United States
.uk	United Kingdom

If you don't already have a website name (domain name) registered, go ahead and think about the name of your new online address now and start scribbling notes on your list.

Top-level domains

Keep in mind that while a .com address is certainly the <u>most desirable</u> for your primary website address; however, you may also want to register the same domain name with other top-level domains (.net, .org, .us, .ca, etc.).

This keeps your competition from taking these sites and "pointing" them to their own primary website addresses, effectively driving your traffic to their site.

Once you own the other versions of the domain name that you choose, you can simply forward them to your primary Internet address.

Grace has come up with a few examples for the name of her primary website, as well as names for secondary sites that she will forward to her primary Internet address.

www.GracesWeddingGowns.net

www.GracesWeddingGowns.org

Both you and Grace will want to grab the *dashed* version of your chosen primary Internet address, as well:

www.Graces-Wedding-Gowns.com

And the country version of the name might be a good idea, too:

www.GracesWeddingGowns.us

Common misspellings

You may even consider registering any common misspellings, as I have done and I'll tell you why I did this.

Early on, for my personal site, I registered both the dashed version of my name www.james-martell.com, and the non-dashed version www.jamesmartell.com.

I did this because I didn't want my competitors to grab it.

And it worked, almost.

Before I knew it, I was seeing traffic from the version of my name with one "l", which was great, but they were also linking to one of my competitors.

Not so great.

So, from that point forward, anytime I register a domain name for a site I want to develop, I register numerous versions of the domain name before a competitor does.

Keyword-rich domain names

I would also consider registering the most obvious keyword and geographic versions of the name as well, like this:

www.santabarbaraweddinggowns.net

www.santabarbaraweddinggowns.org

And, once again, you will want to consider registering these domain names with dashes, like this:

www.wedding-gowns-santa-barbara.com

www.santa-barbara-wedding-gowns.com

Personally, I always check availability for .com first and if available, I check the availability of the same .com name with dashes.

I want also register the .net version and the .org version both with dashes and without.

While this may seem a bit extreme, rest assured it's not. Besides, considering the fact that domain names once cost $35-$70 a year to register can now be registered (at the time of this writing) for $5.99 a year, it becomes a great investment – you're assuring your competitors don't "lure" your clients to their sites.

Additionally, if you don't register them and your competitor does, you're out of luck. You won't be able to get these domain names unless you are willing to pay whatever price they demand. Now, that can be a real financial stinger, one that could have been avoided by a few bucks upfront.

Case in point, a number of years ago I noticed that the .com versions of the domain names for my wife and kids were still available, so I grabbed them up. My thinking is that there is only one .com version of their name and once the domain name is owned by someone else, it's gone.

And it will allow me to give them a pretty cool gift somewhere down the road when the opportunity arises. ☺

www.arlenemartell.com

www.adammartell.com

www.justinmartell.com

www.shelbymartell.com

www.victoriamartell.com

Now, back to your list.

In a moment you are about to doodle (and brainstorm) a bit more.

You do not want to awkwardly spell out the address for each and every customer; however, your site name should have a catchy ring, be easily tied to your business and be even easier to understand.

Note: Companies are very protective of their trade name (i.e. Capital One® Visa®) and restrict the use of them in a domain name. I learned this the hard way a few years ago when I received a cease and desist letter for a domain name I had registered (www.capital-one-visa.net), and had to take the site down, resulting in a loss of revenue.

For legal reasons, avoid choosing these domain names:

- Names and abbreviations of third-party trademarks or word combinations that are designed to cause confusion with established brands
- Names and abbreviations of other companies or first and last names of other persons, including those used by prominent personalities for fan websites
- Stand-alone names of cities or vehicle licence numbers, film titles, media or protected products
- Names that could be mistaken for an official authority or information or fan Internet sites for which no expressed authorization has been granted
- Domains that rely on common misspellings of information entered by Internet visitors at third-party websites, thereby purposely redirecting these users

So, what's it gonna be?

Hopefully, the preceding explanation has convinced you to go with a primary Internet address for your main site – and to register and forward variations of that domain

name to gain keyword advantages at the search engines and lock out your competition.

If so, then all you need to do is work down your list of keywords and jot down some likely choices.

It-really-is-as-simple-as-that.com

Just kidding. :)

On a more serious note, let's take a quick look back at what we just covered, so that you can write down the domain names you think will work best for your website and get ready to register the names, which we do in the next Action item.

Domain Name Registration: Six Steps to Success

1) Register a <u>primary</u> Internet address for your business that is easy to pronounce (i.e. <u>www.jamesmartell.com</u>), usually the name of your business

2) Register common misspellings of the name and <u>forward</u> each one to your primary Internet address (i.e. <u>www.jamesmartel.com</u>)

3) Register dashed (-) versions of the names and <u>forward</u> each one to your primary Internet address (i.e. <u>www.james-martell.com</u> and <u>www.james-martel.com</u>)

4) Register obvious keyword-rich domains and <u>forward</u> each one to your primary Internet address both with (<u>www.Santa-Barbara-Wedding-Gowns.com</u>) and without dashes (<u>www.SantaBarbaraWeddingGowns.com</u>)

5) Register other top level domains (i.e. .net, .org, .biz, .us) of your name <u>forward</u> each one to your primary Internet address

6) Register other top level extensions (i.e. .net, .org, .biz, .us) of your keyword-rich domains and <u>forward</u> each one to your primary Internet address

You will be able to register your domain names and order hosting for your website in the same process as you work through the next two Action item.

You will have a great time with this as it can be really fun and exciting to see what domain names are available and because you can order all of the domain names and the hosting for your primary Internet address all at once, it's as quick and easy as it is fun.

An Important Note About Existing Domains: If you have an existing domain name registered with another company, you can easily transfer it to 1&1 now by following the steps outlined in the 1&1 'FAQ' section or by following the on-page Help, which is located in the Administration Control Panel. You can access this Administration Control Panel after you register your additional domains with 1&1.

Action item # 2 – Register your domain names

And now more fun begins.

It's time to check the availability of your domain names.

Hopefully you've been scribbling ideas as you worked through this Step and up to this Action item, for it's time to see if the names you have chosen for your site are available.

Remember: You will want <u>one</u> primary Internet address, which should have your business name or your keywords and/or geographic location in it.

Grab the list of domain names and notes you have made and go to www.1and1.com.

Once on the 1&1 home page, click on 'Domains'.

And enter the domain name you have chosen in the Domain Check field. You can use the pull-down box to select your three-letter extension (.com, .net, org, etc.)

Next, click on the red arrow and check for availability of the domain name and extension you have chosen.

You will be taken to a page that lists availability for this domain name and numerous extensions.

Hopefully, your first choice (which I assume is .com) is there.

If not, remember to first try adding in dashes.

Still no luck?

Try adding in your city name, for as I explained about geographical words before, these can be real helpers (not to mention they are from your Keyword Chart).

If this does not work, your next choice should be .net or org.

Once you have confirmed availability, click **Continue**.

Add repeat the process by clicking on the **Add More Domains** link until you have added all of your desired domain names to Your Cart.

When you are done, and before you complete the checkout process, it is time to order the hosting for your primary Internet address.

Action item #3 – Order your hosting

You will now land on a page that allows you to complete your domain name registration and order hosting.

I recommend to you the 1&1 Business or 1&1 Developer package.

You get three free domains (.com, .net, and .org) of your choice with the Business package and five of these with the Developer package and a bunch of really great features that I will tell you how to take advantage of later.

Again, not to worry here.

If you want to upgrade either package in the future you can do so with just the push of a button.

If you want to really dive into this, you can click on Compare Hosting.

Once you have completed this process, 1&1 will send you a confirmation email (within 24 hours).

The email will contain your user name and password, along with your domain name. Record this information in your notebook or binder and, if you did as I recommended in Step #1 – How to Get (and Stay) Organized and purchased and registered RoboForm, you can record it there, as well.

Additionally, if you set up your start page, which I also recommended you do in Step #1, go ahead and add a link the to 1&1 to your start page.

Action item #4 – Go to your new Administration Control Panel

Grab your email confirmation information and go back to www.1and1.com.

Once you receive your email confirmation, take the time to go back to the 1&1 website.

Login from the home page by clicking on the Customer Login link on the top, right-hand corner of the home page.

Enter your username and password. Note: Your Customer ID is your domain name.

You will be taken to your Administration Control Panel.
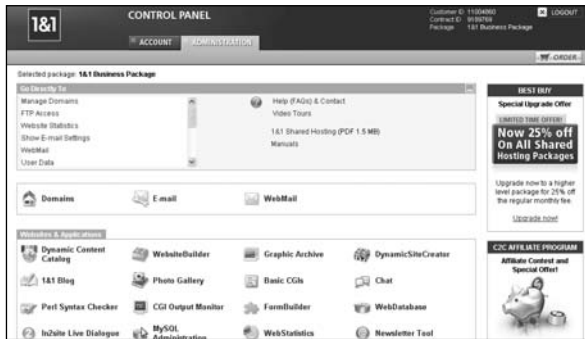
As you will see, this is easy to navigate!

Now, too many business owners make the costly mistake of setting up their website account and the hosting and never log back into their Control Panel.

But, you're not going to make this same mistake!

Instead, get into the habit of using your Control Panel's tools and services.

Truly, this single engaging Control Panel makes it so easy that it would be a real shame not to take the time to use it.

Action item #5 – Familiarize yourself with your 1&1 Control Panel

Start by looking at all your new icons.

You can roll your mouse over any of the icons and a short description pops up.

Try this now.

Pretty cool, isn't it?

Now, Click on Help (FAQs) & Contact.

This button is about to become your best resource. After all, 1&1 has 5 million subscribers and it's safe to assume that they have been asked every possible question.

And here is where you will find all the answers!

For example, if you have questions about setting up your eShops cart (which we talk about in Step #8 – Site Promotion, or questions about adding a blog, you will find your answers here.

I also strongly recommend that you use the FAQ searchable database, where you can type in words, questions, etc. and get answers, articles, and even cool guided Flash tours.

In fact, another great idea is for you to check out the Flash tours now.

Action item #6 – Take a guided Video Tour

Click on Video Tours and you will see a number of headings: Domains, Emails, WebMail, Websites, etc.

Click on "Create a website with 1&1 WebsiteBuilder" now.

Next, a new window will open and you will see a four minute video style step-by-step tutorial about the 1&1 WebsiteBuilder and how you can use it to build a professional looking website for your business.

It is very impressive.

And, if you have never used an online website builder, you are sure to be pleasantly surprised at how quickly and easily you can develop a professional website using tools provided by 1&1.

This Flash tour is just a few minutes long so watch it in its entirety now.

Action item #7 – Print your Easy Setup Guides

Go to Manuals link in Control panel

Once you have watched the Flash Tour on WebsiteBuilder, click on the **Manuals** link in your Control Panel.

You will be taken to a page that boasts a **References** icon.

Click on the **References** icon now.

Here you will find a list of Easy Setup Guides and Manuals.

As you will see, these guides and manuals are unbelievably easy to follow and understand. They are written in a clear, concise manner and include screenshots and tutorials that make every process you complete with 1&1 a real breeze.

You will want to go through each manual carefully at the appropriate time and when you do, you will be pleasantly surprised.

By following the instructions from cover to cover, you will save yourself a great deal of time and frustration and boast an end result that makes you proud and your competition jealous!

I recommend you print out (and have bound at your local Staples, Office Max, etc.) the following manuals:

1&1 Shared Hosting (under Easy Setup Guides)
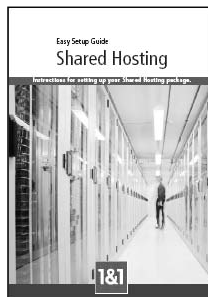
1&1 eShops (under Easy Setup Guides)

You will notice that there is a place to record your 1&1 login information in the front of the manual. Once printed out, add this information in. Better safe than sorry, I say. ☺

You may remember that I mentioned an old mentor of mine, Hubert Humphrey, at the beginning of this book.

Hubert once said "If you want to hide something forever, never to be seen again, put it in a manual."

As always, he makes a good point here because, in most cases, people are just too busy running their business and don't take the time to read these types of manuals.

But you're not going to make this mistake either!

Action item #8 – Forward your secondary domains to you primary Internet address

Forward your secondary domain names to your primary website address.

Take five minutes now and forward your secondary domain names to your primary website address.

You can watch 1&1's quick Flash Tour called "Managing your domain: Forwarding your domain" to see for yourself how quick and easy this process is.

To do this, return to your Administration Control Panel.

At the top of this page, above the icons and on the right-hand side, you see a list of areas you can go directly to.
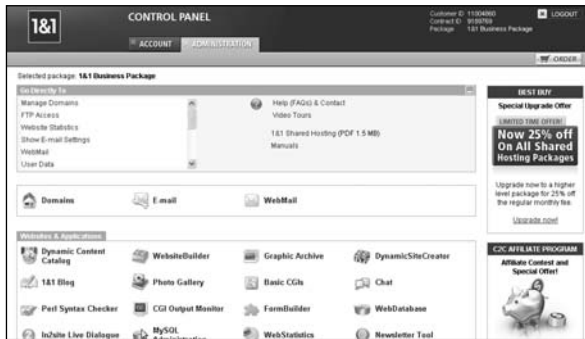
Click on **Manage Domains**.

Next, click on your secondary domain name.

Now you are on your Domain Destination Settings Page.

Click on the Edit button beside Destination.

Under Select Destination Type, use the pull-down box to select Forward Your Domain.

Under Forward Your Domain, enter the forwarding destination, which is your primary website address.

If you have registered other secondary names as I recommended above, repeat this process now for each.

It will take only a few minutes to do four or five of these, so go ahead and take care of this now.

Congratulations!

You now have your secondary sites pointing to your main website.

Great job.

Action item #9 – Start your eShops setup

Normally, I like to work through Steps and Action items in sequential order; however I realize that setting up your eShop will take more time and work than other Action items, so I want you to take just a few minutes now to order this service and then make time to come back to it later.

Grab your printed copy of your 1&1 eShops manual now.

If you have not yet printed the 1&1 eShops manual out as I suggested above, do so now by returning to your Control Panel.

Click on the Help (FAQs) & Contact link at the top of this page.

From the Help & Contact page, click on Manuals.

From the Software & Downloads page, click on Reference (Easy Setup Guide and Manuals).

From the Reference page, and under the Easy Setup Guides heading, click on the 1&1 eShops link.

As I have advised before, you should print this out and even take it to a local office supply store or print shop and have it bound.

Once you have done this, you will need to set aside a time to focus exclusively on setting up your eShop. As you will see, the size of your eShop is based on the number of products you plan to sell, so you will need to determine which solution works best for you.

Again, you can follow the steps in the manual to setup your new 1&1 eShops account.

As you will see, 1&1's eshop package is another package and therefore it's not like an independent cart software you can simply add to your hosting package.

You can, of course, build you eshop and integrate a link onto your homepage, which will take you to the online store.

And, your manual will help you do this, as will 1&1's FAQ section, the Help section and even 1&1's responsive Customer Service team, which you can contact via email or by phone, 24 hours a day.

But before you progress, take a minute to pat yourself on the back for another job well done!

And don't forget to set up your eShop as soon as possible. If you follow your eShops manual cover to cover, you will find that this process is not difficult at all.

Of course, if you do have questions or feel as though you are unsure of something, you can search 1&1's FAQ section as I explained before.

Now, let's look at adding a blog to your website.

Action item #10 – Set-up a blog

Once again, return to the FAQ section on the 1&1 website.

Hopefully, you are really starting to see how easy building and maintaining your website is. Using your Control Panel, the FAQ section and the manuals, there is nothing you can't do to your website with just a few quick clicks of your mouse.

And you can test this here now, as you add a blog to your website.

In the search area of the FAQ section, enter "blog."

Once on the Blog page, click on the first article, called "How do I create a blog?"

Follow these quick and easy steps and before you know it, your website will boast a blog.

Note: You may want to also quickly read the next article, called "How do I edit my blog?" before you leave this area.

And before you conclude this Step, it is worthwhile to point out that the Action items you just completed – setting up your site, your shopping cart and your blog, all share a common need: content.

Which almost brings us to our next Step, Step 5 – Develop Content.

But before you move forward to Step 5, take a minute to pat yourself on the back for a job well done…

Action item #11 – Complete the checklist for Step #4

Now, use the checklist below to confirm you have completed everything in this important Step #4 now…

- ■ Action item #1 – Make a list
- ■ Action item #2 – Register your domain name
- ■ Action item #3 – Order hosting
- ■ Action item #4 – Go to your new Administration Control Panel
- ■ Action item #5 – Familiarize yourself with the Control Panel
- ■ Action item #6 – Take a "Flash Tour"
- ■ Action item #7 – Print your Easy Setup Guides
- ■ Action item #8 – Forward your secondary domain name to your primary website address
- ■ Action item #9 – Start your eShops setup
- ■ Action item #10 – Set up a blog
- ■ Action item #11 – Complete the checklist for Step #4

Once you have…

…chosen and registered your primary and secondary domain names, signed up for hosting, added your 1&1 eShops package and added a blog to your website…

…then you are ready for the NEXT Step.

Part Two
Build Your Website

In Part Two, the real fun begins.

In this section, you will begin actually building your own website.

You will learn more about Grace's challenges and how to overcome these yourself, and you will also learn how to get the very most from your online presence.

We will also take a closer look at the importance of *free* traffic from the search engines and how you can build your site with this in mind.

You will learn how to sidestep the pitfalls that Grace fell into by simply not understanding that a website ranks high in search engine returns ONLY if it is constructed from the very get-go with the search engines in mind.

Sure, Grace realizes now that she didn't know a lot about the whole website thing, but she is far more committed to the process these days and is actually starting to get excited again about the potential a successful site has to dramatically impact her bottom-line.

Know your visitor

Back in Step #2 – Arranging Your Thoughts, I talked quite a bit about the importance of knowing your visitor.

In fact, you penned a list of 21 things a visitor to your website is hoping to accomplish when they land on your home page (or any other pages on your site).

You were actually putting to paper what you believe to be your visitor's needs.

You should grab this list again now.

Take a minute to study it once again.

Because by focusing on *serving* the needs of a visitor to your site, and thoroughly understanding what they are hoping to accomplish, the pages and features required to serve their needs will become obvious.

Considering this, if Grace had known in advance what she required to serve her visitor, her dealings with Dave would have been a lot more productive and the outcome undoubtedly much, much more positive.

Building brick-by-brick

Grace is starting to grasp the fact that this is something she can do. The whole website thing, well, it's starting to make sense, and she also realizes that she doesn't have to do everything herself.

And, of course, she wants to serve the needs of her visitors, and is starting to realize that the person who visits her site is just like the person who walks into her shop.

Having recently learned about Elance, Grace is also starting to get very excited about using this online freelance service to hire a professional copywriter to help her develop the content for her site further. In fact, she is also planning to have that same copywriter work with her to develop a newsletter for her visitors soon, too.

And although at this point she is still not completely clear on how her shopping cart software and a few other technical items work, she is committed to learning.

She now understands her site publishing options, and how to develop a site that does not handcuff her to Dave and will allow her to make her own changes and updates.

Likewise, she now understands the role of the graphic designer and how to take charge and responsibility for her own site.

And although Grace is not a techie, she has a basic understanding of how hosting works.

Grace is starting to feel very content about her newfound knowledge and about putting it all to use as we progress.

So, let's walk you through the same set-up process that Grace successfully used right now.

Step #5
Develop Your Content

Desired outcome

At the completion of THIS step…

…you will have learned about different means through which you can deliver "content," you will have determined what your site's pages will be about (article topics) and you will have hired a professional copywriter and maybe even a professional to help you develop and add content to your website through audio and video files.

After working with thousands of entrepreneurs since 2001, I can safely say that THIS is the area where people have the most trouble.

Content. "How do I write content?" they'd ask.

This truly surprises me. I guess because communicating comes fairly easily to me.

Often I'd hear from students saying they were paralyzed when attempting to write an article about – let's say – "Shoes for the Bride," for example.

Where do I start? What do I say?

My standard advice was to do a Google search for the term. And from there, thoroughly research the topic, taking notes into a text editor for editing.

Simply develop your own information and ideas in your own style – don't plagiarize.

Yet, people still reported getting stuck.

And for those who may be looking for a shortcut or a little assistance in this area, – I am also going to introduce you to the idea of hiring an expert to handle ALL of your writing needs (as I do) and once again provide you with information on two online services that provide you with professional copywriters.

And you'll be surprised at the relatively low cost associated with having content professionally written for your site.

You simply provide your writer with the parameters, (length, topic, etc. as I will outline for you shortly) and THEY research and write your content for you.

But before we get into the nitty-gritty of creating your content, it is worth pointing out that Web content comes in <u>many</u> forms.

Sit back, because this is about to get interesting!

Content is not just text anymore

In the early days of the Internet, content was primarily limited to text on the page… and slow-loading photos.

If you've been hanging around the Internet for a while, you may recall that it could take two to three minutes for a photo to open on the page.

This timely delay was primarily due to slow dial-up connections to the Internet.

Fast-forward to today.

High-speed Internet connections have quickly become the norm and because of this, in addition to text and photos, audio and video is now being delivered efficiently via desktop computers, laptops, cell phones, PDAs such as Blackberry's and Palm Pilots and MP3 players such as iPods – making the delivery of your marketing message in a variety of forms all the more exciting and rewarding.

And this is only just beginning.

In fact, there's never been a more exciting or opportune time for you to take your business, hobby or profession to the Internet.

We'll get through the text and images portions first, which is simpler than you may think, and then we'll look into the possibility of adding audio and video to your site, so sit tight, this is about to get really fun!

And as we progress here, try to picture your website as your visitor will, focusing your efforts on delivering content that will help you achieve your main objective, which may be to sell your products and services, to generate leads or to disseminate information, or a combination of all three, as we have previously discussed.

You see, the content on your website, regardless of the form (which we talk a great deal about in this Step), is what drives your visitor to action.

By providing content that piques your site visitor's interest and then delivers value (sought-out information), you ensure your website's success.

Let's look at this now.

Content as text

Search engines *love* unique and interesting text.

So do your visitors.

Think for a minute or two about what you like to find when you land on someone else's website.

Unique and interesting words help to pique your interest and help to differentiate the products and services on the page from those offered by a competitor.

If what you see is interesting, you want to see more.

But if what you see makes little or no sense, is organized poorly, or does not interest you at all, chances are you will leave the site and go elsewhere.

The same holds true for a visitor to your site.

By providing them with well-researched, well-written text, you can grab their interest and hold it.

Likewise, a neatly, well-thought through home page and a few articles that prompt a desired action, while simultaneously providing required information quickly and directly (in a click or two), will not only keep your visitor on your website, but it will keep him or her coming back to your site again and again for future information and purchases.

By providing text that is valuable to your visitor and that tells them exactly what to do and how to do it, you keep your visitor happy and more likely to take you up on your offer.

Of course, as search engines *spider* and *index* web pages, they also gather up text (reports, checklists, and newsletters) formatted in Microsoft Word or an Adobe PDF for their index, allowing you to create a real win-win situation for you, your visitor, and the search engine.

The bottom-line is this: If you focus on developing content that guides your prospect to the required information in an efficient manner, following a few search engine rules (more on that shortly) then you are sure to keep your visitors and the search engines happy, which is what it takes to achieve top rankings at the search engines.

And this is something a professional writer will help you do.

As you will see as you progress through this step, by relying on a professional copy-writer, one that gets to know you and your business, you will be able to provide your site's visitors with a truly engaging and informative website.

As you work through the Action items that follow, you should start envisioning your site and the many ways you can use content to pique your visitor's interest.

Content as images

In Step #4 – Set up Your Website, you determined your website address.

Now, think about what you want visitors to see when they arrive at this address.

Surely images come to mind.

These may be your company's logo, graphics that you have used in branding your business in print advertising, friendly pictures of your employees (always a good idea), photos of your products and informative images, illustrations, charts and tables.

The truth is that content in the form of images packs powerful punch because visitors love visuals, and you know what else?

Search engines *love* images, too.

And they can be very helpful to your visitors as well, allowing them to assess your site quickly, learning your business' most important details and information just from scanning the page.

As the old saying goes, a picture is worth a thousand words.

So you will want to use images, photos, illustrations and graphics to engage your visitor and guide them to your site's shopping cart, survey form, newsletter subscriber or contact information form, quickly and directly – all in no more than two or three clicks.

Of course, images can also be used on your website to help differentiate products or services from your competition, concisely present advantages of your products or services to your visitors, and more.

For instance, Grace now provides a full color image of each of her wedding gowns along with a short description to help her visitors see her shop's large selection of wedding attire. She has also included images of bridal accessories such as veils, other headpieces, shoes, gloves, jewelry, etc.

Not only do Grace's visitors want to see these images, but these eye-catching images have prompted countless new sales from existing and new clients alike, many of which found her website in an image directory, like Google (http://images.google.com) and Yahoo! (http://images.yahoo.com).

You see, Google and Yahoo love images and because they now *index* all types of images, they can also provide additional free traffic from visitors who discover your site through one of these image directories.

But not to worry yet about where your images will come from. For now, just start picturing it because you are going to learn more about online services you can turn to for help with creating images that are perfect for your site and your visitor as we progress through this step and again in Step #6 – Create and Upload Your Pages.

Content as audio

It is not surprising that the search engines are also very interested in audio.

And so are your visitors.

Audio and all other forms of multimedia have increased in popularity because high-speed connections are on the rise and these types of files are now quicker and easier to open, listen to and/or view, and they provide the visitor with the information and the value they are looking via a much more exciting delivery method.

Also contributing to the increase in popularity for audio files are the advances made in recent years in cell phones, MP3 players such as iPods.

> "The iPod (and similar portable devices) has become a pop culture phenomenon, rapidly becoming a dynamic force in the way that music (and other content) is being purchased and consumed." ~ Jacobs Media

Not only are the wildly popular devices convenient, portable and affordable, they now boast capabilities to download audio (and some can even download video) and to access it via the Internet, allowing users of these devices to hear your important information on the go.

Think about it like this: Your visitors certainly can't read content from a page while they jog, ride in their car, or fly in an airplane. They can, however, listen to audio files, making this a great resource for you to add to your website.

Podcasting

And speaking of audio files, you should know a bit about an exciting new media called "podcasting" and how you can put this phenomenon to work for you and your visitors with little cost and minimal effort.

This is something you are going to want to know about, for podcasting is taking the online world by storm.

"Invented in August 2004, podcasts are one of the fastest-growing media channels in history." ~ Marketing Sherpa

And for business owners looking to promote products and service, "podcasting" offers a unique opportunity to do so.

A podcast is simply an audio file that is created using a microphone, voice-editing software and a computer, – that is then uploaded onto a website so that other people can download it into their computer, MP3 player (iPod) or cell phone for easy listening.

Take a minute now to check out these engaging "podcasts," which are audio files that got their name from the much-coveted MP3 player, the Apple **iPod:**

http://www.askaboutflyfishing.com

As you will see when you go to this website address, expert fly fishermen D. Roger Maves and Don Bishop host live audio shows which include them talking one-on-one to and conducting interviews with fellow fly fishing experts every two weeks.

Taking it a step further, each call is recorded and transcribed so that even if a listener can't make the live call, they can listen to the recorded call or read the written transcripts at a later date. Over time, the archived calls become part of a library that listeners can access whenever they want.

http://www.mommycast.com

As you will see when you go to this website address, "Mommycast" is an audio show, or a podcast, put on by mothers Paige Heniger and Gretchen Vogelzang, who discuss the joys and sorrows, challenges and rewards, of motherhood.

Heniger and Vogelzang are now stars in the podcast world, talking directly to hundreds of thousands of listeners each month and appearing on national news shows. In fact, they have become so wildly popular that the Heniger-Vogelzang duo recently announced what is perhaps the most lucrative podcasting marketing deal to date, a 12-month sponsorship agreement with Dixie paper products.

These two examples of podcasting, or sharing audio files with site visitors, show you different ways you can use audio on your on site.

Additionally, these two podcasts share a common thread that is worth mentioning here and is something you should consider when you begin to brainstorm (later in this Step) your own ideas for adding a podcast to your marketing mix.

Both of these podcasts are sponsored by other companies. This means in the case of these two sites, the podcast itself is the product, and the revenue for the sites is generated through sponsors.

This is another online trend. Take a look now at these interesting facts from BlogSpot.com, which go to show that iPods and podcasting are only going to grow in popularity in coming years:

> "In 2005, Apple announced deals with major automobile companies
> including Mercedes-Benz Volvo, Nissan, Ferrari Audi, Honda, and

Volkswagen to integrate iPod into their car stereos covering around 30% of the US car market."

Today (August 5, 2006), Apple signed additional iPod integration deals with auto majors Ford, GM and Mazda which essentially means that 70% of the cars in US will have iPod inbuilt integration before they roll out of the factory."

These are some of the most recognizable business names in the world and they not only recognize that podcasting is more than a fleeting trend, but they are integrating the tools needed to allow podcasting in their automobiles, affirming their commitment to podcasting and showing that they believe this is something their customers want to be able to do.

Now, you can't ignore that!

You have also heard me mention my own podcast, the "Affiliate Buzz", which, since 2003, I have used to keep my students up-to-date on the latest search engine changes, website building techniques and the lifestyle that goes along with running a successful online business.

http://www.affiliate-buzz.com

And unlike *MommyCast* and *Ask About Fly Fishing*, revenue is generated for my show by subscribers who pay $10 a month to have access to the show.

The concept for the show came about when an associate of mine, Charles Johnston, and I were having a conversation over the phone when he said: "Wouldn't it have been great if we had recorded this call for your students?"

And so the idea for the "show" was born.

And after three years, and nearly 80 shows, I am happy to say that subscribers from all over the world listen in and this format works very well for me.

If a podcast is something that you are interested in doing, you will need to determine what format will work best for your unique audience.

And, as I pointed out above, your podcast could be the product paid for by <u>sponsors</u> or <u>subscribers</u>, or could be simply used as a strong promotional tool.

Grace provides her site's visitors with a short, simple 30-minute podcast each month.

In her podcast, Grace talks about trends in wedding gowns, seasonal dresses, and accessories, how to pull together a stunning bridal head-to-toe look, and even discusses wedding trends, including conversations with local florists, local caterers, and her favorite local wedding photographers.

Grace provides the podcasts free and has found that the information she provides in her podcasts has sparked new sales and is responsible for generating additional revenue for the merchants she regularly includes.

Because of this, a handful of these merchants have started their own podcasts and Grace is now a guest on their "shows," allowing her to reach potential buyers like never before.

Grace's podcasts are archived on her website and provide valuable content for her visitors, just as a podcast will for your visitors. And, like Grace has found, podcasting has helped her build a loyal audience and reach new clientele.

A podcast can do the same for you.

If you are interested in adding a podcast to your site, and I highly recommend that you do, you can distribute your shows to any one of the dozens of free podcast directories:

http://www.podcast.net

Doing this is sure to get your website's address in front of hundreds, perhaps even thousands of people who may have never known about you or the products or services you provide.

With this in mind, it's easy to see how and why podcasting is perfect for small business owners looking to develop (or expand) a loyal customer base by providing valuable information.

As Rodney Rumford (Radio Secrets for Podcasting), points out in his popular *How to Podcast* e-book, "Podcasting is an audio file that you create on your computer and then upload it to the Internet so other people can hear it. All you need is a computer, microphone, and voice-editing program."

http://www.radiosecretsforpodcasters.com

He goes on to say: "There are no special skills required. Anyone can podcast. It is perfect for women, men, students, work-at-home-moms and seniors. If you have something to say, podcasting is a great way to accomplish this goal."

I agree.

And it is easy to start a podcast of your own with little planning you should seriously consider developing a podcast for your site.

Of course, there are numerous other ways to take advantage of audio and to provide your site's visitors with content through spoken words.

Audio interviews

The above examples go to show you that audio can be used effectively for content delivery an infinite number of ways. The truth is your only limitation here may be your own imagination.

In fact, you may want to hire a company called 'Success Talk' (www.successtalk.net) that specializes in developing 20-30 minute radio style interviews.

You can have an interview conducted that allows you to discuss the benefits of your products and then have Success Talk post this audio interview on your website.

Being interviewed by a professional interviewer is important here and will go a long way toward establishing your credibility and your site's credibility.

If you are a keen do-it-yourselfer, and I hope you are because with a little effort this really is doable, this next service puts an amazing array of audio tools at your fingertips that make it really, really easy to add professional audio to your site.

Personally, I have been using "Audio Generator" for years to quickly and easily add audio to my sites.

http://www.instantlyaddaudio.com

Using this service, you can record right over the telephone (just like leaving a voice-mail) or using your computer and a microphone and then create a 'play' button (with fast-forward and reverse capabilities) that you can add to your site for viewers to use when they listen to your pre-recorded messages.

Additionally, using an audio recorder service like Audio Generator to automatically gather up audio testimonials from satisfied customers is a great selling tool. All you have to do is add the audio testimonials to your site (which is very easy) for visitors to listen to and you have provided powerful selling information that is sure to sway even a skeptic.

And not to worry if you are concerned at all about starting your own podcast or adding audio of any type to your site because the experts at Elance (www.postnew-project.com) would love to give you a free quote on any audio project you can dream up.

And if you ask, I am sure they will help you with your audio idea from its initial conception right to through to its completion.

You gotta love Elance. ☺

Content as video

Much like people, search engines can't seem to get enough video.

It's all the rage.

Why?

Simply put, because seeing is believing!

Which explains why YouTube, which was founded in February 2005, just announced that as of this writing, people are currently watching more than 70,000,000 videos a day on their site.

http://www.youtube.com
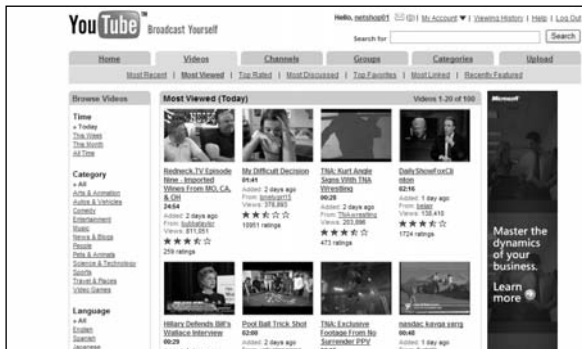
In fact, it is not uncommon for a crazy online video to be viewed 50,000-100,000 times in a single day or perhaps over two days. Because once someone sees a great video, word of it seems to spread like wildfire with viewers sending the link to their friends, and then their friends send it to their friends, and then their friends send it to…

Yes, audio and video has a big future of the Net!

And you can easily and affordably create a video for your site or a video for distribution.

The cost is relatively low as you can outsource the actual videotaping or have a family member or friend help with this, and then upload the video file to your website and to directories for distribution.

Because of this, paired with video's sparing popularity, video has become a highly effective tool that you can use to sell your products and services, to generate more leads, and to deliver information.

Still not convinced? Consider this: If a photo is worth a thousand words, what do you think a 60 second video is worth?

How about two or three minutes?

Or ten?

But if you're like me, your first thought about creating website videos may be, "Do I really want to spend the time and money figuring out how to do this?"

Sure, adding video to your website is a bit more involved than adding text, images or even audio, but it is a worthwhile investment and is where the Web is heading, so don't get left behind here!

Keep in mind that your video does not need to be long to be effective. It can do a great job for you in 60 seconds or even less.

And now for some really good news: There is no charge to upload your video to Google (http://video.google.com), Yahoo video (http://video.yahoo.com), YouTube (http://www.youtube.com), or a number of other directories.

And, when in doubt, hire a local high school student (from the school's television or broadcast department) like I have done, or turn to Elance.

Inch-by-inch

This is really exciting stuff, so as we progress here, you may want to grab a coffee or tea and take the time to really make sure you understand it all.

There is no need for you to feel overwhelmed because technological advances in these areas and the ability to hire a freelance professional that specializes in these different types of content makes adding content to your site – in all of its forms, an easy process.

So, take a deep breath here and let's look at where you should begin.

Keywords provide clues

I bet you are a bit surprised to see me back talking about keywords. ☺

It's simple, until you have a website, you have nowhere to <u>publish</u> your text, images, audio or video, – and if we want that content to rank well in all its forms, we need to start with keywords, so, let's get right to work.

If you recall, back in Step #2 – Keywords Are Key To Site Success, I explained to you how many visitors will find your site by entering a **keyword** (i.e. Santa Barbara wedding gowns) at one of the major search engines.

These keyword phrases can be looked at by us, as a quasi-type of question, giving us clues as to what is in the mind of the visitor.

For example, someone who enters the keyword phrase "Santa Barbara wedding gowns" is probably situated in the **Santa Barbara** area, planning a **wedding**, needs a wedding gown and is probably a **female**.

Keywords DO provide clues, as we have discussed before.

Look at a cross-section of Grace's Wedding Gowns keyword list below. As you will see, these are really clues to what exactly her visitors are looking for.

There are 45 keywords here for May312004 using the Wordtracker database.

> wedding dresses
> wedding gowns
> bridal gowns
> wedding dress
> wedding gown
> plus size wedding dresses
> beach wedding dress
> informal wedding dresses
> cheap wedding dresses
> discount wedding dresses
> modest wedding gowns
> vintage wedding dresses
> plus size wedding gowns

casual wedding dresses
designer wedding dresses
modest wedding dresses
cheap wedding gowns
informal wedding gowns
vintage wedding gowns
winter wedding gowns
renaissance wedding gowns
celtic wedding gowns
plus size bridal gowns

As I suggested in Step #2 – Keywords Are Key To Site Success, think about what a person wants to know when they type in the keyword phrases.

Get into your visitor's head.

Picture what you think may be going on here.

For instance, take the keywords "Santa Barbara wedding gowns."

The person (probably a woman) typing this into his search box is more than likely sitting at her computer picturing herself on her special day – wearing a beautiful wedding gown, perhaps one she has dreamed about since childhood.

She envisions herself at the ceremony, perhaps walking down the aisle with her father, eyes on her eager groom.

She scans the crowd for the reaction to her entrance and is thrilled with what she sees. She can see everyone smiling and knows that she and her dress (and hopefully her husband, too) are a perfect match and that she looks as special as she feels.

Once you begin to think like this, it is easy to see how the keywords typed in by people actually provide clues, and how your job is to provide answers and solutions.

Now, it's time to pull together your initial research.

Action item #1 – Grab your initial research

Go ahead now and grab your Keyword Chart along with your Wordtracker keyword list, and the list of 21 (or more) things your visitor is looking to accomplish at your site.

If you have been following my advice these are all neatly stored in your notebook or binder or the applicable file folder. ☺

Now, put your thinking cap on because no one knows your business better than you do; however, if you feel like there is someone who knows a great deal about your business, you may want to get them involved here now, too.

As the saying goes, two heads are better than one.

And at this point I would recommend not worrying about *who* is going to write the text for your site, or *where* you are going to get the images, or *how* you are going to deal with the technical side of audio and video.

This is not the time.

Those details will come later.

Action item #2 – Make some observations

It is time to determine *what* you are going to add to your site and *why*.

And I suggest keeping this simple.

For instance, I suggest that you keep the pages to a minimum and that you focus on creating quality content.

I suggest beginning this process by coming up with ideas for creating the text, images, audio and video for your site.

I suggest that you use your initial Keyword Chart, Wordtracker keyword list, and the list of 21 (or more) things your visitor is looking to accomplish to further brainstorm what you want covered on your website.

You should also take some time during this process to write down what you feel are the advantages of your products or services, especially the ones that differentiate your business from its competitors.

And not to worry too much about getting it just right.

You're still in the research and brainstorming mode and your writer, the one I have been recommending you hire, will use the information you have developed to carefully craft the text for every page of your site, make recommendations as to what images should be included, and to offer up any ideas for the use of audio and video, as well.

Of course, the more input you provide about the details and fine nuances of your business and its products and services, the better a job the writer can do for your visitors, which of course will help you.

Remember: Think like a visitor to your site. In doing so, ask yourself these questions:

1. What do these visitors want to see when they land on your website?
2. Go through your list of 21 (or more) things your visitor is looking to accomplish at your site. Can you add to this list? Has anything else come to mind?
3. What are the advantages for your visitors to purchase your products or services? I would suggest making another list of 21.
4. What differentiates you from your competitors?
5. Do you offer any special offers on shipping? What is your policy on refunds? Do you offer a guarantee of any type?

I suggest you grab a piece of paper and write these down now, and keep the notes handy for your writer who can use this information as the basis for their interview with you, where they will extract additional nuggets of information.

I also suggest that you provide your writer with a general outline of the different web pages you would like to see on your site.

This will be invaluable in helping them to begin to understand your project.

Action item #3 – Make a list of your web pages

It's time to now determine the types of pages you will add to your site.

You can make your list using the information below, which I suggest you also print out and add to your binder and share with your professional writer.

Your writer will be very interested in this information and the information in the Action items that follow – Action items #3, #4 and #5.

So let's get right to it.

Determine what type of pages you are going to add to your site by reviewing this list:

- **Home Page** – Also known as the index page, the home page is designated as the main point of entry of a website. Typically, it welcomes the visitor and introduces the purpose of the site and provides links to other pages within the site. This is the front-door to your website and if it is confusing, cluttered or even if it downloads too slowly or is just unclear or uninteresting, you will probably lose customers.
- **Articles** – Article pages are great resources for your visitors and you. Visitors can find important information that they are looking for here if you post regularly updated articles that are relevant to your site. And, if these articles are well-written, keyword rich, and valuable to the visitor (and the search engine spiders), you create a real win-win situation for your website (and your clientele).
- **About Us** – This page tells your visitor about you and your business. Ask yourself, if you were a visitor to your site, what would you want to know about the company? And, what do you want to know about companies when you visit their sites.
- **Contact Us** – Your Contact Us page should provide visitors with your physical address, a location map to this address, your contact information (email, phone and fax numbers, etc.). It should also provide a form so visitors can ask for more information and submit to you along with their email address so that you can reply to them quickly and with great ease (all the while keeping track of their con-

tact information so you can send them emails about upcoming events such as sales, discount coupons, newsletters, etc.).

■ **Press** – This page allows you to post your monthly press releases, which can range in topic from announcing a new product rollout to a announcing a new hire, or an upcoming sale, a sponsored community event, etc.

■ **Media Kit** – This page allows you to provide a media kit to interested journalists. This kit can include a general press release about your business, a description of your products and or services, a bit of background, contact information for you or for someone who has agreed to act as a liaison between your business and the media, a company logo, etc.

■ **Legal** – This contains the site's legal notice, as well as legal disclaimers for hyperlinks to third-party websites, general terms and conditions for an online shop, etc.

■ **Newsletter Archives** – This page allows you to post your monthly or bi-weekly newsletters for visitors to review at their convenience after the original distribution date

■ **Podcast Archives** – This page allows you to post your podcasts for visitors to review at their convenience after the podcast has occurred.

■ **Product Descriptions** – This is where you offer your visitors the products or services you sell and support information in the form of text, images, etc. Additionally, this page has a shopping cart that allows your customers to utilize an electronic checkout process.

■ **Lead Generation Form** –This simply lets you "capture" your visitors contact information so that you can keep in touch and provide them with your marketing materials, auto-responder email campaigns, electronic brochures, monthly newsletters, etc. You may also consider offering a free product, such as a downloadable e-book, that teaches them how to use a product or provides them with relevant information that is valuable so that they are more than happy to provide you with their email address (because they are so excited about the free offer).

■ **Site Map** – A list of all pages on the site, for visitors and for spiders.

Action item #4 – Identify a list of images for your site

Next, take a few minutes to determine what type of images you are going to add to your site, based on the following information, and add these to your list:

- **Products** – Product images include any images (photographs, graphics, etc.) that you will provide your site's visitors of the products you sell.
- **Staff Photos** – Staff photos are pictures taken of your staff. These are a great way to make your site friendly and really help to put human faces with your online capabilities.
- **Illustrations** – Illustrations are graphics that you can use to help deliver your message. You may have some existing illustrations that you want to use or you may want to hire a professional designer to help here.

Action item #5 – Jot down any ideas you have for audio

Next, I recommend that you once again jot down 21 ideas, but with your focus now on audio ideas you have for your website, based on the following information. Don't forget, you should still be thinking like a visitor to your site. ☺

- **Podcasts** – As Grace has done, you may want to do a regular podcast for your visitors that detail the latest products your business provides. If you have seasonal merchandise, this can be a great way to tell your clients about what's coming soon, etc. You may want to do a regularly scheduled newsletter as your podcast, like I do with my "Affiliate Buzz" or be creative and come up with your own ideas here.
- **Interviews** – As I explained above, you can have a professional interviewer question you about your products or services, or you can interview your own clients and get testimonials or talk to suppliers about new product lines, or showcase conversations with colleagues, etc.

Action item #6 – Determine your video

Now, take a minute to determine what type of video you are going to add to your site.

- Promotional Video – Your promotional video can include anything from product information and details about upcoming sales to engaging tutorials on how to use a product you sell. Once again, the possibilities are limitless.

GREAT JOB!

As you took notes on the above information on your site's pages and what you will add to each, make sure you kept both your site's visitor and your writer in mind.

Also, place this important information in your binder so that it will be at your fingertips when the time comes to request a free quote from Elance.com or DotComCopy, which you will do shortly.

Once you've brainstormed a bit about what pages your site will have and about what text, images, and audio these pages will boast, it's time to look at the actual design of your pages and how this impacts your visitors and the search engines, too.

Designing a page for your visitor (and the search engines)

Most sites are created by well meaning graphic designers and business owners who lack the knowledge needed to rank high in search engine returns.

By understanding a few simple concepts, you can catapult your website to the top of search engine returns.

And the first concept they need to understand (and so do you and so does Grace) is that search engines rank pages, not sites.

And if you understand how to develop one page that ranks, you can create many pages that rank as well, and that rank for any combination of the keywords contained within the keyword chart.

Grace wants her site to rank well for not only one keyword phrase (i.e. Santa Barbara wedding gowns), but also for as many possible combinations of the keywords listed within her Keyword Chart.

Grace's Keyword Chart

Before			After	Geographic
formal	wedding	gowns	Shops	Santa Barbara
informal	bridal	gown	Shop	Santa Barbara, CA
designer	bride	dresses	Stores	Santa Barbara, California
plus size		dress	Store	
summer		attire	Outlet	
casual		outfits	Outlets	
petite		outfit	Designers	
beach			Designer	
short				
unique				
modest				
simple				

With a little pre-planning it is possible to gain top listings in the search results for a keyword phrase such as **Santa Barbara wedding gowns**, and **wedding dress**, **Santa Barbara**, or **bridal attire**, **Santa Barbara**, **California** and so on.

And your Keyword Chart is the first step in this pre-planning and where you should begin as you strive to organize copy for your website pages.

You, like Grace, will want to develop a few select pages for the search engines, such as your site's home and article pages. Take some time now to review your initial Keyword Chart, which I suggest you use for your home page in the following manner.

6 Rules for Page Construction

1. Identify a primary keyword phrase from the Keyword Chart for the page (i.e. *Santa Barbara wedding gowns*) and be sure to include it <u>once</u> in the headline and <u>once</u> within the text on the page.
2. Use the balance of the keywords (i.e. beach) <u>once</u> or twice on the page, as they would naturally occur during the writing process.
3. While keywords are absolutely vital here, so is good, well-researched, well-written content. Your site won't get very far if your content is not top-notch and expertly crafted.
4. Add appropriate images (photos, illustrations), and audio and video if desired.
5. Develop a great title tag (i.e. *Formal & Informal Wedding Dresses & Gowns in Santa Barbara, CA*) for the page that does NOT exceed 64-characters (including spaces) and that includes the primary keyword (in no particular order) and a couple other popular keywords from the Keyword Chart.
6. Gather up and arrange inbound links to the page from other pages on the Internet as outlined later for you in Step #8 – Site Promotion.

A WORD OF CAUTION: *Natural writing* and not keyword stuffing is the key to developing a great page of content for the search engines.

Action item #7 – Narrow down your keyword list

Earlier in this manual you developed a keyword list at Wordtracker that may, or may not serve your purposes well enough to act as a narrowly targeted keyword list for your site.

The reason I say that is, while working with students previously, I witnessed that in nearly every case their initial keyword lists were too general in nature.

This is understandable.

When first venturing into Wordtracker most have only a vague idea of the role of these keywords or the industry they plan to pursue.

So take a good look at your list again.

Can you see 5-6 keywords in the top 20-30 words that could serve well as Primary topics for pages on your site?

For instance, Grace's site is about wedding gowns, but she also has a number of other products she would like to see as well, which she noticed in her Wordtracker list and from her knowledge of her business (i.e. wedding veils, wedding gloves and a variety of brand name dresses (i.e. Vera Wang wedding gowns).

You see, each one of those keyword phrases could be used as a <u>Primary keyword</u> for an article *about* that subject, – and it is recommended that a <u>separate and unique</u> Keyword Chart is developed for each of these keywords so that each article, like the home page, has the potential to rank for its Primary keyword (i.e. Vera Wang wedding gowns) and multiple variations of it (i.e. Vera Wang designer wedding dresses), etc.

So play with these ideas a bit, then…

If your first list is vague…

That's okay!

It can still serve you by providing a point of comparison when rebuilding a new list at Wordtracker.

And armed with your new understandings, I think you will really nail it this time.

A more focused way to use Wordtracker

www.wordtracker.com

When you first created keyword lists you simply used a keyword (i.e. wedding gowns) that represented, in a general way, the topic for your website.

The result was probably a long list.

But, here is a little trick I use to help sort this 'long' list into 'separate' lists for each planned article page.

So go back to Wordtracker and simply enter each keyword category (i.e. wedding veils) separately, – rather than searching the whole topic with one fell swoop, as you did initially, to create a unique Keyword Chart for the topic.

So, for instance, if Grace were planning to develop a page for her selection of Wedding Gloves, instead of searching the Wedding Gown category as a whole, I would create individual lists for each topic, such as beach wedding dresses, wedding veils, etc.

Now when the Right Window appears, with all words bearing a relationship to that word, then go back and forth, selecting more words from the Left window, as you did earlier, until you have built up a 'single list' around a 'planned' article, instead of the general topic as a whole.

Then go to step #3 of the Wordtracker process to review.

Now email yourself that more narrowly defined list.

What you end up with is numerous sets of beautifully organized keyword lists for each article page, - and from each list you can create a separate Keyword Chart.

This saves you a lot of time and simplifies the task of sorting your keywords into different groups.

Feature articles

While I now work with professional copywriters to produce my site's feature articles, if you feel this is something you want to take on yourself and you have confidence in your writing abilities, then by all means feel free to develop your site's content yourself.

For those short on time, or lacking the skills need to thoroughly research a topic and then write valuable content about this topic, I suggest you hire a professional copywriter.

You can start this process by visiting Elance (www.postnewproject.com) or DotComCopy (www.dotcomcopy.net) (or both) and requesting a free quote. While Elance allows you to detail your project and accept bids, DotComCopy has set fees for most projects and packages of copy that can be tailored to meet your needs.

You can then rely on your copywriter to help you organize your thoughts and ALL of the information for your site.

That's right. I strongly recommend that you let the copywriter you work with do EVERYTHING for your website. This includes all of your site's pages, articles, press releases, newsletters, etc.

This will allow you to develop a long-term relationship with your copywriter, who really is a member of your team.

The copywriter will get to know you and your business and will be able to assist you with writing projects on a regular basis.

Now that you understand this, it's time to actually add a professional copywriter to your team.

Action item #8 – Hire a professional copywriter

As a business owner, you know all about outsourcing and when it comes to website copywriting, outsourcing this important project is key.

Use Elance to find one writer who will get to know you and your business…

Elance.com

By now, you should have created your free Elance (www.postnewproject.com) account and hopefully you took the time to tour the site and get familiar with how it works.

If you did, you know that you can simply "post" specifics about your project and have professional writers from all over the world place bids.

Note: I do have a bit of advice here about hiring copywriters via Elance. Take a minute to review the service provider's online portfolio (in this case, the copywriter's) and online resume (which is verified by US Search), both of which you can do by clicking on the appropriate link in the service provider's bid. Additionally, I strongly encourage you to use only writers that speak and write English as their **first** language. You may also want to look to see if the service provider is a member of Square Trade, which is an organization that backs the member's (service provider's) work and work ethic and provides a forum if there are problems, and mediation services in the event the problems cannot be worked out.

DotComCopy.net

I met a copywriter that I now use on a regular basis through Elance. Her name is Kellie Fowler and she owns DotComCopy (www.dotcomcopy.net). We do a large number of projects together and Kellie really knows my business and my unique style.

This is because we have both invested the time and the effort it takes to cultivate this working relationship, which is a must.

The truth is that the outcome of your project is only as good as your communication (and this includes working with professional writers, designers, etc.) and your relationship with the people you have hired to work on the project.

Kellie and her team offer content packages to website owners that are written by a professional copywriter that will talk to you over the phone, and get to know all about you, your business, and even your competitors.

And, as you will see, these are very affordable.

A DotComCopy writer will interview you to start the process and will then thoroughly research and expertly write everything for you – your site's home page, product

page, about us page, contact us page, etc. This same writer will remain available to you and your business to write press releases and articles on a monthly basis (which we go into more later in this training).

I recommend you focus on your list of the 21 reasons visitors come to your site and provide this to the writer.

I also recommend that you start the content development process with 7 well-researched, well-written, keyword-rich articles, one for each of the seven topics you choose.

You should also work with your writer to research and write a handful of other articles that you can provide to other webmasters so their sites can link back to yours (which I discuss in greater detail in Step #8 – Site Promotion).

You will also want to go ahead and sign-up with DotComCopy to have two articles written for you each month, as well as a press release (which is also detailed more in Step #8 – Site Promotion).

Kellie and her team offer a few packages and will even upload the articles to your website and send the linking articles to other webmasters, at no additional cost to you!

Posting a new project

When you post a copywriting project on Elance, or when you communicate with your DotComCopy writer for the first time, there are a few things you will need to have already thought through.

For instance, you will want to request in the very beginning that your copywriter interview you by phone.

You should let the writer know that you would like to brainstorm together a bit about content for your website.

Next, outline your exact needs, such as what pages you need content for, what kind of content you are looking for (text, audio, video, etc.) and what timeline you and your writer have to work with.

You will need to provide your writer with a link to your website. I also strongly suggest you provide your writer with links to your competitor's sites. This will allow the writer to see exactly what your business is up against and helps them as they work through the research process, as well.

Talk to your writer about any upcoming or ongoing needs you may have, such as monthly newsletters, monthly press releases, monthly articles for your website, blog posts, etc.

Explain that you want to cultivate a long-term relationship and take the time to answer any questions the writer may have both initially and during the entire writing process.

The truth is that the end result of your project is only as good as your communications with the writer and simply handing over your Keyword Chart (which you will need to share with your writer) and not taking the time to explain your business, the goals you have for your website, etc. will result in doom.

Even the best writer cannot produce copy for something they know nothing about and while your writer can help you organize your thoughts and come up with great ideas, it is up to you to equip them with the knowledge and/or resources they need to complete their job.

To help you do this, I have provided a sample Project Request Worksheet for you at http://www.jamesmartell.com/checklists.html.

It's an ongoing process

What you need to understand about content development is this: It is an ongoing process, one that you or your copywriter will need to consistently develop each and every month.

If Grace had known about this option, she would have had a keyword-rich website from the very beginning, one that boasted an informative Home page, a clear, concise About Us page and great articles that serve to provide her visitors with the value they are looking for (while feeding the search engine's hungry spiders).

For instance, working with a professional copywriter, Grace would have been prompted to include articles on topics such as "How to Choose a Wedding Dress,"

"Organizing Your Special Day," "Find Bridesmaids Dresses that Your Wedding Party Will Want to Wear," etc.

And it's in these articles that you build your keywords.

Take a few minutes to start this process now. Go ahead and place your project on Elance (www.postnewproject.com) for copywriters to bid on or go to DotComCopy (www.dotcomcopy.net) and review the content packages (keeping in mind that these packages can easily be tailored to meet your unique needs).

Action item #9 – Complete the checklist for Step #5

Now, use the checklist below to confirm you have completed everything in this important Step #5 now…

- ■ Action item #1 – Grab your initial research
- ■ Action item #2 – Make some observations
- ■ Action item #3 – Make a list of your web pages
- ■ Action item #4 – Identify a list of images for your site
- ■ Action item #5 – Jot down any ideas you have for audio
- ■ Action item #6 – Determine your video
- ■ Action item #7 – Narrow down your keyword list
- ■ Action item #8 – Hire a professional copywriter
- ■ Action item #9 – Complete the checklist for Step #5

Once you have…

…a thorough understanding of the different types of content and know about the resources that can help you develop and deliver these various types of content, determined topics for your site's articles, and hired a professional copywriter…

…then you are ready for the NEXT Step.

Step #6
Create and Upload
Your Pages

Desired outcome

At the completion of THIS step…

…you will have chosen a template for your website's overall look, you will have added content to your website, determined which images you want to add and hired a graphics designer, you will have placed an order for graphics design work and added this new design work to your template.

Congratulations! In the previous Step, you determined what pages will be on your site and it is now officially under construction.

Great work!

Now it's time to bring all of your hard work together and choose your template, add content to the pages, and take a look at additional tools you can add to impress your visitors and positively impact your business' bottom-line.

And before you know it, you're going to have a great looking website that, with a bit of ongoing effort and execution of the Steps in this manual, will perform.

So, let's get right to it.

Site design and navigation

You have spent a great deal of time in previous steps learning how to increase your site's visibility by including valuable content – text, images, audio, etc. and how search engines and indexes will drive traffic your way when you make the most of these content delivery methods and organize your content so that it is easy to understand.

For if your message is not delivered clearly and concisely, you are in danger of overloading your visitors and losing them once and for all.

The same holds true for your site's overall look and design.

Poor design or confusing menus on your pages will cause visitors who are sent to your website to click the ever-looming and always present back button and go elsewhere, perhaps to your competitor.

And after all the hard work and effort you have put forth, that would be a real shame.

Considering this, there are some general "rules" that you should take a minute to understand about your site design and navigation now, for this will save you immeasurable amounts of time and frustration later on.

Poor Grace. If she had known all of this before… well, she wouldn't be disappointed and starting over now. Armed with the knowledge in this Step, Grace would have better understood her role, which included giving strong direction to Dave.

Grace now realizes that it is up to her to understand what she wants. Sure she can look to Dave for advice, suggestions and design ideas, but only Grace knows the big picture she has in mind for her business and website.

Remember nobody knows Grace's business better than Grace, especially now that she has taken the time to think it all through (just like you have). ☺

Let's make sure you skip the disappointment and despair Grace felt and start your website out on the right foot, and keep it there!

This all starts by understanding a few simple guidelines, which are provided below:

Note: You may want to make a copy of these guidelines and place them in your notebook and keep them handy as you progress through this Step. Not to worry if some of it seems a bit technical. It's all broken down for you here and 1&1 also offers a great deal of supporting information in these areas, too.

1. Present content in a clear and concise fashion addressing the needs of your visitor, while simultaneously articulating the advantages of your products or services – emphasize important content

2. Dissect your information and present visitors with exactly what they are looking for – provide headings and brief summaries for readers who are short on time, and in-depth descriptions for those who require more detailed information

3. Your website should be easy to navigate, guiding your visitor to the required information quickly and directly (requiring little or no effort on their part) within two or three mouse clicks

4. Keep your menus simple and intuitive, and hierarchical layers to a minimum

5. Your contact information, such as address, phone and fax numbers, and email addresses should be very easy to find

6. Give your website visitors ways to interact and make contact with your company; email newsletter, customer survey, discussion forum, call back and email response forms (more on this later in Step #7 – Communications on the Net)

7. Keep it simple and aesthetically pleasing. In doing this, I strongly suggest using dark text on a light background with "click-on-me blue" hyperlinks

8. Provide engaging graphics, images and diagrams

9. Use standard font styles and sizes and spacing of paragraphs, headlines and sub-headlines – stay away from blinking, spinning, twirling graphics

10. Use a content management system for the ease of keeping information current, fresh, and up-to-date

11. Add title, description and keyword meta-tags to assist with natural search rankings

12. Interesting editorial content on a website emphasizes a company's technical expertise and professionalism and generates a positive impression on product and service offerings

13. Be sure to use secure methods of data transmission to prevent "eavesdroppers" from having access to critical data

14. Make sure you have a Privacy Policy page on your website, where you can publish legally required information about your company (in addition to contact information; e.g., tax ID)

15. Be sure to include a legal disclaimer if your website has hyperlinks to third-party web pages

16. If you operate an online shop, you must publish your general terms and conditions on your website

In the previous Step, Step #5 – Develop Your Content, you determined what types of pages your site needed and wrote these down. In this Step, you also posted a project on Elance or chose from one of the website content packages at DotComCopy.net. By now, you should be communicating regularly with your writer and expecting to see their content shortly.

Before we move on to finalizing your site pages (which you can change through 1&1 at any time), let's just take a quick look at what we've learned about this process so far.

We know that identifying the keywords your potential clients will use to find you is, well, key.

We also know that understanding your visitor plays an integral part in your online business success and that this starts by determining exactly what your clients want from you (as you detailed in your list of at least 21 "things") and that site navigation consists of some very important general rules (listed above) that we will elaborate on as we move forward.

So, let's get ready to actually create and add pages to your site.

Action item #1 – Choose your template

Log into your 1&1 account now.

You will be taken to your Administration Control Panel.

Click on the WebsiteBuilder icon.

Once on your WebsiteBuilder page, you will need to click on the domain name that you registered with 1&1. This is under Create a Website.

Your WebsiteBuilder page will open.

This should all look familiar to you after completing the previous step.

Now, you will see that this page is broken into two parts. On the left, there is the Edit Your Website area and on the right, there is the Put Your Website Online area.

Click on the Design icon and choose your template. Keep in mind that these can be customized by adding your own images and graphics, which we get into more a bit later.

For now, you will simply want to choose a design and color scheme (which can also be changed later).

Once completed, return to your administrative Control Panel.

Note: If you need help, refer to 1&1's FAQ search area or view the Flash Tour on the WebsiteBuilder tour. You will also find information to help you with this quick and easy process in the Easy Setup Guide you printed in the last Step.

Action item #2 – Set-up your pages

From your Control Panel, click on the Pages icon on the right side, under Edit Your Website.

On this page, click on Page Suggestions in the sub toolbar (under the main toolbar across the top of the page).

This is a nice feature because your WebsiteBuilder actually provides you with page suggestions based on the business you are in.

So, assuming you are building this website for your business, click on Business Websites (vs. Personal Websites).

A sub menu pops up. From here, choose your category.

Cool, isn't it?

Now, all you have to do is click on the suggested pages that you want and then click on Add to Website after each.

Note: If you are unsure about which pages you need, simply refer back to my suggested list of website pages in Step 2 and grab the list you made of potential pages for your website. You should use this list to work with your writer to determine your needs and to place an actual order with your writer.

As you add these pages, they show up in the far right hand side of the page.

Note: You can review these on the next page where you can rename them, add more pages or delete the ones you have chosen, so no worries. ;-)

Once you have completed this quick step, click OK.

Once you are satisfied that you have the pages you want, click Preview in the main toolbar at the top of the page and give it all a quick look.

You can even add some temporary text here just to get a preview of what your site will look like with content. This will also help you get familiar with the WebsiteBuilder tool while you wait for your writer to deliver your content.

Note: *If you are not taking advantage of 1&1's WebsiteBuilder and are perhaps using another option, you will most likely still be working with a graphics designer (remember: you can do this through Elance, BlogMoxie, or even by doing a Google search for "graphics designer"). While you can simply disregard the information in this Step that details 1&1's WebsiteBuilder tools, you will want to pay attention to the other information in this Step, which will help you work better with your graphics designer as you strive to develop a website that works for your business and your target audience.*

You can make any tweaks here (now or later). You can still change the template design, the colors, even the pages you have chosen. You can also change the header graphic here, as well.

And if you do not like the graphics on the template you choose, worry not. As pointed out before, don't be shy about hiring a graphic designer at Elance, BlogMoxie, or through a Google search to modify the graphics for you if you are at all unsure of what to do.

Now that you have your pages polished to perfection, let's add some content.

Action item #3 – Add content to your pages

Your writer will more than likely provide you with content for your website as a Word file. You can simply cut and paste this into Notepad, which removes html coding from the Word document. Once you have done this, you can copy and paste the content into 1&1's Website Builder tools or, if you prefer, directly into 1&1's templates via your Website Builder tools.

In reviewing the content, here are some guidelines to follow (which I suggest you provide your writer, as well):

1. Stick to Arial or Verdana fonts for the best readability
2. Use the <u>same</u> font throughout
3. 10pt. or 12pt. is best for the Net
4. Headlines are typically 14 pt. or 18pt. (bolded)
5. Sub-headlines are typically 12pt. or 14pt. (bolded)
6. Use black ink (on a light background)
7. Never bold your entire text block
8. Italicize or bold only the keywords according to the optimization process. Underline for emphasis if needed

Less is more

Additionally, there seems to be a tendency for some people to overuse keywords within a page of content.

It's easy to see why, especially when you start to understand the importance of keywords as they relate to obtaining natural search rankings.

Once you understand that search engines today not only understand natural language but they also demand it, especially Google, it becomes crystal clear why writing in a natural tone, voice, and style is more important.

This is actually very good news because it allows you to focus your attention on developing unique, interesting and naturally written content for your visitor.

As you progress, you should know that essentially you will really only be adding two types of pages to your site: 1) Those pages that are designed to rank in the natural

search results (such as your home page and your article pages); and 2) Those that are simply supporting pages (such as your about us and contact us pages) for the site, and that are not designed to rank.

In doing this, you will need to create your own Keyword chart for every page, one that is well researched and thought through. You will need to pair this Keyword Chart with the strategies outlined for back link development in Step #8 – Site Promotion.

But, don't stop there.

Over time you will need to regularly "mine" your keyword for other topics, developing additional keyword charts focusing on new keyword groupings. For example, you saw how Grace did this for her site and by creating a Keyword Chart also based on her store's geographic location.

You will need to get into the habit of adding articles and relevant content periodically to your site. Again, you can count on your writer to take care of this for you.

Remember: Search engines love fresh content and so do your visitors. This said, adding new content to your site on a regular basis is a must!

Here is a little checklist you may want to keep handy when adding content to your pages. You can keep this handy as you progress through this step (and afterward as you regularly update your website with articles, press releases, etc.)

Content Checklist

1) A well-written headline that includes the Primary keyword (or a variation thereof) that draws the reader into the page.
2) A well-written page of content, containing between 150-1000 words that includes the Primary keyword contained only once within the page.
3) Naturally sprinkle a variety of the keywords from the Keyword Chart once or twice on the page. Once is fine for the purpose of ranking. Stay focused on your visitor.
4) Images – Images used appropriately on your pages to deliver content are key.
   Remember: A picture is worth a thousand words.

5) Audio or video – Like images, use audio and video on your pages to provide information and impact.

6) Title (title tag) – Should include the Primary keyword and other popular keywords from your Keyword Chart to develop title for your page. Not to exceed 64-characters.

7) Description (description meta-tag) 25 words – accurate description of the page content.

8) Develop the appropriate number of Back Links to gain top natural search ranking using the techniques outlined in Step #8 – Site Promotion.

And of course you will want to proofread and spell-check every page.

Now, let's try this together

While still in your own 1&1 WebsiteBuilder, click on the Content icon in the main toolbar across the top of the page.

The actual page of your new website will appear, with text editing tools just like you are use to seeing when working in Word.

As I said before, I personally prefer to cut and paste, but you can either do that or type directly onto this page. In fact, you will notice that your cursor is already in your website page (where it says Please insert your text here).

So, you know you're in the right place. ☺

Now, hopefully you took my advice and hired a professional copywriter to carefully craft content for you. If so, go ahead and open the file of content that your copywriter wrote for you now.

And this next part is a real breeze.

Simply copy the text and paste it directly onto your web page.

Note: Use your mouse to click on the different pages that you just added to your site (Home, About Us, Contact, etc.) from your website toolbar.

But what about the header and the footer?

Glad you asked. All you have to do is simply click on the existing header on this page and a box will pop up. You enter your header here.

Not sure about the font (text) format and size? As I explained above, my recommendations are to:

> Stick to Arial or Verdana fonts for the best readability
> Use the same font throughout
> Use 10pt. or 12pt. size (this is best for the Net)
> Format headlines at 14 pt. or 18pt. (bolded)
> Format sub-headlines at 12pt. or 14pt. (bolded)

Note: As you complete this process for each of your site's pages, keep in mind that you can take a look at your work by clicking on the Preview icon at the top of the page in the main toolbar.

Also, it is always a good idea to save your work as you go, and this can be done by clicking on the Save icon (located to the left of the Preview icon).

Follow this process until all of your pages have the look you want and the content you feel works best for your business.

Note: You can change the "look" at any time by clicking on the Design icon, which allows you to change the template, the color scheme, etc. Likewise, your copy can easily be updated and changed by following the steps outlined above.

Speaking of the look, in Step 3, I talked about exciting elements that you can add to your website to make it more appealing to your visitors, such as linking to an interactive blog. I also talked about your site's shopping cart and payment processor.

I will elaborate more on these shortly, as they are key components to your website.

For now, however, let's take a minute to touch again on the importance of graphics, illustrations and photos.

Remember, content is not just your site's words. As I explained before, content includes photos, graphics, blogs, audio and video.

In Step #5 – Develop Your Content, you started thinking about how you want your site to look and even brainstormed a bit about the graphics and images content you want to add to your website.

Now it's time to get some professional help.

To do this, you can return to Elance.com (www.postnewproject.com), BlogMoxie.com or, as I said previously explained, you can do a quick Google search for "graphic designers."

Regardless of which option you choose, I caution once again not to fall into the trap that Grace did. It is up to you to provide your graphics designer with direction and to let him or her know what you like and even what you don't like. You should also supply your graphics designer with any company logo or other existing images you have.

Action item #4 – Decide what images to add to your website

You've already brainstormed a bit about the graphics, product images, photos (such as pictures of your staff) charts, diagrams, etc. that you want to add to your website.

Now, it's decision time.

Write down a list of the graphics, images, photos etc. that you want included on your site now.

If you are unsure about what you want to add to your site as far as images and photos go, take a few minutes to view your competitor's sites. Visit other sites and make notes about what you like and don't like as it pertains to images for your own site.

Action item #5 – Gather the images for your website

You will now want to gather these images. For instance, if you have a company logo or staff photos you want included on the website, gather them all up now.

There are numerous picture services online for which you can again perform a Google search or you can browse through 1&1's Graphic Archive from your 1&1 Control Panel to find an array of images that you can use on your website free of charge.

I suggest you store these in an electronic file folder on your desktop, for quicker and easier access.

Action item #6 – Order graphics design services

You will now want to actually place an order for graphics design services. In doing this, make sure you provide your designer with detailed notes and strong direction. Remember, this is where Grace originally dropped the ball, but you don't have to.

Instead, provide your graphics designer with everything he or she needs to meet your expectations.

Action item #7 – Add graphics, images and photos

Once you have received the images back from your designer, it is time to add them to your website.

You can ask your graphics designer to handle this for you. Of course, you can expect to pay an additional fee for these services, so make sure you go over it with your graphics designer beforehand.

If you prefer to handle this yourself and trust me here, it really is something you can do, you simply need to refer to 1&1's Easy Set-up Guide and Manuals.

To show you how well pictures and illustrations work, think about this manual for just a minute. Isn't it true that the pictures and graphics I have provided have helped to really drive this information home?

This is certainly no accident. By including "visuals" on your pages, you further cement the information on that page in your visitor's mind (while prompting desired action).

Bottom line: pictures and graphics work!

And, any page you add to your site will benefit strongly from an image of some type, as you learned in Step #5 – Develop Your Content.

Before you start scratching your head here, you should know that 1&1 provides you with a virtual library of photos, graphics and animated images that you can use for your website.

And, best of all, adding them to your pages is as easy as 1, 2, 3…so give it a shot right now.

From your 1&1 Administration Control Panel, click on the Graphics Archive icon (which is under Websites & Applications).

Next, review the licensing agreement and click on Accept if you accept the terms.

As you will see, you will be taken to your Graphic Archive, where there are four categories: Animated images, Clipart, Individual items and Photos.

Click on the category you would like to view.

Once on the next page, you will be able to select sub-categories, which are very specific. For instance, if you click on Clipart, the sub-categories include everything from agriculture and architecture to health and safety, science and technology, even wildlife.

Beside each sub-category, you will see a number, which tells you how many pictures appear in this sub-category.

When you click on one of these, folders pop up under the sub-category. Click on any of these folders and the photos or illustrations will appear to the right.

Scroll through these and take some time to find images that appeal to you and, more importantly, that will appeal to your site's visitor.

When ready, click on the photo, image, graphics or clipart that you decide to use.

The image will appear on your screen and you have the option to Download the image or Close it and select another.

If you want to use this image, click Download. You will then be able to open the image on your desktop or save it to a disk.

To use the image in your website, save the image to your website project files and then upload it to your web space.

Note: For more information on using 1&1's Graphic Archive and uploading the photos, animated images, clipart illustrations, and photos to your site, refer to your user's manual. Remember, you printed this out and had it bound (or so I recommended). This is a great time to reach for it. You can use it here and as we progress through the next Action items.

And in this next Action item, we are going to look at adding videos and audio to your website, starting with podcasts and RSS feeds.

Action item #8 – Podcasts and RSS Feeds

You learned about podcasts in Step 5 – Develop Your Content, but do you know what an RSS Feed is?

An RSS feed is a method of distributing links or syndicating (see following paragraph) content in your website that you'd like others to use. It can be an easy way to draw attention to your products and services and can help you disseminate information quick and easy.

In general, syndication is the supply of material for reuse and integration with other material, often through a paid service subscription. The most common example of syndication is in newspapers, where such content as wire-service news, comics, columns, horoscopes, and crossword puzzles are usually syndicated content.

Newspapers receive their content from the content providers, reformat it as required, integrate it with other copy, print it, and publish it. For many years mainly a feature of print media, today content syndication is the way a great deal of information is disseminated across the Web. Reuters, for example, provides online news content to over 900 Web sites and portals, such as Yahoo and America Online.

Using 1&1's EasyRSS tool, you can easily add RSS Feeds to your own website.

You can work through the next few paragraphs and add this feature to your site now or, as you did with podcasting in the previous Step, you may want to add this feature at a later date.

Remember, when you are ready to take this on, you have the additional support of 1&1's Flash tutorials, FAQ search database and manuals, so this is sure to be a fairly simple process.

If this is something you want to get started on now just click on the RSS Feeds icon.

You will then be asked to Select Feed Type (new text channel, New podcast channel, New photocast channel, Import existing text channel and Include external text channel).

Now, you're almost there! All you have to do to complete this process is give your new channel a name and a description then assign it to your domain name.

The title and description will help others decide if they would like to subscribe to your feed.

You will be able to add your channel's subscription button to any of your websites through a link. The link will include the domain you select here. The domain itself can be used for other purposes, as well, and the channel will not automatically show up at this address.

Note: Although it is possible to change the domain later, once you have subscribers, changing the domain may cause problems. If you do choose to change the domain later, you will need to ask your subscribers to update their subscription.

You may want to take a quick break here and grab a coffee, tea or soda. You've done a great job and you're almost there. Just a bit more and your website will be "live" and online for the world to see.

Besides, armed with the information in this step, you will surely find crafting content for your sites, or hiring a writer to assist with this, is a cinch!

And if you struggle at all, think back to the rule of thumb, which is to write for your visitors! Just think through what each page is about and what information you would want to see on the page if you were a visitor.

It really is that easy!

You've worked through a wealth of information – and you are well on your way. Let's enter the "home stretch" now.

You've got text and images on your pages and perhaps you've also added a podcast or RSS feed.

Bet you never thought you'd come this far and that you could build a winning website.

Well, you have.

So give yourself a well-deserved pat on the back before we get back on course.

It's time to learn more about communicating with visitors to your new winning website!

Action item #9 – Complete the checklist for Step #6

At this point, prior to moving onto Step #7, I would suggest taking a moment and placing a checkmark beside the steps you have completed to date.

- Action item #1 – Choose your template
- Action item #2 – Set up your pages
- Action item #3 – Add content to your pages
- Action item #4 – Decide what images to add to your website
- Action item #5 – Gather the images for your website
- Action item #6 – Order graphics design services
- Action item #7 – Add graphics, images and photos
- Action item #8 – Podcasts and RSS Feeds
- Action item #9 – Complete the checklist for Step #6

Once you have…

chosen a template for your website's overall look, added content to your template, determined which images you want to add and hired a graphics designer, placed an order for graphics design work and added this new design work to your template

…then you are ready for the NEXT Step.

Part Three
Online PR

In Part Three, you will set-up your email address, learn all about ongoing communications with your online clientele, including how to take advantage of must-have tools such as newsletters and press releases.

You will also learn how Grace is using these tools to keep her customers coming back for more, all the while tapping into a new and unexpected clientele, which is prompting sales both online and off.

You will also learn about other exciting tools you can use, such as customer feedback forms and discussion forums, to take your customer service to the next level and truly set your business apart from even its toughest competitor.

In achieving this, you will see how adding a blog and regular blog postings, paired with the addition of ongoing informative articles to your website will please your visitors and the search engines, and keep your site high on the search engine returns – all of which can dramatically impact your bottomline.

You will also watch as Grace submits her site to search engines and directories and learn how to do this yourself.

You and Grace will develop inbound linking plans and ever-important text links and will learn a bit about advertising on the Net.

It's called online PR and simply put, these final two Steps are a must!

The information and Action items that follow in Part Three are what take your site to the top of search engine returns and keep it there.

So, don't stop now.

Work through these final two Steps now and you will see firsthand how what you learn in this final section is what keeps your site in front of your target audience, both now and in the future.

You've accomplished a great deal and I congratulate you.

Now it's time to wrap everything up and to get your site – your information, your products and/or your services out there where they belong – **and keep them there**, where they are in front of qualified customers who are looking for what you have to offer.

And, that all starts with ongoing communications.

Step #7 Communications On The Net!

Desired outcome

At the completion of THIS step…

…you will have set-up your email, selected your unique email address and added your own email signature. You will have added an email response form and a customer call back form to your site, as well as a FAQ list and discussion forum. You will have generated a customer survey and integrated it into your site, you will know how to create a newsletter for your clients, and you will have added your telephone number and stats counter to your site.

Grace has found that staying in-touch with her clients is a relatively easy job – one that is really, really paying off.

She is sending out a monthly newsletter to her clients and the response has been overwhelmingly positive.

Grace has even started surveying the visitors to her site to find out what they would like to see on her website and most recently added a forum, which is proving to be a fun, interactive tool for her existing and potential clients.

Apparently, brides-to-be have a lot to talk about amongst themselves. ☺

Grace is finding it hard to believe that these small additions to her website, additions that cost her very little to set up and only a small amount of effort to maintain, are already yielding such strong results.

Yet they are.

These ongoing communications have contributed to increased sales and customer satisfaction, while also drawing in new clients.

Who would have ever thought that staying in touch would accomplish all of this?

Additionally, Grace has also found there are a few simple tricks that help to maintain these newly opened lines of communications and helps her keep these lines open all of the time (even when Grace is snug in her bed and fast asleep).

And Grace's clients couldn't be happier. They are visiting her website and her store like never before.

The same can happen for you and your business, but you will have to follow Grace's lead here. She has the tools in place and the dedication needed to follow these through.

Create an advantage

Before we get into this further, you should know that it is not uncommon for Web surfers (potential customers) to send companies (of every size and within every niche) emails with questions about their products or services, only to receive a reply two or three days later or worse, not at all.

Has this ever happened to you?

It certainly has happened to me.

And by being cognizant of this, you can create a great advantage for your business.

How, you ask?

Easy.

Be responsive to your online clients. Don't treat them any differently than you do the clients who walk into your company's physical location.

And take advantage of the great tools your hosting company provides you with that allow you to keep in touch with your clients - such as newsletters, forums and surveys, all of which we will expand on in this Step.

As you get accustom to responding to your online clientele, you will see that you spend more time online. You will absolutely need to check your email on a daily basis and perhaps even several times each day.

Think of it like this. When you are unable to answer a call, the caller leaves you a message, perhaps with an assistant or fellow employee, or perhaps on your voicemail.

You check these messages and return the calls or take the appropriate course of action, right?

You will need to do the same for your online clients, most of which will contact you through email, although some will call you by phone.

Additionally, by adding an email submission form, which allows visitors to your site to send you emails directly (which end up in your inbox) you can make this process as easy and efficient for your visitor as you do for yourself.

Even if you did not choose 1&1 for your hosting company, you can install tools such as this within your website template. Simply look to the hosting company you have chosen for these important solutions.

Now, let's keep moving here.

In the following task, we talk about setting up your email, which, although quite simple, is a very important step that you will want to accomplish today.

No worries. I am going to help you do just that.

Action item #1 – Set up your email

1&1 and most other hosting providers give you a couple of options for email.

Generally, the hosting companies provide you with web mail interface, which allows you to log onto the Internet where you check your email online from anywhere in the world, using just an Internet connection.

You may already be familiar with Hotmail or Gmail (from Google), both of which are great examples of web-based email.

Or, if you prefer to use Microsoft Outlook (or other similar email programs) from your computer, you simply set up what is called a POP3/IMAP email account with your hosting company.

You will want to grab your 1&1 Easy Setup Guide now. In it, you will find easy-to-follow instructions for setting up your email account. Additionally, you can also go to the FAQ section of the 1&1 site and under Categories, click on the Email option.

Next, click on New Email Addresses and then you can choose from five articles. Open the first article, called "How do I create a new email address?"

You will find everything you need to get the ball rolling here.

While this should be a fairly simple process, if you find you struggle or just need a bit of help with this, call your hosting company (now you will see for yourself how important it is to have a phone number on a website). ☺

The technical support team walks people through this process all day long so you don't need to be shy about calling. This is something you want to get right.

And if you chose 1&1, you will find that the Easy Setup Guide manual that you printed out is a great resource here, and has everything you need to handle this on your own. But in the unlikely event you still need additional help, 1&1 has its telephone number on its site.

I would suggest that you take the time to get your email set-up now. You can go ahead and move forward to the next Action item for help selecting your email address, as this is sure to clear up any confusion or answer any questions you may have about selecting your actual email address.

Action item #2 – Select your email address

So, you're ready to select your email address.

Before I offer a few pointers to help you with this, I want to congratulate you for another job well done! Take a minute (but just one because we're in the midst of some really important stuff here) to really pat yourself on the back. You deserve it!

Now, on to some pointers that you can use to make sure you select the best email address possible. Here they are:

- The email address you choose should clearly identify you (the sender). This helps to differentiate your email from unwanted emails sent by fly-by-night businesses, which are commonly known as "spam").
- The email address you choose should be traceable and complete with information identifying you (again, as the sender) at the end of the email. This is called your email signature.
- The email address you choose should be comprised of a name and should always include the proper first and last names, whereby the first name may be abbreviated to one letter. For example:

karen.meyer@company.net

k.meyer@company.net

Keep in mind that, while short form email addresses can be read quickly, they only make sense if the receiver already knows the sender's email address.

The following email address is an example of what not to do. It establishes little trust and may be eliminated as spam.

km@abbr.com

For general corporate email, I recommend you establish emails such as these:

info@company.net

marketing@company.net

service@company.net

As you see, the above email address examples are suitable for use by departments where customers do not generally interact with a specific individual.

Take the time to select your own email address now. You will need it as we move forward throughout Step 7.

Action item #3 – Add your email signature

Much like you have your company's information on your letterhead, your fax cover sheets, your invoices, your catalogs, your mailings, your brochures, etc., you will want to make sure you have your company's information on your emails.

The good news here: You can set this up so it is added automatically to your emails (so you do not have to type it in every time, which would be terribly time consuming).

This is known as your email "signature."

Aside from the obvious marketing benefits here, reputable companies consider it a common courtesy to include common information regarding the sender at the end of every email.

Email applications such as Microsoft Outlook Express include an "email signature" function that enables you to automatically include your contact information in every new email.

Here's a great example of an email signature used by my editor:

> Kellie Fowler
> DotComCopy.net
> 107 Rideau Street, RR # 5
> Perth, ON K7H 3C7
> Phone: 1-613-326-0563
> Fax: 1-613-326-0072
> Email: kellie.fowler@dotcomcopy.com
> Website: www.dotcomcopy.net

If you have chosen 1&1 as your hosting provider, you can find help with this by navigating to the main FAQ page. Once there, click on the Email option (under Categories).

Once on this next page, click on WebMail.

On the WebMail page, about halfway down, you will find an option that says: "What is an email Signature?"

Click on this option.

This gives you a great overview and provides you with a quick step-by-step guide to getting your own email signature set-up. Also, 1&1's nifty Online Assistant will be there to guide you through the process.

Take a few minutes to do this now, before progressing to the next Action item, which shows you how to set-up an email response form that is sure to benefit your site's visitors, your business, and you!

Action item #4 – Add an email response form

Grace has also recently added an email response form and is thrilled with the feedback she's receiving.

Using the email response form, they ask her questions about dress materials, size availability, accessories such as shoes and jewelry, and more.

And because the email reader simply clicks on a link and provides the question, suggestion or comment they wish to relay to Grace, along with their contact information, the process is quick and easy for her potential clients, creating a real win-win situation.

While Grace's products are easily explained, many companies provide products and/or services that cannot be detailed in a few short, simple paragraphs.

And trying to outline everything about your business in an email can be as tedious for you as it is confusing for the reader.

In such cases, I strongly recommend that you don't even attempt to outline everything in detail. Instead, hone your efforts in on one differentiating competitive aspect, complete with its benefits or advantages.

In a nutshell: Offer prospects a simple and informal opportunity to establish contact with your company.

An email response form is particularly suited to this task.

Your prospects can use it around the clock to send questions, or to order a catalog, brochure, etc. by regular mail.

This gives you a chance to process the request at your own pace and to call back the prospect, which has now been identified because they provided you with their contact information on the email response form).

In short, you may have just acquired a new customer.

Here is an example of an invitation to interact using an email response form:

Name of the link: I am interested and have additional questions…

You can click on the FormBuilder icon from your 1&1 Administration Control Panel. You will find this icon under the Website & Applications tab on this page.

As you will see, 1&1's FormBuilder has ready-to-use forms that you can easily add to your website, allowing you to obtain data from your visitors, such as contact information, online orders, event registrations, customer surveys, and much more.

You can choose from 1&1's templates, or mix and match to create a customized form.

1&1's special Online Assistant can guide you through the entire process and you will also find additional information on this by going to your FAQ section and searching for "add forms."

Using 1&1, the information that your visitors enter in your forms is saved in a special Internet database, viewable at any time. You can even have the information emailed to you. That means you'll never miss a message from your visitors or customers.

Go ahead and do this now before you move on. By working with a form generator in this Action item, you make the following step, which is also form-related, much easier (although it really is already quite simple).

If you chose another hosting provider, you will probably find this information in their manual or on their website. If not, I urge you to give them a quick call now (but only after looking ahead to see the titles of the next few Action items, so you can inquire about how-to for each of these with a single call or an email to your hosting company's customer service team.

Note: You should know that as you create this email response form and the forms that I detail in the following Action items, you can rely on 1&1's form templates or mix and match to create a more customized form. Additionally (and this is really, really cool) 1&1 will save the information that your visitors enter in your forms in a special Internet database, viewable by you at any time. You can even have the information emailed to you. This means you'll never miss a message from your visitors or customers.

You should also know as you progress through Step 7, you can rely on 1&1's comprehensive FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) section (even as you build your site's own FAQ). ☺

In the 1&1 FAQ section, accessible from your Control Panel, you have the ability to search for answers to anything and everything you need to achieve every Action item in Steps 7 and 8, so don't be shy.

Put the 1&1 FAQ section and search capabilities to work for you. That's exactly what the tools are for.

Action item #5 – Add a call-back response form

As I mentioned above, there are times when you simply are unable to describe a product or service in its entirety and, unfortunately, the product or service itself may not be all that self-explanatory to a visitor to your website.

However, if a visitor to your site does not fully understand what he or she is considering buying, you've lost a sale before the process ever began and all your hard work up to this point is wasted.

Don't let that happen!

Of course, I understand that you cannot answer every question on your website.

And, that's A-OK.

Because you can compensate for this by simply adding a call-back response form to your website.

Of course, like I pointed out in the previous Action item, you need to take the time to emphasize the benefits of your products or services and whatever differentiates them from comparable products or services offered by other vendors.

And, after doing this, you can include a simple request for a telephone call instead of providing a link for your visitors to click on for "additional details."

By doing this (and by "this" I mean simply using a call-back response form), your site visitor gives you an opportunity to provide additional details in smaller doses, once again creating a win-win situation.

You can again click on the FormBuilder icon from your 1&1 Administration Control Panel to start tis process. And don't forget to rely on 1&1's FAQ section if you feel unsure because this form is something you want to get set up now.

Trust me here.

This form will prove to be as invaluable for you as it has for Grace, who now proudly reports that she and her staff return calls to several people each week, almost every one of which has resulted in a sale!

Get this form added to your website before progressing to the next Action item. Like Grace, you're sure to be glad you did.

Now, on to setting up your site's FAQ.

Action item #6 – Add a FAQ list and discussion forum

As a small business owner, Grace keeps a very watchful eye on her operating costs.

Like you, she needs to maximize her efforts in the area of customer satisfaction, while minimizing her support costs.

And she has found a great way to do this.

Grace has added an FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) list to her website, along with a discussion forum to the site, because she is acutely aware that good service is often more important than a good product.

Likewise Grace understands that customer loyalty is often not established until a particular issue has been resolved.

So Grace now relies on her website's comprehensive FAQ list and new discussion forum to provide better customer service and to help resolve any issues her site's visitors may have.

The FAQ section on Grace's website saves her time and money, since the most frequently asked questions are subsequently answered automatically, while the discussion forum allows visitors to discuss Grace's products, services, customer service, their questions, etc., creating a great opportunity to involve visitors to her site while helping to increase customer satisfaction and ultimately her sales.

Yes, you guessed it: Another win-win for Grace.

If you're a bit weary about adding a discussion forum to your site, consider this information:

> ■ Offering a discussion forum gives customers access to a particularly useful service.

- Unlike a chat mechanism (which allows members to sign-in and chat live in real time), a discussion forum is not tied to a fixed time slot. Discussions are visible to anyone and are not conducted live.
- You can make your own decision about what is published at the time, and what is not.
- In a discussion forum, customers can post questions about your products or raise concerns.
- You can subsequently decide (moderate a role) whether or not you wish to publish the question and its answer on your website and to do this, all that is required is a quick click of your mouse.

Hopefully you're convinced that your visitors will benefit from a FAQ section and discussion forum and add both of these important features to your site.

Now, let's take the first step in creating your website's FAQ list to which everyone will have access that determines which questions and answers you need to provide your site's visitors.

In doing this, you may want to talk to your employees, your clients, and even your family and friends to get a better understanding of any questions visitors to your website may have.

Start writing these down.

And, if you need help, call on your writer. Your copywriter can help you brainstorm questions and answers as they become more familiar with you and your business (as well as your website and your website's visitors).

As you build your FAQ section, you can again rely on 1&1's templates, Online Assistant and your trusty Easy Setup Guide to help you navigate through this process, not to mention 1&1's FAQ.

1&1 boasts one of the best FAQ sections out there and you can use it as a resource as you build your own, pulling from the wealth of information it provides and using it as an example of what you want your own FAQ section to accomplish.

As you will see, it's easier than you think.

Besides, by now, you have to be getting excited about the various tools you are adding to your website.

Not only will this arsenal of tools make chiseling out online success much easier, you can count on these tools to maximize your efforts and help streamline your customer service costs. Like Grace, you probably keep a watchful eye on these areas of your business, too, and these tools can be counted on to make a real difference.

Speaking of tools, let's cover just a few more before we move to Step 8.

Before doing this, take the time now to set up your FAQ and discussion forum. Remember: You can quickly and easily add new questions and answers to your FAQ section later on. For now, focus on getting these two features set up.

Once you have them in place, it's time to look at creating a customer survey and how to integrate it into your website.

Action item #7 – Generate a customer survey and integrate it into your site

As a successful business owner, you are undoubtedly aware of the fact that you must know as much as possible about your target group, including your clients opinions and their buying habits.

As Grace has found, this is the only way to establish a solid foundation for product and service improvements. In fact, just last month Grace received information from a customer survey that prompted her to carry a new line of wedding dresses. It took a little over a week for the order to be delivered and wouldn't you know it. Grace sold out of the entire line in just over two weeks.

She has since ordered more from this specialty line of wedding dresses and has moved out another line that was not making her any money.

The result: Grace earned herself several thousand dollars just this month alone – and that's several thousand she did not anticipate. Better yet, she is working with the provider of this specialty line of wedding gowns to bring in bridesmaids dresses by the same designer and has already pre-sold two dozen of these!

And this is business that was generated from her website's customer survey.

As Grace will now attest, surveys are an ideal way to obtain detailed customer information, which you can use to tweak your own products and services, all in an effort to make your business more successful and your bottom-line fatter. ☺

Customer surveys are especially useful when it is important to obtain indisputable facts, instead of mere perceptions – like when Grace is ordering thousands of dollars of wedding gowns and bridesmaids dresses and can use customer service information to influence her decision, vs. her own likes and dislikes.

In Grace's case, the information from her website's customer survey proved highly valuable – allowing her to pocket thousands of dollars.

And because there are special tools that enable you to quickly and easily generate the necessary forms, without having any specialized programming knowledge, there is no reason why you can't quickly and easily add a customer survey to your website now.

You can use the FormBuilder tool at 1&1 or the search capabilities offered to you through 1&1's FAQ section, as I have suggested before.

As you will see, there are templates for you to choose from that make this process a cinch.

You will need to come up with question and answer combinations that work for you and your business and, once again, you can rely on your writer to help with this process.

Of course, no one knows your business like you, so I recommend that you take a few minutes now to think about the kind of information you would like to receive from your customers.

For instance, would it benefit you and your business to ask about a specific product or service?

Or perhaps you want to ask about price points. You could even ask your customers for their opinions about your new website, about the customer service you offer, etc.

Whatever questions you decide on, you will need to offer response options that include lists (pull-down menu selection), multiple choice (selecting one or more answers) and input fields for written answers.

And if you use 1&1, your customer responses are presented in the form of statistical analysis and graphics charts. And, as I pointed out before, it is even saved for you so you can view it at any time.

As you go about adding a customer survey to your site, I caution you to be careful when creating your surveys, as poorly executed customer surveys can annoy your target group.

Here are a few tips to help you:

- Avoid questionnaires that are too long. A customer survey should only take a visitor 2-5 minutes to complete.
- Avoid questions that are not absolutely relevant to the surveys purpose.
- Make sure you have adequate selection categories for answers.
- Incentives such as a raffle prize can convince the customer that it is worthwhile to invest the time in responding to the survey.

You should know that recently I decided to survey the customers on one of my sites, which I have owned for more than five years.

I assumed I had a good handle on what the visitors to this site were looking for, and for the most part I do. But, when I added the questionnaire form to my site, I was surprised to see that 50% of the questions I expected; but the other 50% I did not.

This just goes to show you that you can always learn more about your customers and it's your job to have a thorough understanding of what they want when they visit your site and what they are looking to find.

Considering this and the obvious value customer surveys have yielded both Grace and me, I urge you to add one to your site now.

Sure, it may take you a few minutes to get your questions and answers thought out.

That's OK.

Start this process now and if you are going to rely on your copywriter to help here, go ahead and get the form set-up and take a few seconds more to send your copywriter an email or give them a quick call. Let them know about the various forms you are

adding to your site throughout this Step and that you need their help before moving forward.

Once you have done this, it's time to look at one of my favorite steps, a tool that has worked wonders for my business and that's a newsletter.

Action item #8 – Implement an email newsletter

Sure, winning customers is difficult and sometimes requires a little luck.

Retaining customers for as long as possible and making them loyal to the company is a painstaking and time-consuming process.

But, it doesn't need to be.

You see, in this Action item, I am going to show you how to use an email newsletter for repeat customers and for prospects.

As I have found in my own business, and as Grace has found in hers, a regularly published email newsletter satisfies your customers' craving for information.

At the same time, you will continually provide new food for thought while giving your customers the assurance that you are looking after them, and that they made the right decision when they selected your company.

Instead of using so-called "mailing lists", where email messages are not personalized or customized when they are sent to the email distribution list, you can use a software application to generate high-quality email newsletters, which can be personalized and fine tuned to cater to the specific interests of individual customers.

Take a minute to consider these benefits:

- The email newsletter includes exactly the information that interests the particular customer.
- Your customers can contact you easily and directly and make reference to the contents of your newsletter.
- An email newsletter enables you to present news, as well as new products or services in a way that will generate additional sales.

■ You will already be able to measure the success of a new email newsletter a few days after sending it out.

■ Producing an email newsletter is easy and costs almost nothing, only time. Your customers should be worth this investment.

You can create your own newsletter easily by using 1&1's E-mail Marketing Tool. You will find this on your Control Panel.

You can use your 1&1 Easy Setup Guide to help you get started or simply launch the E-mail Marketing Tool by clicking on it.

Also, you can search the FAQ section for "newsletter" and have access to several on-screen tutorials that walk you through this process step-by-step.

You will be able to choose your newsletters layout, the images you want to use (and learn how to add your own), you will see exactly where to place your content and how to put together your mailing list – all of which you can do with a click of your mouse.

And, with just a few more quick clicks, you can distribute your newsletter and view statistics. These important statistics include information such as which recipient's newsletters were caught by a junk filter or spam filter, which addresses the newsletter was successfully delivered to, and those addresses that did not receive it and more.

And in the event you did not choose 1&1 as your hosting option, you will find that nowadays, hosting companies usually provide this tool with the hosting package.

Keep in mind that if you're going to start a newsletter, maybe not right away but soon, you will have to commit to this and once a month develop an email newsletter to send to your customers.

Nothing is worse than having someone sign-up for a newsletter they never receive or perhaps receive once and then not again for six months, at which time they forgot they signed-up and associate your email with spam.

If you have taken my advice and hired a writer, you can start to see how important this writer is to your business because once this writer understands your business, you can put this task and many others in your writer's hands.

Your copywriter can even package it all up for you and deliver it to you ready to send out or may even handle sending it out for you, too.

If looking for ideas to entice visitors to join your newsletter, do a Google search and look at the paid links on the right-hand side of the returns page. These paid search marketers are usually very, very good at this and you should visit their sites to see some examples.

Below you see one of my favorite examples of a newsletter subscription sign-up offer. It's from Barbecue America and those who register for the newsletter receive an enticing package, including "discounts, recipes and more." Now, if you're into barbecuing, this offer is enticing and that's exactly what you want.

If you choose to wait before starting your newsletter, take a minute or two here now to look around at other newsletters and offers/ideas that entice visitors to subscribe to newsletters.

Also, even if you do not start your newsletter now, you may want to go ahead and let your writer know when you are looking to launch your first edition, so they can begin the planning process for you as soon as possible.

In the meantime, I have just a few more suggestions (Action items) that you can use right now to help you better communicate with potential and existing customers and you're sure to be surprised at the sheer simplicity and ease with which you can implement these. But don't be fooled. The results are BIG!

In fact, you can start by doing something as simple as adding your telephone number to your website. This will only take a minute or two, so let's do it now.

Action item #9 – Put your telephone number on your site

I am sorry to say that to this day many large and reputable companies still do not pub-lish their phone number on their site or, if they do, they seem to hide it so you have to "dig" around to find it.

Don't make this mistake!

Keep in mind that visitors to your site are used to getting answers. After all, we live in a day and age where we want information in an instant.

So if a visitor gets to your website and finds it does not have what they are looking for, or perhaps they have a question about a product or a service offered on your web-site, the only way to prevent them from hitting the looming back button and going elsewhere is by providing them with the answers they need in a timely manner.

And the only way for people to get quick answers is by using the phone.

Thank goodness for Alexander Graham Bell, right?

Sure, people realize that your store or office is not open 24/7 and most will not call after hours, but if they do, make sure you have voicemail so they can leave their ques-tions or concerns with you.

Then make sure to reply as quickly as possible.

I should point out here that I just don't deal with companies that don't make their phone number available on their website because when I need to talk to someone, I need to be able to phone them.

The Net compensates for stores and businesses not being open 24/7, but nothing, and I do mean NOTHING, can replace a quick conversation when the need arises.

This said, it is important that the person answering calls from the number on your website be up-to-date with everything on your website. You don't want to have some-one answering these calls that are so disconnected from site they don't know what the caller is talking about.

You could have thousands of visitors a day (depending on traffic, which I show you how to get lots of in Step 8). Give these people the same care and attention that you give someone walking through your door or calling on you to provide a service.

Treat online customers the same as those that walk through your front door.

Sorry for the little rant here, but I've just seen it so many times that someone goes to the time and energy to build a great site (and perhaps even offer a great product or service) only to lose me in the sales process because I can't get a question answered or a customer representative doesn't know what I am talking about, or doesn't treat me well when I call.

Make it a priority to be good at communicating with your customers and providing your company's telephone number on your website, in plain view, is one of the best ways to do this.

And having said that, my most successful site, the one with the most traffic and that clearly displays my phone number actually gets the fewest number of calls of all of my websites primarily because over the last few years we've really focused on making sure visitors get what they want when they visit my site.

I tell you this because I think it is worth pointing out that just because the telephone number is there, it doesn't mean that people will call; however, it does provide them with a certain amount of comfort and that is important.

So don't take another step here without quickly adding your telephone number to your website. You should add it on the Contact Us page, just as you added content to the page templates in Step 5.

Action item #10 – Add a stats counter to your site

I've been training webmasters the last 5 or 6 years and I can't tell you how many times I've asked them to pull up the stats counter and show me the number of visitors they get each day and where these visitors are coming from (Google, Yahoo, MSN, directories, etc.), are they returning by bookmarks, etc.

These tracking tools (which are included with 1&1 hosting package), are very easy to turn on and will provide you with all the data you need, right at your fingertips, to show you exactly how people find your site, which page they enter your site on, what pages they click through to, what their navigation Action item through your site are, what page they leave site on, how many minutes they spend on each page and more – all of which gives you a clear and accurate picture of what happens when someone arrives to your website.

You not only want to know this, but simply put, you have to.

Not convinced? Consider this: If you have no idea if people visited your store today, how do you manage your business and how do you adjust to make sure visitors return tomorrow?

Imagine being the owner of a large retail store and calling to ask your store's manager how many visitors stopped by that day and having him or her reply that they did not know. What would happen if you asked this same manager how the sales numbers looked for the day and he again replied he did not know?

Well, I know. You wouldn't employ that manager much longer.

These tracking tools not only let you know how visitors entered your site, but what was purchased, what keywords they used to find your site and more, giving you an all-encompassing picture of what's going on.

So don't make the mistake of not installing these tracking tools.

With many hosting companies, you will find you have to go to a third party link, such www.hitslink.com (which does provide a beautiful tracking and analysis tool), and pay a fee to get it started. Sure, this may only be $10 to get started, but it can quickly run into a large monthly expense because the fee is based on volume.

Again, I suggest you use the tracking tools provided free of charge by 1&1. These will provide you with everything you need.

And once you have added these features and tools to your site, push yourself to keep going. Refer to your hosting manual often and become a student of your site.

Communicate.

Ask your customers want they want.

Make applicable changes.

Analyze.

Track progress.

Repeat.

Action item #11 – Complete the checklist for Step #7

At this point, prior to moving onto Step #8, I would suggest taking a moment and placing a checkmark beside the steps you have completed to date.

- Action item #1 – Set up your email
- Action item #2 – Select your email address
- Action item #3 – Add your email signature
- Action item #4 – Add an email response form
- Action item #5 – Add a customer call-back form
- Action item #6 – Add a FAQ list and discussion forum
- Action item #7 – Generate a customer survey and integrate it into your site
- Action item #8 – Implement an email newsletter
- Action item #9 – Put your telephone number on your site
- Action item #10 – Add a stats counter to your site
- Action item #11 – Complete the checklist for Step #7

Once you have…

……set up your email, selected your email address and added your email signature, as well as added an email response form and a customer call-back form to your site, along with a FAQ list and discussion forum, and generated a customer survey and integrated it into your site, know how to create a newsletter, added your telephone number and a stats counter to your site…

…then you are ready for the NEXT step.

Step #8
Site Promotion

Desired outcome

At the completion of THIS step…

…you will have submitted your site to the major search engines and local directories, developed an inbound linking plan, developed text links for your home page, identified a list of business associates that will list your website address on their websites, learned how to write and distribute a press release locally and online, identified banner ad networks that you may want to advertise with and found some simple, but often overlooked ways to promote your website and understand a bit about affiliate programs and how these work.

Now for the icing on the cake

Kudos to you, for you truly deserve a pat on the back for a job well done! You have accomplished a great deal by completing the previous 7 steps.

Now you are ready to finish things up.

And, you'll be happy to know that the final touches you are about to do are very simple – especially when compared to the work you've done so far.

But, don't be fooled by their simplicity.

By gaining a firm grasp on what I'm about to reveal, you position your new website for maximum visibility and traffic, which is sure to positively impact your business's bottomline.

That's right!

By properly executing the few final steps in this module, you will dramatically improve your chances of gaining a great deal of free traffic from the search engines – especially Google.

Keeping your eye on the prize

And now, it's time for your hard work to start paying off.

But to ensure this happens, it will be very important that you set aside time each week, and actually schedule this time in and stick to it, to handle the exciting, rewarding promotional aspects of your website.

Remember: You worked hard to get here and you have accomplished so much. Allowing this to go to waste because you do not set aside the regular time needed to truly maintain and nurture your website would be a shame (perhaps to the tune of hundreds of thousands of dollars).

So, I urge you to stay focused, have faith in the steps, and to push through when you feel like quitting.

By keeping this momentum going, and keeping your eye on the prize, a successful and profitable well ranked website will follow.

But you simply must realize how very important it is that you stay focused and get the job done.

Like a mentor of mine says: "no hocus-pocus, just focus".

For now, let's focus on search engines and directories, two of the many areas you will continue to focus on long after this Step and this training is complete.

Search engines and directories

Until the search engines index you, you essentially have a lonely brochure that relies solely on your promotional efforts to drive eyeballs to it.

But, thankfully your site has been carefully organized to rank highly with search engines so that people find you.

But THAT can only take place after your site gets submitted to the search engines, and the necessary *back links* are in place (more on this shortly).

As I previously explained, by working with 1&1, you maintain a virtual arsenal of tools you need to do EVERYTHING for your new site – all in one place. This will help keep everything organized for you and allows you to maintain better control of your online presence.

The same goes for site submission to the search engines, which include Google and about a dozen or so other major players. These English-language search engines generate 90% of all traffic, while approximately 200 general and special purpose indexes are also out there and can be somewhat useful.

You see, a 'search engine' is a database of web pages, while an 'index' is a database of web sites. Your listing in an index depends on what you tell them, not what's on your page, as with search engines.

And because you have painstakingly created content-rich web pages for your website, all you need to do now is submit your URL (your site's address on the World Wide Web) to all the major search engines.

But, not to worry.

What used to be a tedious and time-consuming task is now handled for you at 1&1.

Site submission in a nutshell

All that is required by indexes and search engines is a one-time registration that takes about 60 minutes.

The good news is that makes this an easy process by providing you with a custom form that you fill out only once. And given that want to be included in as many of the 200 indexes and search engines as possible for maximum exposure this certainly trims this process down. You wouldn't want to fill out 200 +/- forms now would you?

Instead, the search engine tools that 1&1 utilize actually go around the Net and do all the typing for you, which saves you a huge amount of time and energy.

Automatic submission works fine

Some will say that manually submitting your site works best.

But, these are people who usually have a vested interested in doing it on your behalf for a fee.

Notwithstanding the exceptions mentioned above, automatic submissions done by 1&1 are absolutely as good as manual promotion.

Action item #1 – Promote your site to the major search engines and directories

Go to www.1and1.com.

1&1 provides the tools that know how to talk to all the important search engines and indexes, (and a lot of the semi-important ones, too) and the list is growing daily.

What I like the best is that the tedious (and important) task of submission now takes only minutes.

Click on 1&1's SimpleSubmission toll from your Control Panel now. You will see a brief summary that explains this tool and after reading this, click on the Next button for an engaging Walkthrough Tutorial.

Online Directories

While 1&1 automatically submits your site to a ton of places, it does not auto-submit sites to some major indexes such as Yahoo or the Open Directory (also known as Dmoz.com). The reason is that listings in these indexes are valuable and because of this, it is worth much more for you to create your own hand-done, optimized submission is well worth taking the time to craft.

In Action item #2, I provide you with information on two directories that are edited by humans who can say "yes "or "no" to including your site in their directory.

Keep in mind that getting listed in these directories is important because these directories are used by many people, and these people amount to another great source of free traffic for your site, which is the goal here.

Because these directories are "hand" edited by humans (unlike the search engines which are edited by a mathematical algorithm), the search engines tend to place a higher value on sites that have been included in these directories, creating a real win-win.

Take a minute or two now to create an accurate 20-25 word description of your website that includes a couple of your primary keywords. You will use this description when you submit your site.

You may remember that Grace identified her primary keywords as "Santa Barbara wedding gowns". With this in mind, this is the description she crafted using her keywords:

> "Santa Barbara wedding gowns, specializing in formal and informal wedding dresses, gowns, bridal attire and accessories."

While there are no guarantees that your site will be included in these directories, by carefully reviewing and following the submission guidelines, you certainly increase your chances of inclusion.

Action item #2 – Promote your site to the Open Directory

Go to www.dmoz.com and click on the Suggest URL link.

I strongly suggest that you go ahead and print the "How to suggest a site to the Open Directory" information you will find when you click on the above link. You will need to review this and have it in hand as you go through the submission process.

Note: I have found that you can increase your chance of being accepted into the Open Directory by using the listings located in the category where your site might reside as a model for the development of your listing.

As you see on the screenshot of the Dmoz home page above, there more than a dozen categories. Grace, for instance, chooses the Shopping category. Within this category (and all others on the Dmoz home page), there are numerous sub-categories.

From the Shopping sub-categories, Grace chooses Clothing.

Again, a new page opens and Grace finds yet more sub-categories, but these are more specific, as they fall under Clothing.

Grace glances over the page and finds the sub-category that is ideal for her site: Bridal.

This is just great for Grace, who can now choose from Bridal sub-categories such as accessories, gowns, designers, shoes, veils, etc.

Perfect!

Give this a try for yourself now. It's quick, easy and surprisingly fun.

In addition to the standard Yahoo! search engine (http://www.yahoo.com), Yahoo! provides a popular directory (http://dir.yahoo.com/)

If you have a non-commercial site you can submit it to the Yahoo! Directory for free.

If you have a commercial site, Yahoo! Directory does charge a submission fee that may, at first glance, seem a little pricey: however, because of the advantages obtaining such a listing provides your site, I think you will find it a worthwhile investment.

Action item #3 – Promote your site to the Yahoo! Directory

Go to http://search.yahoo.com/info/submit.html.

Next, if you have a commercial site, click on the Yahoo! Directory Submit link, or if you have a non-commercial site click on the Yahoo! Standard link.

Once you have submitted your site to the major search engines and directories, it is time to identify a list of local community business directories where you might promote your site, as well.

It seems almost all communities have them, but before you go ahead and seek out the local directories, let's get you right up to speed on the importance of link popularity and how it relates to your site.

Understanding link popularity

It's estimated that Google alone indexes 10 million pages daily!

That's right.

A single search engine must properly sort and rank 10 million web pages every day.

Of course, this presents a huge challenge to its engineers who must devise algorithms that effectively prioritize these pages.

In previous Steps, you learned the very best techniques for optimizing your content to attract the attention of search engine spiders, – plus you learned how to do your submissions the right way.

And, until very recently, that was all that was needed to win the search engine wars, as far as I knew.

But, now you must do a little bit more.

The reason is that Google, – along with several major search engines, – has started to "factor in" another important criteria in determining rankings.

So, in addition to the optimization you have done, – the search engines also really want to know who is linking to you.

As the name implies, – the term "link popularity" is a measure of how popular your page is, based on the "number" and "quality" of incoming links from other external pages on the Net!

And, how important a *particular* page is within your site, – which is based on how many *internal* links are pointing to that page, – signifying THIS page is IMPORTANT….more important than the rest.

Of course, your "money" pages are your Home and Article pages, – so most of the links from other pages on your site (internal) and pages on the Net (external) will "link" there.

Simple really.

All of the major search engines factor link popularity into their relevancy algorithms, in one form or another.

As a result, – by increasing the <u>number</u> of links to your site, (or page) – you can *dramatically* improve your rankings.

Lineups say a lot

The idea of "ranking" based on link popularity is easy to grasp when thought of in human terms.

A friend of mine, – who used to run dances in the 60's, – says that although his dances always started at 8 pm sharp, – he never opened the doors until the last minute.

And that's because the lineup, which started about 20 minutes before the doors opened, would invariably attract the attention of others driving by.

Competition for attendance at dances in the 60's was tough.

Kids usually had several choices on any given Friday or Saturday night.

Uppermost in these teenagers' minds were thoughts like, "Will the band be good?" and "Will there be lots of cute girls or nice guys?" and "Who else is going?"

What the lineup inferred was this…

…. *everybody's* going!

Is there a lineup to *your* site?

Are there any links to your site?

Is there a "lineup of links" pointing towards your site?

Or is it being ignored.

A valid lineup to your site works, – a phony lineup doesn't

As is ever the case with the Internet, there is always a small group of technically savvy people, who will attempt to "beat the system", so to speak.

So once it got out that "link popularity" could boost rankings, – some began setting up "link farms" that would act like spiders and automatically develop huge lists of links, – which could be posted on your site for a fee.

This worked until Google and the gang caught on and began banning or penalizing the offending sites.

Play by the rules and win

There is a lot of misinformation about link popularity.

I caution any reader to avoid spending much time in the "chat rooms" on this subject.

That's because people who are writing much of what you read there are really just "guessing."

In fact, the secret to understanding link popularity is to recognize that these changes are simply another way for Google (and others) to improve their search results.

For instance: If you have a bona fide site about automotive products, – with Articles about leasing, parts, accessories, tools and loans, – then all you have to do is devise ways to "green flag" the spiders about the true nature of your site.

There is no need to try and fool anybody with "link spamming".

Simply follow the rules I have used successfully to gain maximum rankings by gathering links from external sources (as I will outline shortly).

But first, and before we begin to identify a list of local directories, I'll develop an inbound link plan for Grace's website so you can get a visual on what it takes to obtain top rankings at the search engines, – especially Google.

Action item #4 – Develop an inbound linking plan

This is fairly simple and, if you just follow my lead here – and create an inbound linking plan, by watching me create one for GracesWeddingGowns.com, you will have a strong competitive advantage over most webmasters.

As we do this, it is important to keep in mind that search engines rank pages, NOT sites. This is why it is best that we develop a separate inbound link plan for the Home page and each of the Articles.

Stop here and think about all of this for just a minute.

I mean *really* think about it all.

Do you see now how focusing all of your time and attention on working on the site, and ignoring or not spending enough time to gather up the required number of links, can defeat your best efforts here?

If this isn't clear to you, go over the above information once again.

Now you will understand the entire business boils down to only two things: publishing quality content and arranging quality inbound links.

That's really it.

Everything else is just details.

And, much like it took some focused effort to get your initial home page and articles created, it will also take a focused effort to get the initial inbound links for your new site.

And now that you thoroughly understand the importance of inbound links, it's time to do a quick estimation of how many are needed.

Text link management

Before we get into a discussion about sources and methods for creating and arranging inbound links to your site, it is important to make a list of text links that will be used to make up the actual links that will "link" back to your Home page.

A text link is simply the clickable text of a hyperlink.

If you recall, way back in Step #2 you were introduced to a Sample Keyword Chart that was organized for the home page of Grace's site.

Now it is time for me to introduce you to the Text Link Management Chart, which is located at http://www.jamesmartell.com/checklists.html.

Please print a couple copies of it now.

Text Link Management Chart

Text Link	Located	Title tag	PageRank
wedding gowns santa Barbara	http://www.santabarbara.org/wedding.htm		

In addition to using the keywords in the chart to develop the content for the home page, those same words are used to develop the "text links" that will *link* back to the Grace's home page from other pages on the Net!

And knowing this gives you a huge competitive advantage over other sites competing for one of those top 10 spots.

It is a very powerful technique because a spider that finds a link to Grace's home page on *another* website using the words "wedding gowns in Santa Barbara", – knows it's a safe bet that page is about wedding gowns in Santa Barbara and ranks it accordingly.

And, here is the key, – if the spider finds enough other pages on the Net using those keywords it quickly begins to recognize that this page, the one with the links to it, – is about wedding gowns in Santa Barbara.

Do you see how the search engines look at the text that makes up the link, is key to gaining top natural search results?

Another important question…

Why is it that a page on www.adobe.com ranks #1 on Google for the keyword phrase click here, – even though the words click here are not listed on the page?

Stop and think about.

If you answered that it is because enough other pages on the Net are linking to that page using the words *click here* that Google thinks the page is about click here.

Another important question that I want you to think about…

Why is it that that same page on www.adobe.com also ranks #4 on Google for the keyword phrase clicks here (note the 's'), – even though people are NOT typically linking to that page using the phrase clicks here.

Again, stop and think about it for a minute.

If you answered that it is because enough other pages on the net are linking to their page using the word click, – and that Google knows (using its word variation algorithm) that clicks and click means the same thing.

I think it's cool. ☺

And I hope you are starting to understand the real power you have in your hands to gain top rankings, especially at Google, the world's largest search engine.

Oh, and if you are wondering about the word **in** that separates "wedding gowns in Santa Barbara" in the keyword phrase, – keep in mind Google knows (using its word proximity algorithm) that the page is still about wedding gowns in Santa Barbara.

Those spiders are pretty smart.

The key to top rankings is in the link

And before we start I should point out that you cannot get this wrong.

Let's look at how Grace nailed this and how you can too.

Go ahead and grab the Keyword Chart you completed in Step 3. You will want this in hand as we again review the Keyword Chart Grace compiled for her own home page and as we progress through this Action item and those that follow.

Now, back to Grace.

Grace already knows from her experience with her own business, and the keyword research which she earlier (and which you completed, too), and some common sense, that she would like to rank in the top 10 search engine results for:

> wedding gowns, Santa Barbara
> wedding gown, Santa Barbara
> wedding dresses, Santa Barbara
> wedding dress, Santa Barbara
> wedding dress, Santa Barbara
> wedding dresses, Santa Barbara
> wedding gown, Santa Barbara
> wedding gowns, Santa Barbara
> bridal dress, Santa Barbara
> bridal dresses, Santa Barbara
> bridal gown, Santa Barbara
> bridal gowns, Santa Barbara
> bridal salon, Santa Barbara
> bridal shop, Santa Barbara

And Grace also knows that if she wants her Home page to rank on Google for these keywords, she will need to get other websites on the Net to link to her page using these same keywords (not to worry, we get into this shortly so stick with me here).

So let's look at Grace's Keyword Chart now and make sure you have yours, too.

Grace's Keyword Chart

Before			After	Geographic
formal	wedding	gowns	Shops	Santa Barbara
informal	bridal	gown	Shop	Santa Barbara, CA
designer	bride	dresses	Stores	Santa Barbara, California
plus size		dress	Store	
summer		attire	Outlet	
casual		outfits	Outlets	
petite		outfit	Designers	
beach			Designer	
short				
unique				
modest				
simple				

And by continuing to look at the Keyword Chart, Grace knows that some brides want a formal or designer gown so she decides to include those keywords.

> formal wedding dresses, Santa Barbara
> designer wedding gowns, Santa Barbara

Grace is also starting to "get it".

And she knows that some people think of her business as a shop, or a store so she decides to include those words in a couple of her text links.

> wedding dress shop, Santa Barbara
> wedding gown store, Santa Barbara

Grace also noticed on her keyword list, the one she developed by in Step #3, that some people type the city name first, – so she decides to include a few of these as well.

> Santa Barbara, plus size wedding dresses
> Santa Barbara, summer bridal gown

> Santa Barbara, casual bride dresses
> Santa Barbara, petite bridal attire
> Santa Barbara, beach wedding outfits

The light bulb is coming on for Grace, and hopefully for you as well.

It's starting to make sense and she understands that to rank well in the search results for a particular keyword, she simply needs to have other webmasters link to her site using the keywords she wants to rank for.

Grace is also starting to realize that the search engines are smart, and that Google already knows that Santa Barbara is in California so she might only include the word California in one or two of the text links so she decides on these keyword phrases:

> short bridal dresses, Santa Barbara, California
> unique wedding dresses, Santa Barbara, CA

Grace is starting to grasp the fact that the search engines understand that a dress and a gown is essentially the same thing and that she can use those words interchangeably.

She also takes a wild guess and correctly assumes that all of her keyword phrases do NOT need to include 'Santa Barbara' and, from time-to-time, she can shorten them up a little like this:

> modest wedding attire
> simple wedding dress

And the light bulb really starts to shine for Grace when she begins to understand that it is the accumulation of all of the keywords, and their variations in proximity to each other, all contained within the text links pointing to her Home page – that is the real key to gaining top rankings at the major search engines.

Now Grace is really on a roll.

And soon, as you develop the text links for your home page, you'll be in the same great shape and ready to obtain top rankings for your own keywords.

So let's get started.

Action item #5 – Develop the 'text links' for your home page

Now that you understand that the text links that point to your page is what determines what your page will rank for, it is time to develop a series of text links for other webmasters to post on their sites.

You should already have the Keyword Chart you developed for your home page in hand.

Now, also grab the blank Text Link Management Chart I have provided for you in the Appendix section of this manual, so you can also develop a list of text links for the home page of your site, just like Grace did for her site (see next page).

Grace's Text Link Management Chart

Text Link	Located
wedding gowns Santa Barbara	i.e. http://www.santabarbara.org/wedding.htm
wedding gowns, Santa Barbara	
wedding gown, Santa Barbara	
wedding dresses, Santa Barbara	
wedding dress, Santa Barbara	
wedding dress, Santa Barbara	
wedding dresses, Santa Barbara	
wedding gown, Santa Barbara	
wedding gowns, Santa Barbara	
bridal dress, Santa Barbara	
bridal dresses, Santa Barbara	
bridal gown, Santa Barbara	
bridal gowns, Santa Barbara	
bridal salon, Santa Barbara	
bridal shop, Santa Barbara	
formal wedding dresses, Santa Barbara	
designer wedding gowns, Santa Barbara	
wedding dress shop, Santa Barbara	
wedding gown store, Santa Barbara	
Santa Barbara, plus size wedding dresses	
Santa Barbara, summer bridal gown	
Santa Barbara, casual bride dresses	
Santa Barbara, petite bridal attire	
Santa Barbara, beach wedding outfits	
modest wedding attire	
simple wedding dress	

As you see, Grace has developed a solid list here.

She has carefully organized 26 links, which is more than adequate for her home page to rank well for these keyword phrases.

As for the question I know you are considering right now, which is how many links do you need for your site to rank well at the search engines, my answer is this: It typical-

ly takes between 20-30 other sites linking back to the page you're attempting to rank well with at the search engines.

Of course if you or Grace find that after developing the links back to your home pages, and giving the search engines adequate time to do their job (usually 1-2 months), that you are not ranking in the top 10, you will need to distribute a few more of the text links you created in your text link management chart (which in Grace's case is above).

It really is that simple.

Now, before you move on, take some time to develop a list of text links for the home page of your site. To help you here, I have provided a Text Link Management Chart for you at http://www.jamesmartell.com/checklists.html.

Once you print the Text Link Management chart out, you should identify between 20-40 text links for your website's home page.

I suggest you type this list out right now and keep it handy, so that each time you successfully arrange a link from another webmaster (more on this shortly), you can simply grab the next link from the list.

By doing this, you will always know how many links you have at any given time.

This all goes back to tracking their progress, which should be part of your weekly schedule.

And remember you can't get this wrong. ☺

Local directories are an often overlooked goldmine

It makes sense (actually dollars and *cents*) to promote your site in as many local directories as possible.

It makes sense (yes, lots and lots of *cents*) to be listed in these directories, especially the ones located in the top results at the search engines, because they have traffic, which is what translates into sales.

And if you have an advertisement for your business with a link to your site, you will get traffic from these sites because they are at the top of the search results.

Cha-ching!

In addition, the value of purchasing the ad that includes a text link to your site *far exceeds* the value of the cost of the actual link because of its ability to <u>push your site</u> up in the natural search rankings.

In just a few minutes, and by searching Google for keywords such as *Santa Barbara businesses*, – Grace quickly realizes that there was some *amazing deals* on advertising that she previously overlooked for her business.

One example:

Actually the first site Grace looked at that was listed in the #1 spot on Google for the keyword *Santa Barbara businesses*.

The name of the site is <u>http://www.santabarbara.org/</u>.

The cost for an ad on the site; $2.00 a month.

Nice. ☺

Of course, some sites will cost more, but the point is this: Even if the ad cost ten or twenty times that, say $20-$40 a month, it is still worthwhile because of the ads ability to drive traffic to your site and for its ability to push your site up in the rankings.

Not to mention it's way cheaper than newspaper or radio advertising.

Action item #6 – Identify a list of local directories

Go to <u>www.google.com</u>.

Search for directories and websites where you might advertise your site. Here are a few keyword phrases you may want to do a Google search for...

> *city name businesses*
> *city name directories*
> *city name business directories*

And be sure to come up with some keyword phrases of your own.

Spend some time on this, and be sure to make a list.

Dig a little.

Dig a lot.

These directories are gold.

I would suggest that you find at least of 15-20 potential places to advertise.

And when you are looking at these site look for their advertising rate card, print a copy if you find it, along with any contact information you can find for the sales department.

Dig. Dig. Dig. ☺

Action item #7 – Prepare to promote your site to the local directories (and beyond)

In preparing to promote your website to local directories, there are a few important things I would like you to do. Not to worry. I am going to help you here.

We are going to create a few different styles of ads and promotional pieces prior to promoting your site to the local directories.

More specifically, we are going to develop a few different styles of ads and promotional pieces for *your* site.

Once again, I am going to point you in the direction I take myself when taking this step, and that is to call on my professional copywriter.

Your writer can help with the creation of these promotional pieces for your site.

And, unless you are handling all of your copywriting in-house, you really need to get accustomed to leaning on your writer, for he or she will help you with a variety of promotional pieces that you will distribute to the local directories and various other sites that are outlined throughout the next few Action items.

You will contact these website owners in exactly the same way you purchase an ad for your local newspaper or radio station, and that you may want to negotiate a few "extras" when negotiating the price.

For example, if you are purchasing a listing in the directory, you may also want to offer the website owner a feature article for their site about the local area.

This is a great place again for you to enlist the services of your writer, who can help you come up with great ideas for the content.

For example, if you owned a bike rental business in Santa Barbara, you might have your writer develop a feature article about bicycling in Santa Barbara.

Or, in Grace's case, she had her writer (no, it's not little sister Sara any more, but a bona-fide professional copywriter) research and developed a fantastic article about setting up the perfect Santa Barbara wedding, complete with local resources and referrals.

You see, these directories also typically have to pay to get content created by providing them with content that is valuable to visitors, you give yourself bargaining power when negotiating placement on the site.

I should point out here that in some cases, many times due to software limitations on the part of the directory, the directory will publish only your website address (i.e. www.sbbikerentals.com) and not your text link.

This is just fine and will create a very natural looking inbound linking pattern to your site, and the search engines like that, as well.

Take some time to create a directory listing for your website now.

Yes, I know. I promised to help you here and I will, by providing some great examples below, written by my professional copywriter from DotComCopy.net.

Directory Listing

Santa Barbara Bicycle Rentals
1243 State Street
Santa Barbara, CA 98784
Phone # 560-555-4660
Website: www.sbbikerentals.com

Promotional Piece (50 words)

Year-round cycling is at it's best in sunny Southern California and <u>Santa Barbara bicy-cle rentals</u> is your one-stop-shop source for everything you need to hit the road car-free. You name it, we have it: mountain bikes, beach cruisers, tandems, 4-wheel sur-rey bikes, hybrids, gear, detailed maps and more.

Promotional Piece (100 words)

Looking for a day of excitement and fun in the spectacular Southern California sun? There's no better way to enjoy our splendid year-round weather and jaw-dropping scenery than from a bike. Well-marked pathways not only cover the waterfront, but also extend throughout the area, allowing you a one-of-a-kind experience like no other. And <u>Santa Barbara bike rentals</u> has everything you need to make your bike experience the best, offering individuals, couples, families and even corporate retreat attendees a wide variety of bikes and gear, even detailed maps, allowing you to truly indulge yourself in all Southern California has to offer.

Promotional Piece (250 words)

If you're looking to *really* see Southern California, turn to the same place locals and tourists have been turning for years and that's to Santa Barbara Bicycle Rentals.

Enjoy our mild beach climate, breathtaking scenery, world-class dining, cultural events and festivals without the worry of a car. As you will soon see, our beautiful oceanfront and the downtown historic district are best explored by foot and by using our network of exquisite bike paths.

So whether beach going, sight-seeing, shopping in our specialty stores or dining in our tantalizing cafes, bicycle renting is the way to go and for <u>bike rentals in Santa Barbara</u>, there's just one place to turn: Santa Barbara Bicycle Rentals.

We make your experience unlike any other, taking care of everything you need to make the most of your day. From beach cruisers and tandem bikes to hybrids and 4-wheel surreys, we've got it all. The only thing you need is a sense of adventure and wonderment and a desire to explore Santa Barbara and its neighboring areas.

At Santa Barbara Bicycle Rentals, we provide you with bikes that are suited to your needs and with detailed maps and exciting trips that allow you to take-in our unique way of life and make it your very own – for hours, days or even a week or two. We even show you special bike rides, ranging from 4 to 26 miles long, taking you into our wine country and well beyond.

Santa Barbara Bicycle Rentals: Your car-free source to sun and fun!

Feature Article

Looking to experience all Santa Barbara has to offer? Want to taste our local flavor and devour our succulent scenery?

Ditch the car and grab a bike! A bike from Santa Barbara bicycle rentals that is.

Not sure a bicycle tour of Southern California is for sure. Then you'll have to check out http://www.santabarbaracarfree.org and see for yourself how others are taking memorable car-free vacations in Santa Barbara and throughout sunny Southern California.

In fact, you may be surprised to learn that the Santa Barbara Car Free project received a 2004 Environmental Award and a 2004 Marketing Excellence Award from the California Travel and Tourism Commission, both of which have garnished this project and its website lots of interest and prompted visitors to the area to grab their bikes and see the sights while enjoying the spectacular year-round weather.

As they have found, Santa Barbara boasts a downtown like no other, with specialty shops, dining, entertainment and accommodations all accessible by bike. To learn more about Santa Barbara's unique downtown area, go to http://www.santabarbaradowntown.com/ where you will find a wealth of information on the many attractions you can take in – all from your rented bike.

Known as the Historic Arts District (or the Heart of Santa Barbara), this area has something for everyone, making it a great bike destination. And without the hassle of a car, you are freed up to enjoy fine dining, unique shops, and a variety of cultural and historical attractions.

But don't forget the beaches (www.totalsantabarbara.com/beach.shtml), where you can enjoy the sun surf from our beach cruiser bikes. You can hit the beach trails and take in the beautiful sunrises and sunsets, freeing yourself to peddle on the sand or even walk hand-in-hand with your loved one.

Park and lock your bike safely and securely at any of the beachfront attractions, where you will find that bikes now regularly outnumber cars.

You can also rely on all the information at http://www.santabarbara.com/ to help you put together a Santa Barbara bike trip that is second-to-none. You're sure to be so impressed with all you can do and see while traveling by bike that, if you're like most people who take the time to get to know our area by bike, you're sure to return.

While her, you can also enhance your trip with camping, hiking, horseback riding on the beach, surfing whale watching and more (http://www.santabarbara.com/activities/) or by touring the wineries that have made Southern California a coveted travel destination for some of the world's top wine connoisseurs.

For a comprehensive list of wineries and vineyards, go to: http://www.santabarbara.com/winecountry/. As you will see, depending on where you start your bike trip from, some of the wine tours and tastings are just a short peddle away!

And what would be a bike trip through Santa Barbara without shopping, right? You can access specialty shops of every kind from your bike without the hassles and expense of parking, all the while enjoying our breathtaking scenery and picturesque blue skies and pleasant temperatures.

If shopping piques your interest, here are a few websites you should check out before you hit the road on your rental bike. These include:

> www.sbchamber.org/visitors/shopping.html
> www.sailorschoice.com/SantaBarbara/stores.htm
> www.santabarbara.com/community/shopping/

You can count on these websites to provide you with every bit of shopping information you need, from details on innovative arts and crafts stores and rare antique finds to fashion boutiques with designer clothes and shopping complexes – all accessible by bike. Of course, you may need to get an extra large backpack to help you carry your finds back to your hotel or bed and breakfast.

Renting a bicycle is the start of your full Santa Barbara experience. The rest is simply what you make it, but rest assured, the fine staff at Santa Barbara Bicycle Rentals is committed to making your trip a life-changing experience.

About the Author:

Kellie Fowler is an award-winning professional copywriter and owner of DotComCopy.net, a freelance commercial writing firm that specializes in providing website content for small- to medium-size businesses worldwide. Kellie also owns Write Solutions (www.WriteSolutions.net), which provides businesses within the Fortune 500 arena and beyond with copywriting services both online and off. Kellie is a journalist member of PR Newswire and PR Web and a contributor to Associated Press. She is from South Carolina, but currently resides in a log home on the Rideau Lake in southeast Ontario Canada, with her boyfriend of 8 years and their 6 rescue animals, Maggie, a 15-year-old Shepherd-Pit Bull mix, Abby, a 6-year-old Shepherd and four cats, Kline, Misha, Bella and Sashi. Kellie enjoys spending time with her family and friends, kayaking, fly-fishing, running, cooking, and reading.

Action item #8 – Promote your site to the local directories

Great work creating your own directory listing promotional pieces! Sure, these may not be the ones you use, but now you know what is involved here and that is key.

I suggest you give these to your writer and let them see where you are going with all of this. You can also share with them the samples my copywriter provided above.

I hope that working on these promotional pieces really sparked your excitement and that you are starting to see the possibilities here.

Now, I suggest that you grab a coffee, tea or beverage of your choice, and put some thought into devising a plan to contact each of the sites on your list.

To speed this process along, I strongly recommend that you call these directories and that you NOT email them.

Let's start out by setting a simple goal: Promoting your business with a text link on a minimum of 10-15 local websites.

In fact, a good goal may be to find a site for each text link in your list.

With this in mind, I have another tidbit of insider information for you: Because you are purchasing an advertisement, you may want to negotiate having more than one link on the website, killing two (or three, perhaps even four) birds with one stone (or rather one call). ☺

For example, one link might be your actual Internet address (i.e. http://www.sbbik-erentals.com) and another link may be a keyword phrase from their list of text links (i.e. Santa Barbara Bike Rentals).

If you need to offer a little more to get the link, such as a professionally written article for the site with your text link linking back to their site included in the author credit, then make the deal and call your writer.

In short, do what it takes to get your link**s** on their site.

Go ahead and get this ball rolling right here and right now.

Otherwise, it will drag on and this is far too important to let fall through the cracks.

Grab your phone and start making those calls. This will only take a few minutes (I promise) and what it will do for your site and its visibility is priceless.

Action item #9 – Identify a list of business associates, suppliers and trade organizations

Next, let's put together a list of 15-20 business associates, suppliers and trade organizations that you already deal with on a regular, or semi-regular, basis.

You will use this list to "identify" new places to list your website.

In many cases, it will be as simple as asking those on your list to add a listing for your site. Some may request the same from you. This is OK, so by all means do so.

For example, if you are a member of your local Chamber of Commerce, contact them and ask them to add your listing to their online directory.

If you're not a member, consider joining and promoting your site in that way as well. It may be the least expensive ad you purchase, and the benefits associated with belonging to the local chamber are endless and very worthwhile.

For example, Grace, who as you know is in the wedding business, regularly helps plan and organize weddings and in doing do, she deals and recommends from time-to-time two or three local photographers, a handful of local caterers, florists, even banquet halls, etc.

Grace puts the names of all of the individuals and businesses on her list.

I caution you not to prejudge who will and who will not list your business on their website. The truth is that it NEVER hurts to ask and you may need to think creatively as to how to get a link on some of these sites, but you can do it!

As the old saying goes, where there's a will, there's a way!

As Grace found, it was as simple as writing a testimonial for a number of her associates, who then gladly added her kind words, her name, the name of her business and a link to it's website on their site.

It took Grace about 15 minutes to compile her list and about 30 minutes more to call everyone and get a commitment from them. Of course, she was creative when needed and offered testimonials, even a few short articles and in no time at all, Grace's website was listed on every single website on her list!

Go ahead and pen your list now.

Again, be creative.

Next, contact the business associates, suppliers and trade organizations on your list. Offer testimonials, articles, to add links to their site on your own, etc.

Stay focused on this Action item until you have completed it.

Once again, this is a simple process that yields HUGE results so get this done before moving on to the next Action item, where we work on promoting your site to the media.

Action item #10 – Promote your site to the media

The media can be a great tool that you can use to promote your site and you may be very surprised to learn that it doesn't have to cost you an arm and a leg. On the contrary, it can be affordable, even down right cheap.

This brings me to an interesting story.

When I ran my own telecom company, there was no budget for advertising.

So, thinking I was being thrifty and that I could handle this myself, I purchased a manual from a local stationary store called "How to Get Free Publicity," published by Self Counsel Press (http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0066620627).

I read it from cover-to-cover and followed it faithfully (like I sincerely hope you are doing with this book).

Like the book advised me to do, I sent out a press release.

The total cost of the distribution, including the costs for the paper, envelopes, postage, etc. was only $52.50.

I sent the press release to all local newspapers, radio and television stations. This $52.50 turned into (by my estimates) about $50,000 in free publicity to my business at the time.

The press release resulted in a two-minute segment on the evening news broadcast, a story on page 5 of one of the local daily newspaper (www.theprovince.com). The other daily newspaper (www.thevancouversun.com) featured our story on the front page of the business section. Many of the smaller local papers also picked up the story, as well.

At that point, I didn't really understand and therefore had never even considered the fact that the local media outlets (newspapers, radio and television) NEED to fill their publication and broadcasts each with local news that is interesting and valuable to their subscribers or watchers.

And by sending them newsworthy information that is of interest to the local community, you have a good chance of getting some free publicity for your business.

This explains why I strongly recommend that you get in the habit of sending regular press releases by snail mail (not email) to your local media outlets, and that you also submit your press release to online services (which I go over shortly) that then distribute your press releases to dozens of online sites (which is also another great way to get text links pointing back to your site).

Wondering if you have anything newsworthy to say?

Rest assured that you do. And to better understand this, all you have to do is get in the habit of looking at local newspapers, listening to local radio stations, and watching local television channels to study the different types of local stories they run.

If you have never written a press release, not to worry. I provide you with some basic guidelines and an example of a press release that my copywriter recently wrote for me.

While I strongly recommend that you rely on your writer to help you here, you may also want to do a Google search for *how to write a press release?*

Or you can purchase the same manual I did from Self Counsel Press and follow their step-by-step process.

For me, I have found that just getting on the phone with my writer, the one I have worked to have a good relationship with, and talk it through with her. And, in a day or two, I have a press release that is sure to get noticed!

Action item #11 – How to organize your press release

Press releases are great tools – and every Webmaster should know how to write and distribute these.

Doing so correctly will help your site achieve higher rankings with the search engines.

They also provide opportunities for inbound text link development when Google or any of the other search engines list the press release information online.

Additionally, you are providing relevant information to those searching for news related to your industry.

And you are ensuring your site is better represented in the search results.

What's more, you may very well get "coverage" on hundreds of relevant websites that subscribe to PRWeb (which I talk about in a few paragraphs, so just stick with me here) and its RSS feeds – and there is nothing better!

Websites will pick up your press release and you can even "archive" these on your own site for long-term link value.

Combined, all of these press release "bonuses," if you will, add up to a very powerful punch – ultimately increasing the relevant traffic to your site.

The truth is that crafting a press release that gets such results isn't difficult at all.

Still, I recommend that you go ahead and sign-up with www.DotComCopy.net for a press release package that will provide you with a solid press release, written by a professional copywriter that by now knows you and your business; on a regular basis (I suggest every month or every quarter).

Your press release

Here are a few notes my copywriter and I compiled that will help you better understand what your press release needs to include and to give you an idea of just how simple this process is:

- Use a catchy headline and make sure to incorporate your Primary keywords
- Tell the summary of the press release in the very first paragraph
- Use the body of the press release (the next few paragraphs following the first paragraph) to "bottleneck" – which is really nothing more than clearly and concisely elaborating on the first paragraph
- Sprinkle the press release with keywords AND 2 or 3 links to your pages
- And much like sales letters for your website, the press release should provide a solution. With this in mind, it is always beneficial to write with the readers "problem" in mind
- Don't forget to share with the reader how and why you are credible and are a reliable source for the information conveyed in your press release
- A press release can be friendly, but above all else, it should be written in a crisp business format
- Stick to the point
- Your press release should end with a closing that includes a call to action (when applicable) and the closing should be an "About Us" paragraph
- Try to keep the press release between 400 and 500 words. When writing one yourself, which is easy to do, keep it short and sweet.
- Do not use hype or come across as trying to sell. Instead, convey valuable, usable information - this more than does the trick. And, anything that sounds pushy, has too much hype, or appears to be going for the hard sale, will not be picked up. It's just that simple.

Action item #12 – Distribute your press release

Let's now look at how to send your press release out to your local community and then how to distribute it via the World Wide Web.

Again, your writer can handle this for you, but if this is something you want to do, you can, for distributing your press release is simple.

Of course, you can start with the same resource I did, which is "How to Get Free Publicity," published by Self Counsel Press (http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0066620627) or, you can simply follow in my footsteps here and, once your writer has crafted a press release and you have given it a thumbs-up, send it via snail mail to your local newspapers, radio and television stations.

Create a cover letter

I suggest you include a clear, concise cover letter with it. This letter should, in a few short sentences, point out exactly why the information in your press release is newsworthy. And, I think it should be addressed to the appropriate person.

To determine who to send your press release to, you will need to call the newspapers (as well as local magazines) and ask for the Editorial Department. Once connected, ask for the name of the editor that handles local press releases. Address your envelope and your cover letter to this person.

You should also call the radio and television stations and ask who handles local press releases. Again, address your envelope and cover letter accordingly.

Next, you will want to distribute your press release on the World Wide Web.

PRWeb

The best online press release distribution source is called PRWeb. Take a minute to check out the PRWeb site right now: http://www.prweb.com.

There are samples of great press releases on the PRWeb site, – as well as instructions for distributing your press release. It is important you review these, as writing press releases and distributing them via the Net will provide you with huge returns.

As you will see, you can register for free by providing a user name and password on the left hand side of the page.

Once you have done this, take a site tour. I suggest you read press releases posted both on the homepage and in the archives (the tab for this is on the top of the homepage). This will show you how others are writing press releases.

You can choose to read only the press releases that are related to your industry AND you can set up your account so you receive these every day – delivered right to your Inbox – for free.

All you have to do is read these when they come in. You will learn more about your industry, about what your competitors are doing, about what works and what does not – all of which you can use to keep your visitors informed. And, remember, that is your goal!

Of course, you can also see how press releases are written.

In fact, PRWeb now offers a "Free Webinar" that shows the basics of how the organization works, provides great press release writing tips and shows exactly how quick and easy the distribution process is – for anyone!

When you're ready, register for this Free Webinar!

Action item #13 – Froogle, Google, what?

You may want to start this process by checking out www.froogle.com. This is Google's shopping search engine and you can list your products here for the whole world to see and include a link back to your site.

Pretty neat, huh?

By doing this, when buyers search for your products using Google, they are taken to Froogle where your product and product description are posted, along with a link to your website.

If you chose 1&1 as your hosting provider, you will quickly and easily be able transmit a data feed to Froogle from your 1&1 eShop. For more on getting this set up, refer to the eShop section of your Control Panel or 1&1's FAQ section, where you will find a few informative, but short and easy-to-understand articles on submitting your eShop products to Froogle.

Action item #14 – Identify a few banner ad networks

Banner ad networks are a community representing many Websites in selling advertising, allowing advertising buyers to reach broad audiences relatively easily by running ads over a category (run-of-category) or an entire network (run-of-network), allowing you to coordinate an ad campaign for your website across dozens, hundreds, or even thousands of sites in an efficient manner.

While banner ad networks go beyond the scope of this training, I do encourage you to take a look at a few of these and consider the possibilities.

Some of the better-known, most successful banner ad networks include:

http://www.bannerreviews.com/

Action item #15 – Promote your site using the banner ad networks

A graphical web advertising unit, typically measuring 468 pixels wide and 60 pixels tall (i.e. 468x60), a banner ad is one of the dominant forms of advertising online.

Banner ads were initially judged primarily on the basis of click-through rate (CTR). In the early days of the Web, click-through rates were generally much higher than they are now, perhaps due to the novelty factor.

Although click-through rates have gone consistently downward, the same can be said of banner ad prices. It is still possible to achieve a click-through rate many times the industry average by combining good placement and design.

Combining below-average ad rates and above-average response rates can lead to an acceptable return on investment, just as in any other advertising medium.

You can create a banner ad for your website and for a fee advertise it on other websites through a banner ad exchange program.

If you are interested in this, you may want to do a Google search for banner ad networks.

Also, Microsoft offers a banner ad exchange network specifically for small businesses. To learn more about this, click here:

http://www.microsoft.com/smallbusiness/online/banner-advertising/detail.mspx

Action item #16 – Other ways to promote your site

You didn't come this far and put forth all the time and energy it took you to get here to not follow through now. Besides, like Grace learned (and hopefully by now you have, too), having a lonely brochure taking up space out there in the middle of nowhere does you and your business no good.

This said, promoting your website will be an ongoing process as you write articles and press releases on a regular basis (or have a professional writer do this for you).

Remember, perhaps the best advertising you can invest in is on your own letterhead, your brochures, your business cards, etc. Make sure to include your new website address on all of these and on every other printed piece of material your business uses.

Take a look at all of your existing promotional items, including brochures, flyers, things like company mouse pads or anything else that may carry your company's name. The next time you order these, makes sure to include your new website address.

Additionally, this upcoming year, when you renew your Yellow Pages ad, don't forget to include your new website address for everyone to see. Make sure it is prominent (within your ad) and correct! You certainly don't want to send your potential eager customers somewhere else, right?

You will also want to make sure you update all existing signage (and any new signage you may add in the future) to include your website address.

And what about the invoices you regularly send your clients? This is a great way to let them know about your new website address.

Also, memos are another great way to let people – both internally and externally, know more about what's going on with your business so take this opportunity to include your website address on every memo you send – both in-house and out.

Action item #17 – Understand affiliate programs

Simply put, an affiliate program is a business relationship involving you (the "merchant"), who agrees to pay another website owner (the "affiliate") a commission for all referring customers.

An affiliate program is ideal for merchants to generate additional sales or leads.

Sales transactions are tracked by specialized software residing on the merchants site or by third-party tracking systems offered by companies such as: Link Connector, ROIRocket, PartnerCentric, ShareASale, LinkShare or Commission Junction who provide the tracking and infrastructure.

For more information, visit; http://www.jamesmartell.com/affiliate-programs.html.

Action item #18 – Complete the checklist for Step #8

Congratulations, you have made a huge leap forward and are well on your way to establishing a strong online presence. Once you have completed all of the Action items in Step #8, give yourself a pat on the back. You deserve it! ☺

- Action item #1 – Promote your site to the major search engines and directories
- Action item #2 – Promote your site to the Open Directory
- Action item #3 – Promote your site to the Yahoo! Directory
- Action item #4 – Develop an inbound linking plan
- Action item #5 – Develop the 'text links' for your home page
- Action item #6 – Identify a list of local directories
- Action item #7 – Prepare to promote your site to the local directories (and beyond)
- Action item #8 – Promote your site to the local directories
- Action item #9 – Identify a list of business associates, suppliers and trade organizations
- Action item #10 – Promote your site to the media
- Action item #11 – How to organize your press release
- Action item #12 – Distribute your press release
- Action item #13 – Froogle, Google, what?
- Action item #14 – Identify a few banner ad networks
- Action item #15 – Promote your site using the banner ad networks
- Action item #16 – Other ways to promote your site
- Action item #17 – Understand affiliate programs
- Action item #18 – Complete the checklist for Step #8

Once you have…

…submitted your site to the search engines and local directories, developed a linking plan and text links for your home page, pinpointed business that you can exchange links with, distributed a press release, identified banner ad networks and other ways to promote your site…

…then you have finished your training and are well on your way to achieving online success! See you at the top of the search engine returns.

Summing It Up

Congratulations on developing a website you are sure to be proud of!

Those with the "know-how" to successfully publish to the Net are few and far between and you have just joined this rather elite group.

So, if you've been diligent, and followed the steps I've outlined in this manual, you may want to give yourself a hearty pat on the back!

THIS, my friend, could be the beginning of something HUGE for you, because the Internet is still in its infancy.

And, I'm extremely pleased that you chose my manual as a guidebook to help you learn the online ropes and prosper as a Webmaster.

Here's a review of what you've accomplished:

Step #1 – How to Get (and Stay) Organized

Your workspace was equipped with the physical resources needed to set up your workspace, organize your new online presence, and to develop and maintain your website.

Step #2 – Arranging Your Thoughts

You determined exactly what you want your website to accomplish and learned how you can outsource some of your most important website work.

Step #3 – Keywords are Key to Site Success

You developed a keyword list and made your first visit to WordTracker and to Keyword Universe.

Step #4 – Set up Your Website

You determined the name for your domain then registered it, and also ordered hosting for your website. You familiarized yourself with 1&1's Control Panel and took a Flash tour that detailed 1&1's robust WebsiteBuilder tool. You started the process to add both a blog and an eShop to your website.

Step #5 – Develop Your Content

You made a list of the actual pages on your website, identified images to include on these pages, jotted down ideas for audio and video possibilities and hired a professional copywriter to craft content for your website.

Step #6 – Create and Upload Your Pages

You chose your website's template, added content to your pages, determined which images to add and hired a graphics designer to customize your site's overall look and design.

Step #7 – Communications on the Net

You set-up your email, added an email response form to your website, added a call-back response form, as well as a customer survey and a FAQ section, all in an effort to establish and maintain communications with your new online audience.

Step #8 – Site Promotion

You promoted your website to search engines and directories, developed an inbound linking plan, developed text links for your home page, learned how to promote your site to the local media, organized a press release, and learned a bit about banner ad networks and affiliate programs.

Now it's up to you to manage your business for growth

The biggest challenge facing you now is staying up-to-date without getting side-tracked.

At the back of this manual, I've provided a list of reliable resources that have guided me as I've attempted to sort out what makes sense and what doesn't.

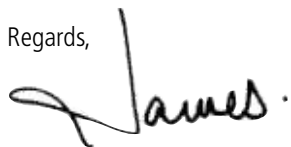Hopefully, you too, will find a way to prosper on the Net as I have done.

A recent Nielsen survey estimated that 8% of the planet's households currently have Internet access from home.

That's half a BILLION surfing the Net from home!

Hopefully, some of them will find your site.

Good luck to you!

Regards,

James Martell,

Net Guides Publishing Inc.

Recommended Resources

The following resources can be used to assist you with development of a successful website and online presence:

- PerrysBook.com - Access 100 million people in 10 minutes. The world's most popular book for winning the Google AdWords game. Instant PDF download with quick-start manual & powerful bonus audio seminars in MP3. FREE fast-start 5 day email course.
- DotComCopy.net - Get a fast and free quote from professional free-lance writers for web-copy, press releases, blog posts and all of your writing needs.
- RadioSecretsForPodcasters.com - A step-by-step blueprint for creating a highly successful podcast.
- InstantlyAddAudio.com - Instantly add streaming audio to your site without expensive equipment or technical know-how.
- PostNewProject.com - Get free quotes and affordable prices from a global network of designers, programmers, writers and other professionals.
- SEOKeywordAnalyzer.com - Uncover overlooked and profitable keywords for your business with a very effective keyword analysis tool. Free 5-Day Keyword Mastery ebook.
- RapidKeywords.com - Find profitable keywords, Analyze competition, Generate typos, Manage Keyword Lists and much more. Free Trial.

Other Products Offered By James Martell

Online Success for NON-TECHIES (Video Edition)

The Online Success for Non-Techies Video Edition is the video version of the manual, led by author James Martell. To learn more or purchase your copy, go to:

http://www.jamesmartell.com

Affiliate Marketers Handbook – "2006" (THIRD-EDITION)

James Martell's Affiliate Marketers Handbook 2006 is an 8-step guide written much like the Online Success for Non-Techies manual that teaches affiliate marketers how to develop an at-home business that will allow them to achieve financial freedom and success by implementing the same 8 steps Martell continues to rely on every day. To learn more or purchase your copy, go to:

http://www.work-at-home-net-guides.com

Affiliate Buzz

James Martell's Affiliate Buzz newsletter is a twice-a-month audio newsletter that features James talking about the latest happenings within the industry. To learn more or subscribe, go to:

http://www.affiliate-buzz.com

Affiliate Marketers BootCamp

James Martell's Affiliate Marketer's BootCamp is a three-day workshop led by James that details the 8 steps discussed in his Affiliate Marketers Handbook 2006. The overwhelmingly popularity of the weekend BootCamp has prompted to James to recently launch an online version, through which he delivers his infamous BootCamp training live via internet conferencing capabilities. To learn more about the BootCamps, go to:

http://www.affiliate-marketers-bootcamp.com

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YOUR LEVEL OF SUCCESS IN ATTAINING THE RESULTS CLAIMED IN OUR MATERIALS DEPENDS ON THE TIME YOU DEVOTE TO THE PROGRAM, IDEAS AND TECHNIQUES MENTIONED, YOUR FINANCES, KNOWLEDGE AND VARIOUS SKILLS. SINCE THESE FACTORS DIFFER ACCORDING TO INDIVIDUALS, WE CANNOT GUARANTEE YOUR SUCCESS OR INCOME LEVEL. NOR ARE WE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY OF YOUR ACTIONS.

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ANY AND ALL FORWARD LOOKING STATEMENTS HERE OR ON ANY OF OUR SALES MATERIAL ARE INTENDED TO EXPRESS OUR OPINION OF EARNINGS POTENTIAL.

"Maybe all you need to take your business to the Net is the right training." ~ James Martell

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James Martell's
Online Success for NON-TECHIES
Not Only Do I Write About It, I Do It!
How To Take Your Business, Hobby or Profession to the Internet

Online Success for NON-Techies
(Video Edition)

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