

8 Things  
you should  
consider  
when choosing  
a webmaster for  
your small business

By Mike Pittaro

Congratulations on making the decision to put your business on the web.

With all the competition these days, placing your business on the web is one more way to maximize your investment and put your business in front of new customers.

A website is a great tool to make sure customers can reach you and find out more about your business. Your business will be available to them 24 hours a day, 7 days a week even if you're not.

Your website should be an ambassador for your business:

- Provide customers with your hours of operation
- Provide directions to your business
- Allow customers to see products or services you provide.
- Provide them with a way to contact you to ask questions or make other business arrangements with you.

This is just a small sampling of what your website should be providing to your online customers.

But deciding on a web master is not an easy thing. You need someone that understands your small business and is willing to work the way you do.

### **They should be available.**

You need a webmaster that will respond quickly to emails and phone calls. Most webmaster's will get back to you in a timely manner, some will not. You should be looking for one that responds to emails within 8 hours or less and will return your phone call within the hour or less during regular business hours.

### **They should be willing to work to understand your business.**

Not everyone will understand your business like you. You need a webmaster that is willing to listen and guide you in your path to your online presence. A good webmaster will spend time with you, learn about your business and find the best way to present your business on the web.

### **They should be able to explain what they do in "layman's" terms**

You need to have one that you can understand, not one that will confuse you with "geek speak"

### **They have samples on their website.**

If they have some samples on their site it will let you see if they do a wide variety of work or if they are very narrow in their business focus. Remember, someone that has designed for a lot of Fortune 1000 business might not be a good fit for your small business.

### **They are friendly and patient on the phone.**

Sometimes ideas are not conveyed very easy via email. You should be dealing with someone that is personable and is willing to brainstorm ideas with you over the phone. They should also be willing to work with you on making changes to your site. They should be able to keep their egos in check and do what you want NOT what they want.

### **They should be knowledgeable about the web**

They should be able to explain to you the "whys and why not's" of web design, getting traffic, search engine placement, writing newsletters and more. They should be able to pick and choose what would be best for your business.

### **They should be able to provide you with an e-commerce solution to fit your needs.**

Not all businesses will need an e-commerce solution to help them. But some of you will. If you do, your webmaster should be able to provide you with the right solution for your business.

### **You webmaster should be able to provide you with solutions to problems that you don't even know you have.**

You should have a webmaster that is proactive for your business. They should be checking in with you occasionally to make sure that your site is staying up with the demands of your business.

These are just a few of the requirements that any good webmaster should have. The webmaster that you choose should be able to do all these things and more.

I hope you enjoyed this little report that I put together. I wish you luck in your quest to find your next webmaster.

Mike Pittaro

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