

Web presence and being found in 2009

Tom Bull, Web Developer for Beaver Design, talks about the value of having a presence on the World Wide Web in 2009

This is the first instalment of a new web advice page. Each month I'll look at good practice for businesses on the web, such as search engine optimisation and website development.

The World Wide Web is as much a part of modern life as driving a car. We use the web for shopping, information, promotion or just general musing on what may interest us.

Whatever you want to find, chances are you can find it on the web.

For businesses, bringing in new clients is key to success and the web is hugely important.

A lot can be done to improve a website and bring in more customers. But amazingly, 37 years after the first email was ever sent, around 30% of UK businesses do not have any web presence at all.*

"The social value of the Web is that it enables human communication, commerce, and opportunities to share knowledge."

– Sir Tim Berners-Lee, inventor of the World Wide Web

A web presence simply means a space on the web that shows who you are and what you do. One way to think of it is like real-estate. If you were a shop owner, you'd need a shop. On the web your business really should have an address where people can find you.

Ensuring new customers find your business should be a top priority and a web presence is a key tool to help them do this.

* www.statistics.gov.uk/pdfdir/ecomnr1108.pdf



Want – Search – Find

How many times have you searched for something on the web and been surprised at what you find? Several million searches are done on Google every day. Try doing a search for what your business does and also for your business name. Are you found? So you need a web presence and it needs to be found. What now? The important thing to do with your web presence is make it valuable to people who visit.

Using your website to give something of value to your customers will increase its worth and turn it from a simple place with a few details, into an important tool for your business.

A recent report by the Office of National Statistics stated that internet sales rose by 30% in 2007 to £163bn for UK businesses

alone. Is this a market that you're making the most of?

Adding value

In the coming months, this web advice page will cover some of the ways to add value to your website and business using the web. We'll be looking at things like search engine optimisation to get your business higher up on search results, e-marketing and design ideas to raise your profile.

As the global market continues tightening the belt, now is the time when promotion will really help. If your business is not on the web already or if you're not making the most of what the web has to offer, then 2009 is the time to invest and grow.

◆ **Next month:** *E-Marketing your business.*

Design for



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