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IN THE ROUTE 422 BUSINESS MARKETPLACE**

IS YOUR WEBSITE WORKING HARD FOR YOU, OR HARDLY WORKING?



By Alan Robezzoli, Member, Small Business Resource Association

When it comes to marketing, it's disappointing that so many small businesses have failed to create an attractive, persuasive, hard-working website that delivers new leads and sales on a regular basis! So many websites are out-of-date and doing more harm than good.

Why is that? Here are two common misconceptions. Do they sound familiar?

#1: The cost is too high

Really? Smart business owners think in terms of return on investment instead of cost alone. If the return from new leads and sales exceeds the cost then price is irrelevant. That said, the cost to create an attractive, hardworking, custom website has dropped considerably over the years. That's because web design technologies have

greatly improved, speeding the development process. Have you obtained pricing from an agency who works with much larger companies than yours? Some agencies won't touch projects under \$25,000 or even \$50,000. Others are happy to tackle projects in the \$5,000 - \$10,000 range. Whoever you decide to work with, be sure to get actual samples of their work, and contact their clients to ensure you will receive value for your investment.

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#2: I don't know where to begin – the process seems daunting

Yes, it would be daunting if you and your staff had to supply every detail about your business and write every line of text and provide all the images and graphics. However, you can slash the time and cost if your agency follows a process like this:

- Gather info about your company from all available resources, including your company website, sales literature, and other readily-available information.
- Create a list of your top 3-5 competitors (in terms of their online presence) who most closely match your products or services. Include competitors outside of your service area – find the best websites to use as inspiration.
- Identify what you like and don't like about their websites.
- Gather all the digital data to include on your new site: logo, photos, graphic elements, etc.
- Identify where to use stock photography, or hire a photographer to take new photos that meet the standards for your new site.

- Identify information to be added.
- Perform keyword research on each product and service to use for search engine optimization.
- Create a final list of the pages for the new site, and an outline of the content for each.
- Create/approve a rough draft of the page text for the Home page and your key service or product category pages.
- Create/approve the design of the Home page.

Once that is done the rest can move quickly. Your budget will influence how many rounds (hours) of refinement will be included in your project scope, and the level of sophistication of the final design.

By following this process we've delivered many beautiful, hard-working websites to our clients, usually in 3-6 weeks, most of which cost \$4k-\$8k. Best of all, the websites pay for themselves many times over. So, what's your excuse?

Alan Robezzoli is President of Power Marketing International, LLC, a digital marketing agency with offices in Reading, Allentown and Malvern. Find them at www.PowerMarketingInternational.com. Visit the Design Gallery on their Web Design page for samples of their work.

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