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In order to speed the development process along please start filling out the following form and gathering the materials (as applicable to this project). This form is fairly detailed but don't get bogged down, just fill out as much as you feel you can.

- 1) What are the specific goals for the website?

- 2) List the major purposes for the website, the reasons for building one (in order of importance, i.e. name branding, e-commerce, because that's what everyone else is doing, etc.)?

- 3) How often during the year do you anticipate updates to the website? What types of information will be updated? Employment opportunities, monthly specials, contests, new products, updated news all should be updated periodically. The less frequently a site will be updated, the more general a site should be.

- 4) If you have any ideas for a primary color scheme for the background, text and graphics please write it down here. I recommend a white background with black or dark text and 2 or 3 colors for highlights for most sites.

- 5) List a couple of website URLs with designs or schemes that appeal to you and give reasons why.

- 6) Which of my portfolio of sites is most appealing to you?

- 7) List some of your competitor's website URLs:

- 8) Will you supply any of the images required or will I be responsible for creating and acquiring images, graphics, logos, etc. For any images (and other materials) supplied by the client do you own the copyrights? If not do you have the rights to use the materials on the website? Please check with the copyright owners if unsure to avoid any copyright violations.

- 9) Are there any search engines, directories or sites you would like to submit to besides the industry standard top 10, that are specific to your business or industry?

- 10) Do you need domain registration and/or an ISP to host the site? What level of hosting will be required (this may need to be determined during the design)? Can you use a low cost service (\$21.95/month)? Or will you need a higher level of hosting, e.g., e-commerce (shopping cart) or databases.

- 11) Describe your vision for this site? How will visitors interact with it? Provide sketches or other mockups or ideas if possible.

- 12) Define the criteria you will use to determine the website's success (i.e. Internet orders of a certain volume, website traffic of a certain volume (this should not be used as the sole definition of success), X amount of sales as a percentage of hits, decrease in customer service costs, increase in productivity, increase in traffic and sales in your physical store). There should be a trackable method to determine success.

- 13) Are you planning to conduct e-commerce (online selling)?

- 14) If you do not already have a domain name (i.e. davidlpark.com) choose 5 names. Your choices may already be taken. You can check www.123cheapdomain.com for availability. Consider registering a few general and specific variations including .net and .org domains. Your domain name should be easily identifiable, easy to explain over the phone and print on a business card. Most short names are usually taken; long names can be good if they click in someone's mind. Try out your ideas on several people. Then ask them in a few days if they remember how to spell it. Try out the name on the phone to see if it is easily remembered and spelled by others. Resorting to lengthy explanations or spelling means problems. How long (in years) will your domain be registered?

Consider acquiring additional domain names that directly relate to your business keywords, like woodfurniture.com or dishwasher.com that people might use to search for your site. Additional domain names can be "parked" and be pointed to your web site so that the surfer will be taken directly to your site if they type in your "parked" domain name.

- 15) List e-mail addresses you want associated with your domain name (info@davidlpark.com, sales@davidlpark.com, support@davidlpark.com)
- 16) List any problems experienced with your existing website (poor performance, graphics, load time, design, etc.) Should you choose another web host?
- 17) Testing is typically done using the top 2 web browsers (Internet Explorer and Netscape) for the Windows 98 and Windows XP operating systems. List other client platforms you would require for testing and support, if any.
- 18) List any existing websites you want linked to your site like manufacturers. These should be sites that are related to your site and not direct competitors. Linked sites should be those whose services you use or that provide service or information useful to your target audience. Sites that cross-link with each other may increase both businesses targeted traffic.

- 19) Please list and gather any existing materials and information (including but not limited to):
 1. Photos (prints, slides, negatives)
 2. Text
 3. Brochures
 4. Business cards
 5. Flyers
 6. Product shots
 7. Product samples
 8. Press releases
 9. Price and part lists
 10. Frequently Asked Questions
 11. Shipping and handling charges and constraints
 12. Warranty policy
 13. Privacy policy
 14. Return policy
 15. Guarantees
 16. True and believable testimonials (clients, industry figures, pros) ask for them with quantifiable results (“I made \$10,000” instead of “I loved how great it worked”)
 17. Endorsements from known sources
 18. Credits
 19. Bios
 20. History
 21. Education
 22. Certifications
 23. Awards
 24. Case studies
 25. Photos of yourself, staff and location
 26. Transcripts of interviews
 27. Industry recognition
 28. Map and directions from major airports, recommended places to stay nearby (if people visit your location)

- 20) What are all the different ways visitors can contact you?
 - Name

 - Address

 - Phone
 - Fax
 - 1-800
 - E-mail addresses

- 21) List hours of operation and days closed.

- 22) List 30 words or phrases that describe your business. Pick words/phrases relevant to your business. List all keywords that would link search engines to your website. Phrases should be both specific and general.

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- 23) Are you a local, regional, national or international business? What areas do you want to specifically target?

- 24) Do you have a business slogan or catch phrase?

- 25) Sketch out the navigation system of a typical page. Typically major topics are in a horizontal graphic at the top. Sub page menus are positioned on a vertical menu bar on the left side. Typically there is a text-based trailer navigation bar at the bottom of each page. If I am not creating artwork for your site, please supply any artwork required for creating graphic navigation bars.

- 26) Is the site dated (for a single event like a sale)? If so what is the expiration date?
- 27) Write a 25 word description of your business to be displayed and used in search engine submissions. Describe what your business offers, to whom it is offered and a succinct reason your business should be considered.
- 28) Write a 50 word description of your business to be displayed and used in search engine submissions. Describe what your business offers, to whom it is offered and a succinct reason your business should be considered.
- 29) Give reasons why your business clearly beats the competition? What is your USP (unique selling proposition)?
- 30) Web surfers have short attention spans, may not remember your site and will probably not return unless you give them a compelling reason to do so. How can you encourage repeat visitors and referrals? Every measure should be taken to encourage visitors to voluntarily submit their email address. Free offers, contests, referral forms, surveys and requests for information forms can be useful tools to encourage email signups. What can you offer that can be digitally delivered on site (computer wallpaper, screensavers, special reports, on-line coupons, affiliate programs, etc.) and is free?
- 31) If you currently have a website, how many visitors do you receive each month?
- 32) How does your business and products benefit your target audience? Please specify a clear list of bullet items of benefits. What can your business offer your visitors, what's in it for them, how can you help them? What problems do your prospects have that your business solves?

- 33) List features of your products and/or services? Please specify a clear list of bullet items.
- 34) What does your company do?
- 35) Who do you do it for?
- 36) List 6 to 8 major topics for your site (i.e. Products, Services, Information, How to Contact us, Galleries, etc.). Base these topics on the visitor's view of the division of information on your site. Major topics will be broken into sub topics (i.e. Information may be broken down into Links, Frequently Asked Questions, Tips, etc). From the tree below, mark major sub-topics of interest. This sample tree can be reorganized as needed. Add topics relevant to your site as needed. Too many choices is confusing. Trying to scan major portal pages and choose from 100 links is time consuming and confusing. 7 or 8 links is the maximum amount a visitor should confront. A site with hundreds of pages can easily be created using 7 or 8 general topics. Adding a few additional general topics (e.g., "Information" or "Products" will allow room for expansion under those headings.

Home

Products and/or Services

Menus

Catalogs (static)

Prices

Testimonials

Purchasing / Shopping Cart

Downloadable products

Product overview / specifications / demos

Product features & benefits

Warranty & Return Policy

Licensing

Customer Service

Training

Contracting & Consulting

Stock List

Capabilities

Portfolio

Parts List

Dealer List

Assembly Instructions

Schematics

Classified Ads

Credits

Samples / Tear sheets
Resume
Bookstore

Contact Us

Jobs

Overview
Job Postings
Recruiting
Resume submissions
Benefits

Customer Login

Database searching

Information

Links
About Us
Reviews
Credits
Copyrights
Privacy Policy
Our Team
Case Studies
Awards
News and Events
Newsletter
Press Releases
Media Coverage
Frequently Asked Questions
Legal Notices
About our Industry
Glossary of Terms
Regional or Local Information
Tech Notes
Tips and tricks
Interesting Facts
Articles
Who's Who

Site Map

Help

Site Quick Guide

Free Stuff

Downloadable screensavers/utilities
Computer Wallpaper
Contests

- 37) Who will maintain the site? If another business will do site maintenance, will they have the skills and tools to support it? Will training be required?
- 38) It has been proven time and time again that the amount of traffic, links into your site, return visits and referrals is directly proportional to the amount of unique and useful content available to your customers at the site or the amount of money spent on off-line and on-line advertising. Are you able

to write articles on subjects related to your visitor's interests or can you offer to publish other works in exchange for exposure? Some companies offer content that can be leased as well. Can you provide on-line assembly instructions, how-to guides, tips and tricks information pages, etc.? This is one of the most important aspects of creating a successful site. When coupled with a quality design and competitive products and services and outstanding customer service the site becomes a winner.

- 39) What can be done to add value to products and services? If your prices cannot be competitive, what other methods will showcase your products/services? The addition of free bonuses, lifetime warranties, free shipping and handling, upgrades, etc. will often be perceived by the consumer as value-added especially if a dollar value can be attached to these extras.

- 40) What are your delivery policies? How long does it take for a product to be delivered?

- 41) Do your customers have buying seasons? September is the ideal month to prepare your site for the upcoming Christmas shopping season. Should the site be updated according to each season? What enticements will you offer during off seasons?

- 42) Do you have a physical store? How do you see the website and off-line business working together? What are the weak points of each and the strong points that can be exploited? Don't try to recreate a catalog showroom on the web. Use the website to drive people to your physical location, to handle customer service support after hours or offer on-line coupons that can be printed and redeemed at the physical location (and vice versa). Use the physical location to promote the website.

- 43) What process will be used to integrate the website into the business on a daily, monthly, quarterly and yearly basis. Who will manage each aspect of the website once it is complete (i.e. e-mail management, system maintenance, new content, testing forms periodically, marketing, etc.)?

Whew, that's over! Thanks very much, this will all be very helpful to the success of the finished web site.