Starting a Corporate Web Page!

Calendar of Events:

Corporate Web Pages

James D. Corder

Have you ever been told that you "must" be on the web? It seems that everyone has stated that the web is the market place of the future. Every Consultant and newspaper article states you must be there! Have you ever asked yourself why and how much?

You hear that you can put up a page for $20.00US a month. How true. But that is a personal page and not a corporate presence. You have been quoted between $25.00 an hour and $25,000.00 a year. You know that there is no way that one can do justice to your protected and/or corporate image for that small fee. Face it, that Author A. Dude's company wouldn't even look at your P&L for that price.

Unfortunately, selecting a company to do your web page by price is like kicking tires on a new car. Why? However, since most people don't know how to make an intelligent decision they shop for price. Most of the time the get what they pay for!

Then what is a business owner to do?

Web Status, For November

TABLE 1.

Items	Pages	Title
991	211	exploring
7766	1626	ExpNews
3738	348	links
16163	1971	post
485	160	1997.calendar
7351	667	members
4095	330	Adults
677	180	Toadies
1171	194	Youth
1562	282	program
128	94	project
1462	307	scouting
2202	683	bible

The Explorer Code

As an Explorer-

I believe that American's Strength lies in her trust in God and in the courage and strength of her people

I will, therefore, be faithful in my religious duties and will maintain a personal sense of honor in my own life.

I will treasure my American heritage and will do all I can to preserve and enrich it.

I will recognize the dignity and worth of my fellowmen and will use fair play and goodwill in dealing with them.

I will acquire the exploring attitude that seeks the truth in all things and adventure on the frontiers of our changing world.

Why

The simplest answer is: Because everyone else has. I know, that brings up the Jumping off a bridge thing our mothers always asked. The truth is, you don't need it. However, there is a vastly growing market share of people that search the InterNet for information on companies they are planing on doing business with. Therefore, look at the WEB as yet another advertising tool. If you are a type of business that doesn't typically advertise then it is an image making tool. In short, some will view you as a lesser entity in the business world if you don't have a web page. In other words, how many clients would stop doing business with you if you didn't have a telephone or your presentation was done in crayon. The information is the same. Your advice is just as valuable. However, you clients want it lazer printed and would not accept Crayola-Green.

Who, What, Where, & Cost

Do you put up your own web page or do you hire a service and/or a consultant? Hmm. That depends on what you want to achieve. First seek the advice of someone you trust. This individual is to help you define the why and decide what you want out of your page. If you don't know your why and your wants then you will never be satisfied and will for ever be sinking endless amount of capital into this bottomless pit.

If you are going to design your web page then it will be stagnate for many months or even its history then go with a provider that will design it and place it on their web site and servers for you. This should run you about $25,000.00 a year for a decent page. Understand, however, that your page will be utilizing the same server as numerous other companies. Therefore, company X's traffic and security vulnerabilities will impact your page as well. In short, if company X uses "cgi" scripts that allow access to information on their page your page might provide the same information if you want to or not.

If you are going to change it daily and you are willing to put the cost into personnel, bring it in house. A good web master with decent design skills will cost you about $75,000.00, Network Administrator for $104,000.00, A graphics Design engineer for $65,000.00 a year with another $50,000.00 to $1,000.000.00 for your server and about $6,000.00 a month for a decent link to the InterNet with sufficient band width.

If you don't want to deal with the technical stuff and your page will change weekly or monthly then go with a company that will provide a consulting agent that will handle all of the technical aspects and can subcontract the necessary programing and/or artistic talents that are required for a decent page. This will most likely cost between $100,000.00 to $1,000.000.00 up front design fee and $6,000.00 to $25,000.00 a month maintenance fee. Depending on your desires. I have seen decent companies in the price range of $75,000.00 the first year and $25,000.00 each additional year. The first year tends to be higher since there is the need to purchase the equipment, your web page will be on its own server. You want your equipment on a UNIX box [I of course would suggest SUN running Solaris] and not a NT system. Face it, NT makes a poor server. These companies will give you copies of the source code in case you want to change providers. This is important!

Understand that suggesting prices is like asking you how much you would give me for my lodge in Canada is ludicrous. Since I know none of the readers have ever seen it and most haven't even heard about it, then how can you even guesstimate a fair market value for it?

Software Development
Jeff Adkins   jmadkins@iwaynet.net

With all software development, the underlying principle must be: "What is the reason that I am developing this software." There are many reasons that one would/should create a software system or in this particular case a Web Page.

One should approach the development of a corporate web page as they would with any software. What is the core reason for this software? Whom does one hope to attract with the web page? Why should my company wish to pay for this endeavor? What business advantage could we gain because of such an outlet?

What makes a "Good" web page?

Depending on the purpose, depends on your answer. If the people your trying to attract are experts in your area, and your trying to produce a forum where they can get answers, then you would want to focus your attention on the subject area and make it easy for them to find the answer. On the other hand, if your trying to attract novice people perhaps to make an impression for your company, then graphics, lots of internal links, product information, etc. should be your emphasis.

I would imagine that most people responding to this inquiry would be fairly explicit in their descriptions. In my opinion, web pages are only tools. Just like C, Pascal, Virtual Reality Interfaces, CASE Tools, etc. They in themselves have no value other than the developer's manipulation of the tool. The value of systems come from their ability to solve problems not just because they exist.

I will close this with a story paraphrased from a song sung by Ray Boltz that shows the importance of tools vs. the importance of the individual using the tool. There was an old violin that was for sale at an auction. No one wanted to bid on this violin. The current price was $1.00. The auctioneer was about to call for the final bid, when a man came up. He took the violin, tighten the bow and began to play the most beautiful melodies the audience had ever heard. He play for a half-hour. When he was finished, he laid the violin down and left. The audience showed their appreciation by their shouts: "$1000", "$1500", "$2500" was the sound he heard as the master walk out the door. The message

behind this story is that the important essence of a software development is not the tool, but the knowledge and skill of the master. Remember, tools will come and go, but the important part is that you are able to answer the question: "How can I make this activity be a positive reflection of my ability and be an asset to myself and my customer?"

My Humble Opinion
Tom Juncewicz tjunc@sprynet.com

To me, a good web site should begin with a page that depicts the theme of the site in general (company name, description, history, services) and provides links to the topics available as close to the "top" of the page as possible (I hate scrolling needlessly!) Subsequent pages should be similarly efficient, containing pertinent info on the topics with as little scrolling needed as possible (assuming it is viewed at a high resolution, of course). Of course, this doesn't mean that there should be only one paragraph per page, either. In general, all information should be accessible as quickly as possible, with as little needless "hopping" as possible.

If the web site belongs to a company, there should be ample product advertisements, and even a section to place an order electronically (although I'm not comfortable with giving my credit card number over the internet). The site should also not be overloaded with multi-megabyte pictures or huge java applets, and should be viewable by all standard web browsers. There shouldn't be a need to download a 10meg plug-in just to see some flashy animation or sound effects. Of course, this doesn't mean that a site should be "all work and no play" either! Well-placed gifs used to augment the textual information give a site a "comfortable" feeling. A simple, yet pleasant background pattern is another low-cost (performance-wise) way of sprucing up a site as well. I also think a dynamic site has more "replay" value than one that never changes or is updated infrequently. One way to achieve this is by using a back-end database connected through JDBC to provide user-specified information retrieval. This would really be helpful to users looking for a particular product or service provided by the company. Simpler solutions are also available using CGI or simple java applets as well.

Computer Acronyms
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PCMCIA	People Can't Memorize Computer Industry Acronyms
ISDN	It Still Does Nothing
SCSI	System Can't See It
DOS	Defective Operating System
BASIC	Bill's Attempt to Seize Industry Control
IBM	I Blame Microsoft
DEC	Do Expect Cuts
CD-ROM	Consumer Device, Rendered Obsolete in Months
OS/2	Obsolete Soon, Too.
MACINTOSH	Most Applications Crash; If Not, The Operating System Hangs
PENTIUM	Produces Erroneous Numbers Threw Incorrect Understanding of Mathematics
COBOL	Completely Obsolete Business Oriented Language
AMIGA	A Merely Insignificant Game Addiction
LISP	Lots of Infuriating & Silly Parenthesis
WINDOWS	Will Install Needless Data On Whole System
MICROSOFT	Most Intelligent Customers Realize Our Software Only Fools Teenagers

Electronic Commerce
James D. Corder

Many companies are touting the concepts of Electronic Commerce. On paper it all looks fine. Banks have been doing this sort of thing for years now. Well, they have been electronically transferring funds between financial institutions. However, most have had dedicated privet lines to protect their electronic assets.

There is a movement to eliminate paper currency an totally utilize electronic commerce. I for one am extremely against this movement. In fact I have eliminated my Master Card due to their strong endorsement of a cashless society. Now let us assume that the InterNet is a perfect place and that no one will snoop nor can steal your credit card information off of the Net. And that no one would ever do crimes on the InterNet. If you believe that I have some swamp land...

Assume that you purchase a diamond ring. That a company contacts the credit card company and asks for a list of everyone that has purchased jewelry in the past six months. Then they ask for a list of everyone that travels a lot. Hmm. Now combine the two list and you have all of the houses that have made large purchases and are on vacation. In other words, you now know what house to rob. By the way, even though it is illegal for a library to sell a list of the books you read or Video Store to sell the list of tapes you rented it is not against the law for credit card companies to sell lists of their customers and/or rate them. In-fact the selling of customer lists is extremely popular.

Prison vs. Work
JD Gibson   djgibson@hotmail.com

IN PRISON:	you spend the majority of your time in an 8x10 cell.
AT WORK:	you spend most of your time in a 6x8 cubicle.
IN PRISON:	you get three meals a day.
AT WORK:	you only get a break for 1 meal and you have to pay for it.
IN PRISON:	you get time off for good behavior.
AT WORK:	you get rewarded for good behavior with more work.
IN PRISON:	a guard locks and unlocks all the doors for you.
AT WORK:	you must carry around a security card and unlock and open all the doors yourself.
IN PRISON:	you can watch TV and play games.
AT WORK:	you get fired for watching TV and playing games.
IN PRISON:	you get your own toilet.
AT WORK:	you have to share.
IN PRISON:	they allow your family and friends to visit.
AT WORK:	you cannot even speak to your family and friends.
IN PRISON:	all expenses are paid by taxpayers with no work required.
AT WORK:	you get to pay all the expenses to go to work and then they deduct taxes from your salary to pay for prisoners.
IN PRISON:	you spend most of your life looking through bars from the inside wanting to get out.
AT WORK:	you spend most of your time wanting to get out and inside bars.
IN PRISON:	there are wardens who are often sadistic.
AT WORK:	they are called managers.

Quote of the month
Scott McNealy

In a word without fences who needs Gates?

The New Batch of Toadies
James D. Corder

With our Open House on November 11th we will be able to see how many more toadies that we can adopt. There can be only one Toadie per Explorer Eagle Scout.

Up-an-Coming Post Expenses
12/01/97 Post Charter	$30.00
12/01/97 Post Insurance	$85.00
Monthly ExpNews	$75.00

Up-an-Coming Member Expenses
Registration 11/01/98	$15.00

Post Finances
Explorer Post 369 has   -$1,318.00

Floor Fund Need	$1,200.00
Floor Fund In Hand	$830.00
Pledges Outstanding FF,	$0.00
Room Fund Needed	$3,800.00
Room Fund	$0.00
Computer Fund Needed	$0.00
Computer Fund	$0.00

Our Principals:
1)   Honor before all else.
2)   The difference between a winner and a looser is that the winner tried one more time.
3)   K.I.S.M.I.F.

Our Creed:
Exploring: Enthusiasm, Energy, & Excellence.

Explorer Post 369:

Explorer Post 369 was chartered on December 31, 1994 to the Reformation Luthern Church.

Explorer Post 369 specializes in UNIX for Programmers while emphasizing a deep theme of Engineering Computer Information & Science

Membership in Explorer Post 369 is open to young men and women between the ages of 14 [and in high school] and not yet 20. Annual Membership fees are $15.00.

Our Web Page:
http://post369.columbus.oh.us

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(E)	Eagle Scout
(Q)	Queen Scout

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

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We are looking for a new sponsor for the ExpNews, Can you help?