

# Website FAQ

1) It will cost tens of thousands of dollars to create a website. Not necessarily. There are plenty of excellent websites that can be produced for well under \$10,000 and can help drive new customers to your business. However it is true that the more pages there are on your site (for those of you with a great deal of information to share), the greater is the investment.

2) I don't have the staff to update the website. This is certainly a legitimate concern, since having an out-of-date website with tired content that is never updated is possibly worse than having no website at all. But many Content Management Systems (CMS) are so good now that it is an easy task to update the website – so easy that your 12-year old can probably help you do it!

3) My competition does not have a website so why would I need one? The other variation on this is when I hear “My industry isn't into technology, so we don't need a website.” It simply isn't true. In fact, if you are seriously asking this question you probably are headed for either retirement or extinction.

4) I can get away with a simple, freebie website. All too often I see that a company has created a 'brochure' website. It has a Home page, About Us (maybe), Hours, Contact Us and perhaps a Company History. But since the web is such an interactive visual medium (not to mention the ability to really engage with sound) a brochure website is boring and not at all engaging.

5) I don't have lots of frequently updated content for my website. Another way for you to avoid the 'brochure' website syndrome is to use things like photo galleries showing happy customers and employees, or a short video, like something that shows “behind the scenes” or the quality processes that go into your business. An interactive Q & A is another way to engage visitors.

6) All that SEO stuff is too hard to figure out. SEO or search engine optimization refers to using the words and phrases on your website that your customers will use when searching for the type of products and services you offer. Let's say you are a dry cleaner and there are several competitors in your area. A new family moves into town, or an existing family is unhappy with their current drycleaner, and while they can ask people for a recommendation, chances are greater that they will search for a drycleaner on their own as well. What do you think will they type into the search engine? Often the

search phrase will include the type of business you are in (dry cleaner) as well as your area, county or town. Create your own list of possible phrases, but an in-depth analysis of what people are actually doing (this can be done by your search marketing vendor) will probably surprise you. Having optimized keywords (one per page being best) will bring your site higher on Google and Yahoo. Having a website that is search optimized is fast becoming the single most important thing that can help your business.

So if you are a small business and have a less than great website or no website at all, you are missing a great opportunity to be there when potential new customers are looking for your product or service. And you are also missing an opportunity to tell your story in a fun and engaging manner. Customers are looking for what you have to offer. Will they find you?