



Sooo... You Want A Website

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 StoreSecured.com


EASYSTORECREATOR

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Sooo...You Want a Website

Preface

You've seen the emails and read all the hype about having a web presence. Most of the ads make it sound like it's a piece of cake. The truth is, it's not nearly as easy as "they" make it sound.

In this free ebook, I'm going to give you step-by-step instructions of how to get started and keep a website going on the net.

You are about to get the “**real story**” of what it takes to have a website from start to finish. These are the things nobody tells you because they want to sell you some information product. Most of them are not worth the millions of characters they use to sell the product!

No one tells you that it will take hours upon hours of searching and researching until your eyes are blurry and you've been tearing at your hair until you look you've stuck your finger in a light socket!

So, here's the scoop! And it doesn't cost you anything! Read all the chapters, then decide if it is worth your time, your money, your family and your job. Because it's possible to do this and lose them all! The anxiety that this can cause will make you scream!

First thing you do is get a clock and place it right above your computer, **before** you start this venture. You will look at the clock when you start. The next time you look it will be 4 hours later and you haven't accomplished a thing!

What will happen is this: you will sit down to the computer with the best of intentions. Since the road to hell is paved with those, you can see where this is going. You will do a search for products. When you get to the page in the search engine, you will see a whole list of sites. Now, before you even click on a site, you will see something on that page or some other site that has a product for which you have been looking. So, here's the first sidetrack! This will continue to happen until you look at the clock, remember that?, and it is another 4 hours later!

This will continue to happen until you set your mind to the task at hand and stick with it. If you are looking for products to sell or anything else specific to starting your website, stick with just that no matter how tempted you are to click on another link.

Throughout the chapters I will attempt to steer you away from the pitfalls but you will eventually succumb to one or more of them.

Trust me!

Chapter 1

Choosing a product to sell.

Many businesses on the web either have or have had a brick and mortar store as well. So they don't have to worry about a product. But if you've never had a business then you must decide what you want to sell. One of the biggest businesses is selling information. Are you an expert at something? Then write an ebook and sell it. Ebook is short for Electronic Book. It is something you write, compile and publish all on the net. What you are reading now is an ebook.

Many people find they have hobbies that they are very good at doing and they start websites to help others with learning that hobby or providing supplies for that hobby. For instance, one of the best selling hobbies on the net is scrapbooking. It affords people the opportunity to save precious memories. But think about what you need to do scrap booking. One you need the book. Then you may need paper clips, photo hangers, markers, etc...Choose a product and see if it has a lot of pieces and parts to it, then sell those.

One way of finding products is checking the drop shippers. You can find a huge list of them on the Net. The way this works is that you have the website with the products listed and when someone makes a purchase, a notification is sent to you. The best thing to do here, is to set up your notifications so that they are sent to both you and the drop shipper. The drop shipper will then send out the item. This is the best way to keep from having to maintain your own warehouse and a large inventory.

Here at EasyStoreCreator.com, we have a few drop shippers with whom we are affiliated. You can see the list once you sign up. You get special discounts for going through us.

There are many entities on the Net, that have ready made websites. You can find sites known as Turnkey businesses. This is where the website is already built and all you have to do is find a place to host and advertise it.

If you've ever seen an ad for SMC or Avon, those are examples of Turnkey businesses. Usually, you have to pay a fee for a Turnkey business. They can be pretty expensive to start but if you are good at advertising, you will probably succeed with it.

You may, also, view these as franchises like McDonald's or Burger King. They have all the control of the websites and you have to run them as the businesses demand. Most of the time it is nothing more than doing advertising for the website. They may tell you the publications that you can or can not use.

Chapter 2

Choosing a domain name.

This is the best place to start after you have decided on a product. If you don't have a good domain name before you sign up for a hosting service, then you have to hope the name is available after you sign up. So, instead of the anxiety, choose the name you want before you do anything else.



When choosing a domain name, you really should make it as close to your actual product as you can. For example, if you are going to be selling baby buggies, you don't want a domain name like, buggiewhips.com. I doubt there are many people alive who would know what a buggy whip is, let alone how to use one. No, if you are going to sell baby buggies, you need a much gentler name, like babybuggy.com. You probably won't find exactly what you want but with a little creativity, you can get close.

I'm sure you have seen ads for domain names that you can purchase. I would never recommend this route unless you are a big business that absolutely has to have that name. For instance, the name, AltaVista.com was owned by someone else originally and the actual company had to pay a handsome price to get the name from them.

In order to register your domain name, you have to go to a reputable domain name Registrar. Be sure you check out the Registrar, thoroughly, before signing up with them.

Most importantly, check how easy it is to transfer the domain name from the Registrar to the hosting site you will be using. This is a requirement of all hosting sites! Be sure to remember the name of the Registrar, because every time you change hosts, this is where you will have to go. You don't change it from the hosting site at all, only from the Registrar. The reason is because your domain name sits on the Registrar's domain name server (DNS). To have your domain name on the same server (DNS) with the site, you have to go to the Registrar's (DNS) and change the information so that the name is pointing to the correct server (DNS). Many people find this aspect of website building very confusing.

For those cerebrally challenged:

 <p>Registrar's DNS Example: Godaddy.com is the registrar. You will have to transfer the domain name from this server.</p>	 <p>Hosting site's DNS Example: ecommerce solution. EasyStoreCreator.com You will transfer the domain name to this server.</p>
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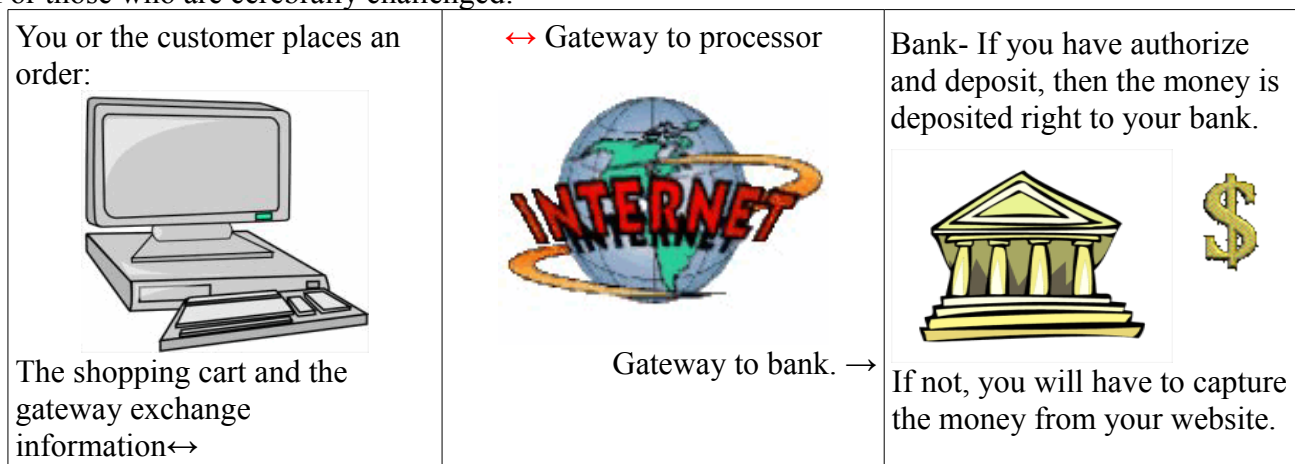
Chapter 3 Merchant Accounts

This is kind of tricky. When you want to sign up with a web host and be able to handle credit card processing, you need a merchant account. This is the tricky part. The website host doesn't care who your merchant account processor is, what's important is the gateway they use.

How this works is a 3 step process:

1. **Authorization:** You submit the card information to verify that the funds are available and to put a hold on those funds.
2. **Capture:** This lets the processor know that you are ready to collect the funds. The processors all have a different amount of time allowed to capture the funds. The easiest way to do this is to set the authorization and capture in the cart to do both steps at the same time.
3. **Settlement:** This lets the bank on which the credit card is drawn know that you have already delivered what was purchased and are ready to collect your funds. This step is completed by the payment processor and usually takes 1 business day to appear in your bank account.

For those who are cerebrally challenged:



Since all gateways are mostly the same, it would be best to choose your shopping cart software and then choose from their list of available gateways.

You can find a list of gateways, with whom we are already integrated, at EasyStoreCreator.com. There is also, a merchant account provider you can get through EasyMerchantServices.com that comes with a substantial discount.

For businesses just starting out, you may not have the budget for a merchant account, yet. There are other options you can use like Google Checkout, Amazon Checkout or PayPal Checkout. With these, before the customer processes the payment, they choose one of those sites. They have options when they get to whichever Checkout they use.

The drawback to that is the customer is taken away from your site and then returned at the end of the payment process. When you have a merchant account the whole operation takes place right on your site seamlessly. It is, also, much more professional looking!

EasyStoreCreator.com is already integrated with each of the above Checkouts.

Chapter 4

Hosting Sites vs. Ecommerce Solutions

A hosting site does only that, host your HTML pages. An ecommerce solution is a comprehensive solution that not only hosts your site but also includes a shopping cart and already comes with integrated payment processors. Hence, if you have a website just to show your store or project, that's hosting. If you want to be able to sell those products then you need an ecommerce solution. We, at EasyStoreCreator.com are an ecommerce solution.

What most people use as a basis for a web solution is the price. That is not the smartest way to find one. Always bear in mind the old adage "you get what you pay for" That said, there are several aspects of ecommerce solutions you need to know. Considering this ebook is coming from EasyStoreCreator.com, of course, I would say we are the best.

However, here are things you should do before choosing an ecommerce solution. Do a search on the net for ecommerce solutions and choose the ones that appeal to you most. I'm sure they will be the cheapest ones you find because you, mistakenly, believe it will keep your costs low. But it doesn't keep costs low if you can't ever contact them when you have problems with your website.

So, do this. Take that list you've made from your research and send an email to each company. See how long it takes to get a response. Hopefully, all the ones you choose have live phone support and chat service. Call them on the phone and see if anyone answers. Sometimes, you will be sent to voice mail, so leave a message. See how long it takes someone to return your call. If they don't have a live chat, stay clear of them. If they do, go on chat and talk with the support staff. Make a list of only the ones that respond to you in a timely fashion. The time limit is up to you.

Then you take that list and start comparing prices. Our price for everything is \$67 per month. To some that seems to be a lot. However, you must compare the features you get here to the features you get for a cheaper price. The biggest thing to check is what kind of hidden fees the other companies have. We don't have any. Others have set up fees, upgrade fees, etc. Be sure you read the terms and conditions. Know if you have to sign a long term contract. You want to stay away from those.

To ease your fears about us, we have none of those fees, just the \$67 per month.

Before you sign up with anyone, check the demo of their sites. Check to see if they have featured customers on their website so you can see what can be done with the software. Ask yourself these questions: Do I need to know HTML to build a site? Do you have pre-made templates that I can use? Do you offer a free custom template? Will your support staff help me with setting the site up? I'm sure you get the idea and can think of even more questions.

With EasyStoreCreator.com, you don't have to know HTML but it helps. We have pre-made templates but we offer a free custom made template where you tell us exactly what you want. We will assist you every step of the way to setting up your site.

Chapter 5

Setting up your site

Now, that you've chosen an ecommerce solution, it's time to set up the site. The first thing you want to do is check the welcome email you received from the company. Does it have a quick start guide as ours does? Since the support staff took the time to write it, then take the time to read it. It has a lot of information on getting started and will answer a lot of the obvious questions that you will have like, "how do I get started?"

No matter what ecommerce solution you use, they all have instructions on how to get set up. Take the time to read all of the instructions and get familiar with the software before you start asking questions. The support teams are there to assist you, not do it for you.

If there is a survey after you finish chatting with a support staff member, complete it. It really does help the business to know which support staff members are doing a good job with helping the customer. Remember, they may have taken a lot of time to help you. It's nice for them to know their time was appreciated.

We at EasyStoreCreator.com have a complete knowledge base and many tutorials that will help you to familiarize yourself with building the site.

One of the major things the search engines look for, along with keywords, is content. The more original the content the better the ranking. If you have a site that's a Turnkey business, especially, you have to be sure to not use the same content as others. The search engines will penalize you for this and your page will not be ranked very high.

If you are unsure of what to write or how to write it, there are many free courses on the net on how to write good content.

One thing you can do is check other websites and read their content. See what you like and what you dislike about the content. You want to write it as though you are speaking directly to the customer. Write a list of questions like: Does your product fill a need? What is that need? How does the product fill it? Is it a niche product? That would be a product that serves a specific group of people.

Once you can answer these questions, put it down on paper and you will have the content for your website.

The rest of setting up the site is adding the departments and the items. Since all shopping carts have different ways of doing this, I can not expound more on that. Here, at EasyStoreCreator.com, we have sample formats of spreadsheets that will help you to upload products faster.

Another thing you want to check is whether or not you can ftp into your site to upload images. Uploading this way is much faster then doing one image at a time.

Chapter 6

Advertising the site

Building a web presence is not like a Field of Dreams. They won't come just because you build it. You must advertise your site. Here at EasyStoreCreator.com, once you open an account with Google Base, our system will automatically send feeds on designated days, depending on the number of items in your store. When you use our service, there is a whole list of other ways to market your site.

“Marketing a website” is one of the top informational product titles sold. Fortunately, there is so much free information about advertising a website that it shouldn't be necessary to purchase any information until you have gone through the free information.

The most important advertising is, of course, the search engines. There are many different schools of thought as to how to go about doing this. Some say to submit your site directly to the search engines. Some say your site will be picked up by the search engines if you have the right keywords, so don't submit it.

We have found that simply submitting products to Google base has gotten our merchants sites listed in Google. Google base allows you to upload your products into their database of products and when someone does a search on that product, yours will show.

The next major form of advertising is Direct Mail marketing. These can get very expensive plus you can get accused of spamming by sending out unsolicited emails depending on how you run your campaign. There are many who sell mailing lists. Be very careful with these because most of them are just harvested email addresses from the net. Many of these addresses, if not all, have never asked to receive email and you could be breaking the [Can-Spam](#) law.

Some of the other forms of advertising are ezines, safe lists, ad blasters, banners, Pay-Per- Click Programs, Press Releases, Buying Ad Space and Exchanging links with relevant sites and offline advertising.

Ezines: This is short for Electronic Magazine. These are generally sent by a specific group to their members. Some of these can have memberships the reach into the thousands! The cost of advertising will not be as expensive as offline printed magazines.

Safe Lists: These are lists that are specifically set up so that members of the lists can email each other with offers. Most are free to join. The problem is that once you sign up for one of these lists, you will receive a ton of email. Then, depending on the list, in order for you to send out ads, you must click on a link to prove you viewed the ad that was sent to you. This can be very time consuming and tiring trying to get all the credits you need to be able to send your own email. They usually offer to not send you massive amounts of email for a fee. However, you are still permitted to send email to the list.

Ad Blasters: These are sites that offer to send your ad to millions for a fee. Most charge a one time fee but there are many that charge a monthly fee. The problem is that a lot of them don't target the email. The ad is just sent to a general list of addresses as opposed to sending it to a select group for whom your ad is specifically targeted. For example, if you are selling scrapbooking materials, a general group may not be as interested as a targeted group who do scrapbooking all the time. Many of these, also, give you a certain amount of banner rotations on their sites for the same fees.

Banners: I'm positive all of you have seen banners if you've even been on the Net only once. They are usually flashy and sometimes annoying. They have been known to generate a great amount of income if located in the right places. If you sign up for blasters check to see if you get banner rotations too.

Pay-Per-Click Programs: With these programs, you pay for keywords. Then every time someone clicks on your site using these keywords, you pay. You can go through thousands of dollars with these programs. It is possible to earn a good income if you choose low cost keywords, test and optimize your ads.

Press Releases: This is one of the best forms of free advertising. You must be good at writing an objective press release and not make it sound like an ad for your product. If it reads like a sales ad at all, it will be rejected. There are a number of sites that are for press releases only.

Buying Ad Space: It goes without saying that there are a plethora of places both online and offline to buy advertising space. Just remember that the online ones are usually a lot cheaper.

Exchanging Links: It may seem counter intuitive to advertise on someones site. But the fact is, you want to exchange links with sites that compliment yours. For example, you sell cartridge toner. You would want to exchange links with sites that sell printers. This is called synergy.

Offline Advertising: We all know that this will be the most expensive form of advertising. However, a few well placed ads, like magazines or newspaper specific to your product, could garner an incredible response. You could have a fantastic ROI (return on investment)

Besides setting up a nice looking website, advertising is the most important thing you will do. If you don't advertise, not that many people will ever see your site.

Chapter 7

Summary

I have given you quite a bit of information to absorb. That's why you really need to read this ebook and give setting up a website a good amount of thought. You must be honest with yourself that you will take the time necessary to not only build it but maintain it as well. You must give yourself and the site the time needed to do the work and make it a viable business.

If you are unwilling to make the commitment, then don't waste your time.