

## Advertising Online with Your Own Website

The best promotional venture for any home or home-based business is to invest time and effort into a website. Even if you aren't interested in reaching a global audience, a website can be the deciding factor with new clients. Is your company online? Do you have a good, professional website that offers company history and available products or services? A website isn't just for those seeking to work in the global economy. It's also for those who want to draw in regional traffic. Offering a web address, or URL, in your signs and advertisements shows clients you are eager to provide history, any necessary product details and a positive statement on your company. Every business should maintain their own website. This will often save you thousands of dollars in set-up fees, design fees and monthly maintenance costs. Running your company's site gives you the maximum freedom and flexibility with both costs and information. There's no middle company to depend on. All updating and news can be added directly to the site without waiting 24-48 hours or more for a web design company to update what is basically your domain. You can also look forward to direct communication with your visitors and clientel through your website. You can add features such as guest books, counters and interactive features as you wish. Instead of being charged for each feature plus extra for their upkeep, you can maintain all the extras for yourself. The only exception to the self-sufficient webmaster is if you plan on operating a very technically advanced operation as an online blog or web service corporation. Such ventures will require IT staffing with advanced web knowledge and capabilities. The primary reason that managing your own site is so effective is the cost involved. Most professional design companies will start your business out with the maximum of everything, even though it will likely be years before you actually need the same amount of space as a major corporation, if you ever need that amount. This justifies the expense involved. Many more dubious companies will also imply that you are less of a professional because you are opting to take care of your own website. Don't allow these pressure tactics to sway you. Website maintenance is a simple process, and you will reduce a good amount of overhead by simply doing it yourself. Your first step when designing your own website is to purchase a good program called an HTML editor. This editor should allow you to edit raw code and feature an item called a "WYSIWYG" (pronounced wizzy-wig) editor. This seemingly strange editor is really a simple acronym for "what you see is what you get." This editor allows you to simply click and drag your web page elements without advanced knowledge of HTML or other design languages. Your HTML editor should also come with a spell checker. Better programs come with validating features to ensure your web page is completely accessible. Free programs are available online and are excellent for beginning webmasters to experiment with. You will want to use a good quality HTML editor when you design your actual business site. While you don't need to shell out hundreds of dollars for such a program, do intend on investing \$50 or \$60. Sometimes you can find a good deal on HTML editors. If that's your situation, by all means save what money you can. Cheaper HTML editors have a tendency to place much excess code into your web pages, and that can result in a low search engine ranking and little traffic. While you are getting into the field of web page design, you should visit any of the thousands of resources online to learn more about web page code. Once you have found your ideal program, you can move on to the more technical aspects. Your next concern will be finding a domain name. Be forewarned that countless websites are currently completely unused, but are under the thumb of what we'll call a "domain developer." These companies buy up as many domains as possible and hope to make a profit by selling them at a much higher price to someone who just wants the name. With the number of extensions available for your website (i.e., .com, .org, .biz, .net), you should never feel forced into purchasing a domain at a higher price. Domains generally run both consumers and businesses around \$10 to \$15 dollars a year. Anything more than this is unreasonable. Your next venture will be to purchase server space with a hosting company. Hosting companies provide you with the structure, or home, in which to store your web page files. You will design your web pages on your computer and publish, or upload, them to the server provided by your hosting company. You should never pay more than \$7 per month for hosting services starting out. If you can avoid being overwhelmed by the process, you can make owning and operating your own website both rewarding and fascinating. Unless you intend on operating some venture that provides online services, it's better to be your own webmaster. If you do it right, your website will bring you more customers for your home business.

## About the Author

John Cantu provides expert analysis of home based business opportunities and invites you to visit his site that shows reviews and comments on the current Top 10 Work at Home Opportunities. Visit: <http://www.wahometop10.com:80/1659.html> for more information.

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