



# **WEBSITES/MARKETING 101**

## **TUTORIAL PACKET**

Managed Services Division

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## 01 How to design an effective website

Pick a goal or goals

What are you trying to accomplish? Consider these common goals...

**Drive leads:** Many businesses want sales leads and the web can be a great way to make them happen. If this is your goal, your site should make it easy for users to fill out and submit their information.

**Drive sales:** If e-commerce is your game make it easy for users to shop and, most importantly, to check out!

**Build your brand:** People buy brands not products. If you're in the business of brand building, then design and content are king.

**Education & Disseminate information:** Many sites serve to educate or inform. If this is your goal, content is your number one priority.

### Have a functionality and technology strategy

Websites can use technology to offer just about any customized tool. For example, instant online quotes, calculators, dealer locators, e-commerce, database access, maps, content management, etc.

Decide if you want or would like your website to "do" anything or if you need any special tools on the back end like content management. The more you can think up before you start, the better (not to mention the more money you'll save).

### Identify your target audience/customer

Clearly select who you are trying to reach and make all content and creative decisions based on what they want, not what you want.

### Determine your content strategy and site map

A site map is essentially the overall navigation and structure of a site. It outlines all pages and how those pages relate or link to one another. Essentially, the site map is a hierarchy of content. Your content strategy should give you a solid site map.

At ETS, we typically arrange copy and content in the following manner:

- What are you selling or promoting? Basically, why would someone write you a check?
- What are the benefits of your product, service or organization?
- Why is your offer different from the competition's? This is also known as the unique selling proposition (USP)
- Why can a customer trust you?
  - o Experience: Showcase how much of it you have
  - o Portfolio: Show relevant work
  - o Other customers: Nothing makes potential customers more comfortable than other big name customers in your portfolio. Show them off as much as possible.
  - o Your team/employees: Experience / Skills / Degrees

- Have a call to action - something that drives the user to contact you. Examples:
  - Contact information
  - Buy now!
  - Promotional offer
- Sample site map
  - Products (or Services): If you are selling online then promote it ...BUY NOW!
  - Benefits
  - Why Us? (or Why Our Products?)
  - Portfolio (or Customers)
  - About Us
    - o Your mission statement
    - o Your team/employees
    - o Skills
    - o Contact

### **Have a great homepage**

Make sure your homepage does the following:

- Greet and invites the user
- Builds your brand
- Promotes your products or services
- Guides the user (Try to limit the options and lead them to the most important information.)
- Positions you in the best and most effective light
- Has clear and simple navigation

### **Don't make people read too much**

We're convinced that no one really wants to read too much. Most of your customers want to get to the point. Everyone is busy, on overload or just flat-out lazy. So please keep this in mind. Make pages "browse-able." Don't try to say everything. Use fun headlines. Make it easy to grasp the main points quickly.

### **Honor the brand**

The power is in the network! Your website needs to be an extension of your brand. Refer to other branded materials in your company and be sure you're on track and on brand with your design, voice, etc.

If your website is the launch of your brand, then consider your future marketing items as you design, and strive for a new look and feel that will translate effectively down the road. For example:

- Be aware of logos that are too long or too high. They can be tough to work with.
- Some colors are cool online but don't work as well in print.

**Make sure you've stayed on track**

Once you have a look, feel, voice and site map, revisit the site's initial goals (Item "a" above). Make changes as necessary to ensure you're still on target.

**Plan for the future**

The key word here is scalability. How will your site scale in the future? Will you be adding products, services, different sections or areas? Keep in mind that some things are hard to change later, and having a plan for growth now will save you a lot of time, money and pain later.

## 02 How to design an effective brochure

### Pick a goal or goals

What are you trying to accomplish? Consider these common goals...

**Drive leads:** Many business want sales leads and an effective brochure is a great way to drive a lead to your door.

**Build your brand:** People buy brands not products. If you're in the business of brand building, then design and content are king.

**Education & Disseminate information:** A brochure is a great way to ensure all of the pertinent information about your company is now in their hands.

### Identify your target audience/customer

Clearly select who you are trying to reach, and make all content and creative decisions based on what they want, not what you want.

### Determine your content strategy

Consider these questions...

- What are you selling or promoting? Basically, why would someone write you a check?
- What are the benefits of your product, service or organization?
- Why is your offer different from the competition's? This is also known as the unique selling proposition (USP)
- Why can a customer trust you?
  - o Experience: Showcase how much of it you have
  - o Portfolio: Show relevant work
  - o Other customers: Nothing makes potential customers more comfortable than other big name customers in your portfolio. Show them off as much as possible.
  - o Your team/employees: Experience / Skills / Degrees

### Have a call to action

This is something that drives the reader to contact you. Examples:

- Contact information
- Buy now
- Promotional offer

### Honor the brand

The power is in the network! Your brochure is an important extension of your brand. Refer to other branded materials in your company and be sure you're on track and on brand with your design, voice, etc.

### Don't make people read too much

We're convinced that no one really wants to read too much. Most of your customers want to get to the point. Everyone is busy, on overload or just flat-out lazy. So please keep this in mind. Don't try to say everything. Use fun headlines. Make it easy to grasp the main points quickly.

### Make sure you've stayed on track

Once you have the look, feel, and voice be sure to revisit your initial goals (Item "a" above). Make changes as necessary to be sure you're still on target.

## 03 How to design an effective ad

### **Pick a goal or goals**

What are you trying to accomplish? Consider these common goals...

**Drive leads/sales:** A well-designed ad that captures the public's attention will drive customers to your company.

**Build your brand:** People buy brands not products. If you're in the business of brand building, then design and content are king.

**Education & Disseminate information:** An ad is a great way to make a statement. It could also push an interested audience into wanting to find out more about what you have to offer.

### **Identify your target audience/customer**

Clearly select who you are trying to reach and make all content and creative decisions based on what they want, not what you want.

### **There are many different realms of advertising**

Decide the best type of ad placement to serve your needs and best reach your chosen audience.

#### **New media**

Mobile/wireless communication  
Web (see Online Advertising)

#### **Covert**

Product placement

#### **Commercial / Media**

Billboards  
Flyers  
Radio, Film and Television  
Magazines  
Newspapers  
Transportation (cabs, buses and bus stops, subways, trains)

#### **Online advertising**

Search engine advertising  
Desktop advertising  
Online advertising directories  
Opt-in e-mail advertising  
Blogs  
Rich Media advertising (banner ads, pop-ups, floating, Interstitial ads i.e. displaying an advertisement before the requested content)

### **Determine your content strategy**

At ETS, we typically arrange ad copy and content in the following manner:

- **Headline/Hook**
- **What are you selling or promoting? Basically, why would someone write you a check?**
- **What are the benefits of your product, service or organization?**
- **Why is your offering different from the competition's? Also known as the unique selling propositions (USP)**

- Why can a customer trust you?
  - o Experience: Showcase how much you have
  - o Portfolio: Show relevant work
  - o Other customers: Nothing makes potential customers more comfortable than other big name customers in your portfolio. Show them off as much as possible.
  - o Your team/employees: Experience / Skills / Degrees

### **Have a call to action**

This is something that makes the user contact you.

- Contact information
- Buy now
- Promotional offer

### **Hook 'em Hard!**

With ads, you really only have an instant to grab people's attention which means you need a good, bold, clever hook. Usually it's a copy line and killer photo or a combination of the two. Just think about when you browse a magazine and consider what would get you to stop.

### **Honor the brand**

The power is in the network! Your ad is an important extension of your brand. Refer to other branded materials in your company and be sure you're on track and on brand with your design, voice, etc.

### **Stay on Track**

Once you have a look, feel, and voice, be sure to revisit your initial goals (Item "a" above). Make changes as necessary to be sure you're still on target.

### **Don't make people read too much**

We're convinced that no one really wants to read too much. Most of your customers want to get to the point. Everyone is busy, on overload or just flat-out lazy. So please keep this in mind. Don't try to say everything. Use fun headlines. Make it easy to grasp the main points quickly.

## 04 How to design an effective direct mail piece

### What's so cool about Direct Mail?

The really nice fact about direct mail is that it, like online marketing, is all about action. The success of a DM piece is very simple. Did you get leads and/or sales? And how much did each lead or sale cost you? DM, if it works for you, can be really handy and easy to track who's getting the message.

### Pick a goal or goals

What are you trying to accomplish? Consider these common goals...

**Drive sales:** This is usually a big goal for DM so make it easy for users to reach you. (i.e. prominent phone number, website address or easy-to-fill-out form.)

**Drive leads:** Also a common DM goal. See above. You'll be using the same approach as driving sales

**Build your brand:** People buy brands not products, so if you're in the business of brand building then design and content are king.

**Education & Disseminate Information:** If this is your goal, content is your number one priority.

### Identify your target audience/customer

Clearly select who you are trying to reach and make all content and creative decisions based on what they want, not what you want.

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### Have a call to action

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**Hook 'em Hard!**

You really only have an instant to grab people's attention which means you need a good, bold, clever hook. Usually it's a copy line and killer photo or a combination of the two. Just think about when you browse a magazine and consider what would get you to stop.

**Honor the brand**

The power is in the network! Your Direct Mailer is an important extension of your brand. Refer to other branded materials in your company and be sure you're on track and on brand with your design, voice, etc.

**Make sure you've stayed on track**

Once you have a look, feel, and voice, be sure to revisit your initial goals (Item a above). Make changes as necessary to be sure you're still on target.

**Don't make people read too much**

We're convinced that no one really wants to read too much. Most of your customers want to get to the point. Everyone is busy, on overload or just flat-out lazy. So please keep this in mind. Don't try to say everything. Use fun headlines. Make it easy to grasp the main points quickly.

## 05 Developing a Successful Brand- Better Yet... What is Branding (and Why is It So Important)?

When it comes to “great branding”, consider these key points.

- The fundamental reason for building a great brand is actually one of the main goals of business -- to increase revenues relative to the competition.
- The essence of brand greatness is in the capacity of a brand to foster the sales of a product or service by creating an emotional link with its audience.
- A great brand balances the delivery of functional benefits with emotional ones.
- Great branding starts with an assessment of your audience and of the brand positioning in the minds of those people.
- Organizations that display a dynamic brand name see branding as a subset of marketing management. This is demonstrated by an organizational structure that puts the customer at the center of the business.
- Great branding seeks to isolate a segment of the market that would be particularly receptive to its message to the extent where those select few would champion "their" brand and have a strong direct or indirect impact on revenues. This group constitutes the marketing target, which is a much narrower subset of the economic target, made up of all the people buying the product/service. The goal is to rally that economic target, because they identify with your marketing target.
- Focus and consistency create successful brands and helps businesses grow by:
  - o Increasing sustainable sales and price premiums
  - o Attracting and retaining the best talent and facilitating relations with employees, suppliers, vendors, shareholders, and the community.
  - o Helping create internal alignment at all levels of the organization.
- The road to a great brand is to focus on one or two attributes in the mind of the customer -- "hot buttons" that will trigger the positive response being sought.

### What Great Brands Share

**A compelling idea** - One that captures the customers' attention and loyalty by filling an unmet or unsatisfied need.

**A core purpose and supporting values** - Strategies that remain in place even though the business strategy and tactics have to be regularly revised. For example, regardless of the car, the BMW brand always stands for “the ultimate driving machine.”

**A central organizational principle** - The brand position, purpose and values are employed as management levers to guide decision-making. Always check to see if any business decision is “on brand.” If it's not, you may need to seriously rethink it. What if BMW went for safety instead of performance? Is that a good move?

**An ability to stay relevant.** - Leading brands constantly maintain their relevance to a targeted set of customers.

### **Three Steps Toward Building Your Brand**

- What preconceived beliefs come to mind when your customers think about your brand and its category? Consider the above with your competition in mind.
- What are the one or two attributes in your mind and the mind of your customer – the "hot buttons" that trigger sales? Consider the above with your competition in mind.
- What do you think are the good and bad thoughts, associations and memories with your brand?

## 06 How can I get my site to come up first on Google?

Google listings come in two flavors, paid and organic. Here is a basic understanding of each:

### **Paid**

Using Google AdWords, you can pay to come up against keywords or phrases. These show up as Sponsored Links after a Google search. AdWords is easy to use and offers a lot of flexibility. For instance, you can “cap” how much you want to spend and how often. Also, AdWords gives you good tracking so you can figure out which words work best for you. Click here to learn more: <https://adwords.google.com/select/Login>

### **Organic (Free!)**

Organic search engine optimization (SEO) is the biggest buzz online right now. It’s a moving target, but here’s our best explanation of what’s going on in this arena.

**The goal is simple:** How to come up as close to the top on search engines like Google (without paying). A few suggestions to make this happen...

- Program your site properly
  - o No frames
  - o H1 tags
  - o Make sure you have a site map
  - o Avoid programming mistakes
  - o Flash
- Maximize the amount of links to your site from other websites  
The more sites linked to your site, the higher your ranking. Work hard to get your site out there with your strategic partners, customers, etc.
- Content is king  
Search engine “spiders” also look for keywords and keyword phrases in your site, so you will want to have relevant words and phrases appear often in the copy on your site. The trick here is how to be informative and yet not redundant to the point of insanity while being as attractive as possible to both the search engines and your site visitor. Think about it...all of this content we’ve written here is actually really good for Hersh Corporation’s SEO. By writing stuff like, “Hey, think of us for website design in Los Angeles”, we just increased the odds of someone finding that exact phrase. This type of content is a good excuse to talk about all the things we do. It’s informative for you and attractive to the search engines. Why don’t you do the same on your site? Can’t hurt.

More proof of how attractive copy is to the search engines is the fact that so many of the top listed sites often times are unattractive and featuring “walls” of copy. But good news! The beauty of hiring professionals (cough, cough) to do this stuff for you is they can design a site that gets the same great results with search engines but without sacrificing a creative, cool look and functionality.

## 07 How can I drive traffic to my website?

### Promote

Promote it everywhere possible and leverage all of your efforts and marketing dollars. Think about...

- Business cards
- Email footers
- Ads
- Brochures
- Hold messages
- Proposals
- Letterhead
- Promotional Items

### Advertise

Sadly, the days of “build a site and they will come” are definitely over. To get people to your site, you need to pay to be out there. The sooner you embrace that, the sooner you’ll get real traffic.

To advertise online, explore opportunities with the big search engines and contact other popular websites where you think you might meet customers. Typically, the good sites will have an available advertising infrastructure.

## 08 What are the basics of online marketing?

The web is, basically, a big funnel of eyeballs. Users typically start or search from a few locations. Search engines are obvious ones. So the simple strategy is how to get your link (website address) in front of the most people. Typically, you will either pay for it or get lucky and get listed.

It’s time to consider marketing to the online space just as you would to any other type of media. Let’s make it a little easier and say we are comparing the web to television. Today, there are countless TV shows just as, online, there are countless websites. If we want to market a product on TV, we would try to pick the shows where we’d get in front of our primary customers. So if we were marketing, say, a pick-up truck, we’d consider placing our commercial in a football game or during the James Bond marathon on basic cable. If we wanted to market that same truck online, we’d buy the keywords pick-up on Google and place some ads on ESPN. The whole goal of online marketing is to build the brand and to get them to click over to our product’s site.

## 09 How much should I expect to pay for a professionally designed and built website?

Corporate	\$50,000 and up
Mid Sized Business	\$35,000
Small Business	\$15,000
Home Business	\$5,000

## 10 How can I pick the right design firm?

When selecting a design firm, consider the following...

### **Size (It matters)**

Are they big enough to support your project or are they so big you won't get the attention you deserve? Find the right mix to suit your particular needs.

### **Timing**

They must commit to getting your project done in an acceptable amount of time. Be cautious of delivery dates that are too soon or too far away. The typical project should take about 2-4 months.

### **Budget**

Figure out what amount you're comfortable paying. In the design game, you'll probably be able to find someone who can do what you want for what you're willing to pay.

### **Expertise**

Check out their portfolio. Be sure they have a lot of paying clients and a decent amount of experience.

### **Sensibility**

Do you like their design style? Just about all design firms will say they can design what you want, but it's definitely a good idea to feel comfortable that the firm you chose has the design eye you need.

## **11 My friend's cousin's sister's friend just graduated from art school. Should I just let her design all of my marketing stuff?**

This is a tough one but one we hear a lot. The truth is, if your friend's cousin's sister's friend is really good and has a decent sense of marketing, branding, design and what you want, you could, in fact, save a lot of money going this route. However, it is our experience that typically going this direction actually wastes a lot of time and, ultimately, money, because you usually need to find someone who can redo what they just did.

Keep in mind that to get an effective logo, brochure, stationery, website, ads and such you need all of the following skills: creative direction, art direction, programming, copywriting, strategy, production, and project management. It's very rare to find one person who possesses all of these skills. (Actually, if you know someone like that, we want to hire her.)

So, we can't say it won't work, but we can say we are often hired to come fix what your friend's cousin's sister's friend just did for you.

## 12 What are the keys to successfully managing a creative project and/or the creative firm you've hired?

If you haven't done it before, the good news is that it can be very, very fun. The bad news is that depending on your partner, it can also be very, very painful. Here are some things to think about:

**Have a mutually agreed-upon deadline.** Make sure your partner commits to the deadline. Creative projects without a clear deadline are a disaster. P.S. we've found that even with a deadline and the best efforts on both sides, most projects tend to run over a little. Not sure why this happens, but it is common and, despite what everyone says, it isn't the end of the world. Especially when you have an experienced firm on your side used to crunch-time.

**Understand what is included and what extra costs you should expect.** Most creative projects will have extra costs like printing, stock photography, color outputs, messengers etc. Just know what you're dealing with so you don't feel surprised later. That kind of stuff can turn a fun job sour very quickly.

**How many cooks do you really need in the kitchen?** This is a biggie. One thing we know for sure...everyone has an opinion. And, to make matters worse, one doesn't need to have any taste to have an opinion. So, be thoughtful about who you include in your creative project. They are fun so everyone wants to dabble, but jobs can get messy and take way too long if too many are involved. Don't forget your/your boss/Karen in accounting/the mail guy's input all put a strain on a deadline if not handled carefully.

**Clearly communicate what you like and what you don't.** If you're working with a professional firm you can assume that we have a thick skin. Don't get us wrong, we appreciate a delicate, polite approach, but we actually love, not to mention really need, clear, firm direction. What you like and what you don't are monumentally important. They help drive the process as well as save time and money. Before you start, think about what you really want and try to visualize it. A great exercise is to grab a bunch of magazines and to create collages that express the look, feel, tone, and vibe of what you want to do. Or simply ask your agency to do that for you. If you like the collage, you're on your way to liking the final piece.

**Figure out what kind of client you are and what kind of client you want to be.** Some clients love to be hands on. They want to submit ideas and see their concepts come to life. Others want to sit back and be shown concepts. Figure out which you are and communicate it to your agency. This way, both parties will have good footing along the way. You'll get what you want and they'll give you what you want.

**Trust your gut.** Just like anything in life, with creativity there are no guarantees. Creative is personal, emotional and subjective. As much as we'd like to say we know exactly what you want the minute you walk through the door, we don't know exactly what will deliver, in your opinion, the best results. We draw on experience, knowledge, talent and instinct. And you should too. Make decisions that honor your company, your customer, your brand and your heart. We've found if you do, you will be happy.

**Make sure you're designing for your customer and not yourself.** This admittedly is a toughie. We struggle with it all the time. How do we make something cool that we like but that really speaks to the customer out in the world? A great way to test this is...well...to test it. Put whatever you're working on in front of your customer and make sure they respond the way you want. If they don't, change it. Be watchful of becoming a client who really just wants to please himself or herself and forgets about the bigger mission.

## 13 Is ETS the all-time greatest creative design and website design firm in Los Angeles or on the planet Earth for that matter?

The truth is we don't really think this (ok, maybe a little), but if you're reading this, that was a pretty good copy hook (see "Hook 'em Hard" under how to create and effect ad section)

The bottom line is that we really enjoy what we do and we think we're pretty good at it. The reason we can say the latter is that respectable companies and seemingly intelligent people often hire us for projects including:

- Logos
- Stationery systems
- Websites
- eCommerce
- Print Ads
- Marketing Strategies
- Packaging Design
- Catalog Work
- Custom Programming Applications

And, what's more, they often times come back to us for more than one project. So, we take from this that they like our work, they like us, and what we did for them is working. And, most likely, it will work for you too. (See what I did right there?)