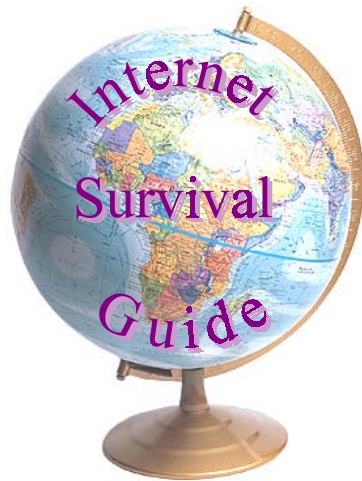


Elmira College

Students In Free Enterprise



<http://www.elmira.edu/Stulife/SIFE/ecsife.htm>



We invite you to use this page for note taking.



Introduction



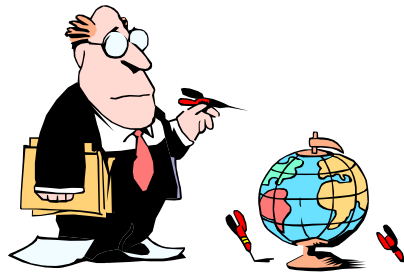
Yesterday, Business was done formally in an office. Today, Business can be conducted right from the comfort of your own home. The Internet has flattened the playing field so that anyone can take part in today's business at a global scale. The Elmira College SIFE team hopes you find this guide useful. If you are interested in promoting your own business online, or want to just publish information for fun, this "Internet Survival Guide" will help you get started.

- This Survival Guide is presented by the members of the Elmira College chapter of the **Students In Free Enterprise**.

Visit our chapter web site at:
<http://www.elmira.edu/Stulife/SIFE/ecsife.htm>

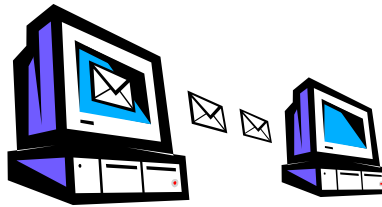
Visit the SIFE organization's page at:
<http://www.sife.org>

Deciding on the Content



- The first step in your web site development is deciding what you want your web site to be about.
 - **Who is your target audience?** Business to Business customers will need to be targeted very differently than the twenty-something female segment.
 - **What is it that you are trying to sell them?** Your page layout will be very different if you are selling someone a high-involvement product than if you are selling them something more routine.
 - **What is the goal of your website?** Your site will be very different if you want to just get information out to the customer than if you are trying to create the sale online.
- After reviewing these questions, you should give some considerable thought into the content of your website. The most important rule however, just like in brick and mortar business, is to be factual when distributing information over the world wide web. The consequences for fraud are just as severe.

Electronic Mail



Electronic Mail, or E-Mail as it is commonly referred to, is a great way to communicate with your peers, coworkers, customers, clients, family, friends, and just about any person you can think of. It is low cost and is normally included free as part of your service package with your Internet Service Provider (ISP).

For personal use, there are many free services that provide email accounts. While these are free and can be quite useful on a personal web page, it is more appropriate to have an email address with your own domain name in it for your company web site. The advantage to having your own email address, instead of using a free service, is that the customer knows that the email they are sending is going to someone at yourbusiness.com, whereas a hotmail* email address may confuse customers. Besides, yourname@yourdomain.com is much nicer on a business card than yourname@hotmail.com.

Some free email services are Hotmail, Yahoo, and Excite.

Hotmail:
[Http://www.hotmail.com](http://www.hotmail.com)

Yahoo
[Http://www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com)

Excite:
[Http://www.excite.com](http://www.excite.com)

Organization & Style



- In addition to the content of your web site, how your site is organized is one of the most important parts of your site. Before developing your site on the computer, you should start by outlining your site organization on a piece of paper. This makes it easier to visualize what you want, and makes it easier to remember how you wanted the user to navigate through your web site. You may also want to write in text and draw pictures that you think would be appropriate for your site.
- If there are multiple pages, or multiple web sites, it is a very good idea to develop a flow chart showing how each page and how each site interconnect with each other. See page 17 for an example.
- Most web sites have their pages set up in a hierarchy, with the home page at the top, and each product occupying a different branch. You can think of this in terms of your organization's control hierarchy, with the CEO at the top representing your home page, and each vice president right under him or her, which represent a product.
- If you are having a hard time figuring out how you want your web site to be represented, then you should look at Media Metrix 500, which shows the top 500 web sites on the Internet. [Http://www.mediametrix.com](http://www.mediametrix.com).

A Brief Design Guide



As you have surfed the world wide web, you may have noticed that the best web sites have several things in common. Below is a listing of design do's and don'ts that make good web sites.

- Put your most important information near the top of the document because this is what the viewer is going to read first. If you cannot capture the viewer's interest, they will not continue to read past the first few lines.
- Be as brief as possible. Each page in your site should be no more than one and a half pages long.
- Do not overuse graphics. Many people do not have fast connections and it takes a long time to download pages with many graphics.
- Try to use headlines to break up your web site and it's pages. Make it easy to navigate.
- If a page looks crowded or is too long, make it into two or more pages linked together.
- Avoid blinking lights and scrolling text unless it is absolutely necessary.
- Provide your e-mail address in a hypertext, or as a hyper-linked graphic.
- Visit an online style guide such as the Yale Style Manual. <http://info.med.yale.edu/caim/manual/>.

Building A Site 101

```
</table>
<table border="0" width="100%">
  <tr>
    <td width="100%" style="border-bottom: thin ridge rgb
(0,0,0)"><p align="center"><small>The
  current issue is </small><strong><small>Tuesday, December 5,
2000</small></strong></td>
  </tr>
</table>
```

HTML? This is what your web page really is under the surface. The text, graphics, and links all come from a basic computer code, just like the one above (which just puts a graphic into a table with a line below it and the date, this can be found at <http://www.ecclubs.net/octagon>). Learning this code is not difficult, however if you don't need to do anything unusual, the good news is that you don't need to know it!

What do you mean I don't need to know it? Well, today there are many software packages out there that are specifically tailored for use by all you non-teckie people who just want to build a page, but don't care about the code underneath it. In the end, all that matters is the finished product right? So unless you are a control freak, we would recommend using a WYSIWYG editor.

What is a WYSIWYG editor anyways? Well, you probably use one on a daily basis—your word processor is a great example. It stands for What You See Is What You Get. Here are some of our recommended software packages:

- For the novice and intermediate users, Microsoft Front-Page is a great program, with very powerful features. It is set up so that novices are comfortable with it and has the extra features that the experts require, so as your skills improve, so do the high-tech features of your web site.

Building A Site 101

- For the Intermediate and Expert users, Macromedia's Dreamweaver is an excellent program. While a novice can use Dreamweaver to make a good page, it's home is really in the hands of an advanced user. This is a good upgrade from Microsoft FrontPage, because it "holds your hand" a bit less.
- For the really advanced and professional user, Macromedia Drumbeat and ColdFusion studio are terrific additions to your web creation arsenal. Both programs allow you to flex your creative muscle, but at a pretty hefty price.

One very important thing that you must consider when posting your site to the Internet is information privacy and sensitivity. Do not get caught up in the excitement of creating an Internet "presence" for yourself or your company to the detriment of the privacy of your sensitive information. A general rule you should follow is to not post anything that you would not put into a public brochure.

It is however, possible to post sensitive information that your suppliers or customers may need to the Internet in such a way that only authorized users can view the information. To do this, you must set up a way to verify authorized users, and ensure that unauthorized users cannot gain access to this information. Contact your Web Host for more information on how to do this.

If you do find yourself needing to change or modify the html code itself, and are willing to learn the code, there are many books available in addition to resources on the Internet. Two recommended sources are:

The Bare Bones guide to HTML
[Http://www.werbach.com/barebones](http://www.werbach.com/barebones)

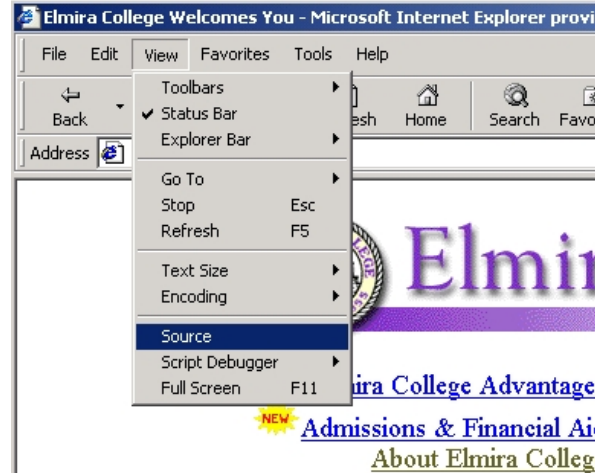
HTML for Dummies
Available at your favorite bookstore

Building A Site 101

SECRET:

So suppose that you are innocently surfing the web and suddenly come across a web page that is just totally awesome, and has something that you would like to, but you don't know how to do it? The good news is that you can "see" how they created a special effect, or a nifty design element by viewing their source code. You must be able to understand HTML code in order "read" their code. Also, it is illegal and unethical to copy another web page, as all webpages are copyrighted whether or not the copyright mark is displayed.

To view the source code of a particular web page, just click on the View menu, and then click on Source. This is the same in Netscape and Internet Explorer.



Graphics & Counters

A web site with text only would look pretty boring. A web site with all graphics would look pretty, but it might be hard to figure out what the person is trying to say. If you want your web site to be perfect and really stand out in the crowd, use just the right amount of information to get across, and use your own graphics.



So how do I make my own graphics you might ask? It's actually very easy and does not require you to be a spectacular artist unless you really want to get fancy. Start by getting yourself a copy of a graphics program such as Paint Shop Pro or Adobe PhotoShop, and then just play around with it until you get the hang of it. You can download a free trial version of Paint Shop Pro at <http://www.paintshoppro.com>.

If you do not want to create your own graphics, you can buy or obtain free graphics from various web sites. Be wary of copyright laws, it's very easy to infringe. More information on the laws can be obtained at <http://www.benedict.com>.

Want to know how many people visited your web site and what they had to say? Web counters and Guest Books are great for this! And, best of all, you can often get these for free. Keep in mind that guest books are not recommended for business web sites as they seem unprofessional.

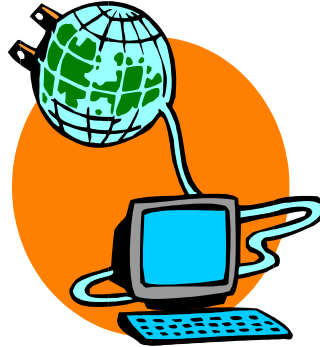
Web counters

[Http://www.digits.com](http://www.digits.com)

Guest Books

[Http://www.guestworld.com](http://www.guestworld.com)

Publishing Your Site



After you have designed and built your website, and tested it to make sure that everything works ok, it is time to publish it to the Internet!

Publishing A Business Web Site

If your website is for a business, you will want to get an Internet Service Provider or a Web Host. Doing this will provide you with full control over your site and it's size, will eliminate the annoying pop up banners that the free web hosts use, and will provide you with your own domain name and e-mail addresses.

The first thing you will want to do is to decide what domain name you want to have, and then to find out if it is available. You can search to see if a domain name is available by going to Domain Search at <http://www.domainsearch.com>. Remember to search only the domains in the appropriate countries, and that .net is reserved for networks, and .org is reserved for not-for-profit institutions.

After you have found a domain that you want, you need to contact a Web Host. These are the people that will actually host your site on the internet. You can find a listing of Web Hosts at <http://www.microsoftwpp.com/wppsearch/>. Your Web Host will normally register your domain name for you, and provide you with everything you need to get started.

Publishing Your Site

Publishing A Personal Web Site

If your website is for personal use, you are in luck! You don't have to pay anything to get it hosted! There are many organizations out there that will host your web site for free, as long as you agree to let them put whatever they want on your page, use pop up banners, and adhere to their disk usage restrictions. Some of the more popular free hosts are:



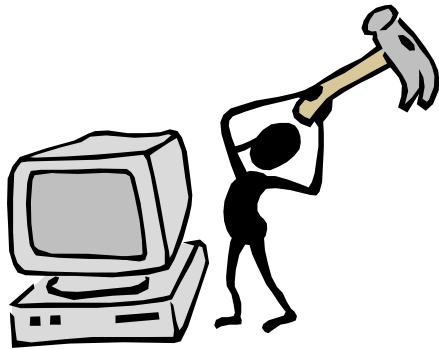
Yahoo! Geocities
[Http://www.geocities.com](http://www.geocities.com)



FreeServers
[Http://www.FreeServers.com](http://www.FreeServers.com)

With free web hosts such as these, all you normally have to do is register (free), and they will give you an address such as www.geocities.com/yoursitename, and they will normally provide you with everything you need to know to get your page posted on their server.

Before You Publish



Before you publish your web site to the Internet, there are some simple things that you want to do to make sure that your site does what you intended it to do.

- Do all hyperlinks work?
- Is the site easy to navigate and intuitive?
- Is the site easy to read? (ie, no black text on a dark green background?)
- Does the site load quickly over a standard modem connection? 60 to 90 seconds is about the most that the average person will wait for a page to load.
- Is all your information correct?
- Have you checked for grammatical and spelling errors?
- Is there a balance between white space and overcrowding on each page?
- Does your email link work properly?

When you are done with the checklist, it might be helpful to have a friend or coworker visit your web site to make sure it works for them too. Be sure to use all criticism constructively, it can only make your site better in the future!

Advertising Your Site

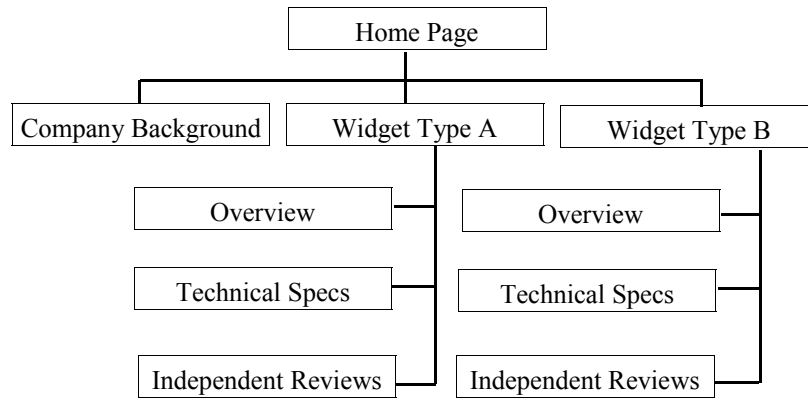


- The secret to getting people to visit your web site is to advertise it. Promotion is the key to success, but how do you achieve this using the Internet? The most frequently used method for advertisement is the Internet Search Engine. To get your site listed on the Search Engines, enlist the help of one of the many company's who's sole job is to submit search engine listings.
- Another commonly used method of advertising web sites is the use of banner ads, such as the ones that Amazon.com uses on many web sites. To do this, you need to create a graphical banner of a reasonable size, and then pay people to use your banner. Many of the larger web sites require banners to be of a certain size so you may want to find out before you make your banner.
- If you are promoting your personal page, you can use banners for free through Link Exchanges. Here are a few exchanges:
[Http://www.linkexchange.com](http://www.linkexchange.com)
[Http://locksmartclicks.com](http://locksmartclicks.com)
- Also keep in mind that possibly one of the most effective ways of advertising your web site is to publish your site address on all of your brochures, communications, and advertisements. It is very common today for site addresses to be integrated into the company logotype.

Quick Reference Glossary

- **Banners**—Web graphics that advertise a company's web site. These are normally hyperlinks that take you to that company's web site when clicked.
- **Guest Book**—The viewer can write comments to tell the web site creator, or owner that they have been to the web site and what they think.
- **HTML**—Hyper Text Markup Language. This is the script that your page is actually made up of. The web browser interprets this code to create the web page that you see.
- **Hyperlinks**—Text or pictures that can be clicked to bring the viewer to a different web page or site.
- **Internet Service Provider**—(ISP) This is a company that provides either dialup (modem) or high speed (Cable, DSL, etc.) access to the Internet. They may also provide Web Hosting services.
- **Web Counter**—Keeps track of how many people have been to your web site. A counter may be either a graphical counter shown on the page, or an invisible counter that the viewer does not actually see.
- **Web Graphics**—Pictures and images that are on your web pages.
- **Web Host**—A company that provides you with server disk space to store your web site on. These may be either fee based or free.
- **Web Search Engine**—Method to find a subject you are looking for. Examples are Yahoo, Excite, Lycos, AltaVista, Netfind, Infoseek, and Webcrawler, among others.

Sample Site Flow Chart





We invite you to use this page for note taking.





We invite you to use this page for note taking.



This Internet Survival Guide has been brought to you by:

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