



**S**elling your products and or services via a web site is very similar to building and selling a home. First, you must determine

your budget. Just like real estate, web site development can range drastically in price depending on the amenities, location and maintenance fees. Amenities like; audio, video, forms, and animation are the web equivalent of putting in that beautiful rose garden with the water fountain and pond that you have always wanted. It may be really nice, but it depends on your budget. Besides, it can always be added later.

**N**ext, we need to obtain our land. Depending on where you decide to settle down it may be at a premium. Especially if you want a piece of property that is in a high demand area with lots of competing buyers. The internet is no different. A domain name can be looked at like your little piece of virtual property, and just like property if it is at a premium it can get expensive. According to StyleGala, an online magazine, iFly.com was recently sold for \$65,000, and Creditcards.com was sold for \$2,750,000. As you can see these domain names can be in quite a high demand. However, all is not lost. If you pick a domain name that is not already registered, then it will run you about \$10.

**S**electing the right domain name for your company should follow three basic principles. First off your name should be memorable. If you have a long corporate name it may serve you better to abbreviate it so it is easier for users to remember. Think about how your business is already referred to within the community. Eliminate hyphens, underlines, and symbols from your domain name. Secondly, try to keep as close to your business name as possible so visitors are aware by the domain name whom they are doing business with. The final principle is to select multiple domain names as means to solidify your part of the domain name market. If you only choose one domain name, let's say www.abc123.com, then there is nothing keeping your competition from opening up a similar site (not an exact copy) at www.abc123.net or www.abc123.org. When you start shopping around you will notice that there area a couple dozen extensions to choose from. The two main names you should be concerned with are .com and .net. These two are the most commonly used extensions for commerce over the internet. For this reason they are the most important names to solidify.

**S**o what dose this all mean for you? As you attempt to find a domain name, you will probably find that most people have taken something similar, but fear not, there are plenty of variations out there. You can check the availability of domain names at sites like Register.com, and see if what you want is available. If your .com & .net are not available try, try again.

The construction of any home you want to have standing in five years, requires planning and a good construction crew. Perhaps the most important part of pre planning a home are the blueprints. Without them, even the best construction crew would not have a place to begin. And as you've probably guessed by now a web site is no different. A web site without a flowchart dictating the correlation between pages, links, and other web applications, is like driving down a dark tunnel with your headlights off. You know if you keep it straight your OK, but how can you tell if your veering from side to side or not? This is why PYXIS Web Solutions takes extraordinary efforts to map out your site before building it. Through customer interaction and a dual educating environment, PYXIS will help you develop a precise map of your site.

Your house is now almost ready to build. It will be a beautiful home with all the latest bells and whistles. But, how will you furnish it? Where are the lighting fixtures going to go? What colors will you paint the walls? Where are you going to place the big screen TV? The way you choose to design the inside of your home says a lot. The overall presentation is the part that transforms a house into a home. Think about it for a second. Let's say you have just built a \$1,000,000 dream home. You have your first dinner party and everyone is sitting on the plastic chairs from the hardware store and



eating with plastic forks and knives. Sure, this may be fine for your closest friends, but what about the guests you are trying to impress. Your web site is like your house, and the contents within the site are all too often resemble the plastic chairs from the hardware store. One way to make your site different from everyone else is content. This is one of the most important factors in return visits, and is the single most important aspect of completing a quality web site. Without informative and interesting content you leave everyone visiting your site eating with plastic silverware and sitting on the floor with their plate in their hand asking for more.



So far, you have selected your land, created blueprints, hired a construction crew and furnished your home so that it has a personal touch. You have had people over and they love what you have done with the place. People can not stop talking about how nicely you've decorated. Everything seems just to fit together. It is now time to sit back and enjoy your wonderful new home right? Wrong. The lawn needs to be mowed every week, and the carpets don't vacuum themselves. Maintaining a home, is essential to the resale value. A web site is no different. In order to keep people coming back it must be maintained. New information or "new drapes" should be added every so often to give the site some life.

Don't take this as a total redesign, but just a tweak to content, or a new image. It will add a great amount of value to a web site. If people are visiting your site they will notice little updates like these. They will feel as though you are keeping up the site and that the information is current. A web site that is stagnant has no value beyond reading the material once. Why would people keep coming back to read the same stuff over and over? They won't. So when deciding to create a web site make sure you incorporate some way of making it fresh about every three months.

**N**ow as time goes on there is always room to improve. You can add an addition or convert your basement into



extra living area. Maybe now it's time for that rose garden. However, don't be foolish. The rule of thumb is don't invest in a home improvement project unless you can make your money back when you sell. Just like your home, a web site can always be added to and upgraded. A good place to identify areas for improvement is from people visiting your site. Allow a way for the users to voice give their opinions. A suggestion box if you will. Incorporating a suggestion box will not only give you a targeted plan for improvement, but it will also extend a sense of belonging to your online community.

**U**sing the analogy of building a home and creating a web site may seem a little far fetched at first. When in fact

they are very similar processes. Hopefully this article has helped you to gain prospective of the venture you are about to embark on, and hopefully it will help you make more informed decisions during the development of your site. Only after all the t's are crossed and the i's dotted are you able to sit back and enjoy the benefits of an online presence.