

# Making Your Fortune on the Internet Can Be Misleading!

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I'm not sure that you can blame any particular group or individual, but the myths and hype about placing your business on the World Wide Web (WWW) can be misleading. As a web designer, a lot of time is spent educating those who are about to embark on such a venture as to the misconceptions. Most have heard the stories of overnight success and about the young baby boomers that have put companies and sites together and are retiring at an early age. So, they take money out of savings, borrow against the house, sell the kids, involve friends and family, only to discover that the venture is not that easy. I'm kidding about 'selling the kids' but in some cases it seems almost as dramatic. The purpose of this article is to provide a better understanding of owning a Web Site is all about.

To better understand the vastness of the WWW let me provide you with an analogy. Having someone design a web site and placing it on the web is like renting a store front in a magical city 1000 times larger than New York City, with no sign out front, no advertising, no marketing and no promotion. Would you venture out and invest money in such a storefront? Would you invest in such a venture? I seriously doubt it. Then, why would anyone think a Web Site is any different? However, not all is lost.

I agree that opening a Web Site is less expensive than a storefront in our magical city, but if the site isn't producing, why waste your time? Can the process be profitable? Yes it can, but it takes planning, effort and execution. It takes marketing, promotion and a thorough understanding of the many aspects of the Internet business. Yet, I have many clients complain to me that their site isn't producing and they want to blame the design. Don't get me wrong, design is important. On the other hand, I have seen some beautiful sites with all of the bells and whistles, stunning graphics and colors, and they are not generating in a dime to their owners. The question is, Why?

A good design is only the first step in the process of web site success. It must be properly designed with all of the correct HTML language and tags. It must be attractive, and more importantly, it must possess functionality. It must be designed to keep the visitor there enough to take a good look around. After that is accomplished, comes the marketing and promotion. Or, as I have often said, "the design is only one-fourth of the battle, the other three-fourths is marketing and promotion." Back to our fictitious storefront in our magical city. Without a sign out front, who even knows and cares if it is there? That may sound cruel but it is the truth.

Let's jump right into marketing and promotion. Have you ever listened to your local TV News commentator at the end of the evening broadcast say something similar to, "If you want to learn more about these news events or contact us, you may do so at our web site at [www.XYTV.com](http://www.XYTV.com)?" That is promotion and marketing at its best. I realize that it would cost you big dollars to do the same marketing on TV every evening, but there are other ways to get your store, or site, in front of the public.

First off, there is a basic rule in this business. If you don't get anything else out of this article, do learn this. Anything that contains your business telephone number should also contain your Web address, or as it is properly referred to as your URL (Uniform Resource Language). Your URL should appear with your telephone number everywhere, i.e. business cards, letterhead, T-shirts, coffee mugs, underwear (I just threw that in to see if you were still paying attention). However, if you do run around in your underwear a lot, have your URL stenciled there also. Every little bit helps!

Today, you see URL's on sides of busses, newspaper ads, flyers, sidelines of sporting events, on racecars, on give-a-ways, handouts, programs, ballpoint pens, menus, billboards, and even at the bottom of all of your e-mail messages. Whenever, or wherever you can place the address, place it (legally of course).

Why can't I just place my URL on a Search Engine and let them do all of the work. You can and should try, but only as part of your overall marketing. There are search engines and indexes around the world, but they alone cannot do all of your work. The next question is "Is there something magic about how you are to place information on search engines and indexes?" Of course there are, just read the thousands of articles each claiming to know the secret formula. This may cause some heart aches to some writers, but "there are no secret formulas." There are sound procedures when dealing with Search Engines. Also, remember, Search Engines have been known to change the way they do business every couple of months and it is almost impossible to keep up with the changes unless you specialize in the field. Ziotech International is one of the companies that will market your site. The "submission process" as well as keeping up with the Search Engines changes is time consuming. Again, it is part of the process toward a successful Web Site. By now you are asking yourself, "Is it really possible to succeed in the Internet business?" Yes it is! Just don't expect everything overnight.

If you plan to take this project on yourself, then be prepared to spend a lot of time studying the "ins and outs" of this business just as you would going into any business venture. Next, try to keep up with the changes. It is like every other business, it takes a lot of dedication and time. That is, of course, if you plan for your business to be around next year. The famed

Winston Churchill, in a different situation, once said, "Never, never, never give up!" The WWW isn't the wave of the future, it is here and Now! Get on, get involved, and be a part of the future. Remember, getting a website on the Internet is easy, to have the "staying power" requires professional marketing and promotion.