Corporate Web Presence Essay, Research Paper

Advantages and disadvantages of a Web Presence The World Wide Web is a World

Wide Market. It is a new way of selling. More and more customers expect to find

your product news and specifications on the web. But even on the Net, you have

to advertise your product. Using Internet as a media to advertise your product

is different from traditional media. Through Internet companies can be present

all over the world. Using the web as an advertising tool is the cheapest way to

be discovered at every time. You can also quickly change your promotional

campaign, in order to gain attention that may lead the consumer to the product.

Online services become so popular because they provide two major benefits to

potential buyers: Convenience: Customers can order products 24 hours a day

wherever they are. They don’t have to sit in traffic, find a parking space, and

walk through countless aisles to find and examine goods. And they don’t have to

drive all the way to a store, only to find out that the desired product is out

of stock. Information: Customers can find reams of comparative information about

companies, products, and competitors without leaving their office or home. They

can focus on objective criteria such as prices, quality, performance, and

availability. Customers can expect the advantage to pull the information, to be

drained into detailed catalog or other information about products and services

for sale that they are looking for. They do not feel forced, they are looking

for the information by themselves. Nevertheless it seems that Web advertising is

much more price than image oriented. Web advertising does not seem the

appropriate way to advert a product. According to BMRB International (annex 1)

37% of UK Net shoppers are not ready to purchase off-line They always fear to

give their account number to a company they do not know. Today a well-known

brand is a real competitive advantage. BRMB International has shown that 16% of

purchases has done thanks to an implicit trust of established brands.

Nevertheless it does not mean that it will stay an advantage in the future.

Moreover the difference with more traditional media is that customers come to

you and not you to the customers. You cannot retain their attention if they feel

that it does not worth it. When you wish to expand your market share trough

Internet, you have to consider the specificity of your target audience. At the

present time people who buy through Internet are young, daily users of

computers. But there are not only people used to Internet. Because e-business is

growing up (annex 2), we can assume that most people have no experience in

e-business. The audience can be both good Internet users and beginners. Dealing

with communication interaction Security The World Wide Web is the fastest

growing part of the Internet. Increasingly, it is also the part of the Internet

that is the most vulnerable to attack. For users, a secure web server is one

that will safeguard any personal information (bank account number) that is

received or collected. It is one that supports their privacy and will not

subvert browser to download viruses or other rogue programs onto their computer

For a company, a secure web server is resistant to a determined attack over the

Internet or from corporate insiders. In order to increase security, you can use

a system for automatically encrypting information as it is sent over the

Internet and decrypting it before it is used. One of Netscape Communication’s

early innovations was its SSL. You can also use firewalls, which is a device

that isolates an organization’s internal network from the Internet at large,

allowing specific connections to pass and blocking others. Marketing /

Communication It is really important to get people inform of the existence of

your web site. You will have to shout it from the roof tops! You can use your

letterhead, your cards or your leaflets to write your web address. You can also

through a TV or board advertising campaign let people know about your site

existence. As Jim Sterne says: "your web site can be funny, pretty, useful,

crisp and clean, but if you don’t promote it, its message won’t be seen".

By the way you can also manage to register different key words on browsers in

order to put make know your web site when people look for information in your

business area. Deliveries and Payment If you use e-commerce on your website,

once the buyer has searched through a catalog and made his decision to purchase,

the order, the payment, the handle fulfillment and other aspects of order

management have to be processed. The order processing must include the ability

to group items together for later purchase; this capability is called a shopping

cart in the case of retail transactions; it usually includes the ability to

modify the contents of the shopping cart at any time. This way the buyer can

discard items, add new ones, change the quantities and so on. To the purchase,

the buyer will have additional charges such as sales taxes and shipping costs.

The order processing system presents the buyer with an itemized order form

including all the charges so the buyer can pay for the items. Information effect

With the Internet, it is now possible to obtain accurate and immediate feedback

from your customers (A daemon can count the number of hits). With access to this

information, your business will be able to add the most personalized value to

the customer. Tool such as the World Wide Web helps you to build more of your

business decision-making based on outside information, and find out more about

your non-customers and what non-customers and what they are doing, and why they

are not customers. Fiscal and legal implications Internet is still largely

unregulated. Because Internet is global (no territorial limits), electronic (no

"writing") and digital (perfect copies can be made almost

instantaneously and repetitively), it is a source of different problems. The

state of California tries to regulate e-business in California (annex 3). It

seems very complex to set up a world wide regulation and, at the present time

nobody knows what to do if something going wrong in the cyberspace. Concerning

taxation, applying existing tax rules and system to the Internet world is

tempting but does not answer to the needs of this marketplace. One key aspect to

resolving the taxation issue of Internet commerce is to keep tax policies

universal, uniform, and neutral. Resources needed to maintain the Site

Obviously, resources need to maintain a web site is going to depend on the size

of the web site. Whatever the size you firstly need to ask you few questions

such as: Will this solution be flexible enough to accommodate change? Do we have

the technical competencies to support Internet initiatives? Is this solution

customizable to our needs and our customer needs? Do we have the technological

infrastructure (network services; hardware, software) required to develop and

scale? Do we have sufficient funding for ongoing web site maintenance? Do we

have operations capabilities to support our Internet strategy? Web creation

There are two different ways to create a web site. You can do it yourself or ask

an agency to manage the creation of your web site. If you decide to create

yourself your web site, you will need special coding software. But if you decide

to delegate the creation to an agency, it might cost you around $750 for a basic

web site (annex 4). Web maintenance However you must also take into

consideration the maintenance. When you have created your web site, you must

care to make it alive. You need to care about your human resources skills

According to the "Business Marketing Web Consortium" the following

roles should be filled: ? A Web Editor.Depending on the size of the site, this

could be a part-time or a full-time person. The Web editor is responsible for

content for a site. ? A Web Master, responsible for the infrastructure and

technology supporting the website. Making sure that links link, and the site

performs ? An Infomaster responsible for timely response to inquiries ? An

overall Technology Leader, defining corporate standards and resources required

Poor maintenance can severely damage a company’s image Site Design and Structure

As we have pointed out since the beginning, e-business is a new way of selling.

When a potential customer gets connected to your site, you have not sell

anything yet. There are different ways to attract customers to your product.

Firstly, you need to care about your web design. It means that you should not

forget that if there are too many pictures or electronic animations, download is

going to take a while. If your site require downloading applications, they

should downloaded in twenty seconds or less. Users of Internet expect fast and

functional site (avoid horizontal scrolling). Web sites must be customers

oriented rather than product oriented. Information value is much more important

than "glizz". Customers stay loyal because of the service, not because

they like your web site. Simplicity and speed differentiate your site, making it

easy for business customers to order. Secondly, Web marketers must ask if their

markets are comfortable with English. Global marketers recommend adding local

languages when needed. Thirdly, in order to maintain interest in your site, you

have to make it interactive. Internet is both a business and communication tool,

you must provide to users a page where you give relevant information on your

product but also on your industry area. It is recommended to let customers

express their feelings through email. But you do not do it only for the fun,

your site must be professional (ie: updated, fast answers), that is why you have

to deal with your e-customers as you are used to do with your offline customers.

In order to support the design of your future web site, we would like to present

this tree structure.