CREATING A DYNAMIC WEB PRESENCE

The need for a dynamic web presence has increased dramatically as consumers on the Internet become more knowledgeable and more demanding in having their needs filled. With internet technologies continuing to evolve rapidly, small businesses can easily create more interactive sites to engage their target audiences.

Key Concepts

Static vs. Dynamic Websites

How do they differ? A dynamic website includes elements that allow interaction with visitors, builds relationships through dialogue, and personalizes the whole web experience. Contrast this with a static, or "read only," site where there really is no way to know who your visitors are unless they contact you. Whether you are designing a site for the first time or redesigning a current site, the goal of achieving a dynamic presence on the web includes incorporating a number of key interactive elements. These include:

- Driving Traffic to the Site (Reach)
- Generating Leads (Engagement)
- Converting Leads to Sales or Action (Conversion)

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Features of a Dynamic Site

- **More engagement.** Taking a site visitor from a "reader" to an "engager"—whether it is to fill in a form, download a document or complete a survey—opens up opportunities for you as a site owner to build a relationship.

- **Better access to information.** Content can be delivered in a variety of ways (e.g. text, video, podcasting) to appeal to different senses and pique a visitor's interest.

- **Quick retrieval.** Incorporating a search feature will help visitors find the relevant information they are seeking much faster than having them scroll through reams of content.

- **Automation of backend processes.** This allows site owners to disseminate content easily and to receive user information more efficiently.

Dynamic Techniques

Here are some examples of dynamic ways to attract and engage prospects and convert them to life-time customers.

Reach	Engagement/ Generating Leads	Conversion
• Social Media • Search Engine Optimization (SEO) • Link Building • Integrated Marketing • Mobile QR Codes • Newsletter Marketing	• Download Forms • Subscription Forms (e.g. RSS, e-mail) • Commenting • Blogs • User Generated Content • Ratings/ Reviews	• Transaction Purchase • Subscription Thanks • Variety of Payment Options • Full and Visible Contact Details

Getting Started

1. Research and Planning

In setting up a successful dynamic website, it is critical that you fully understand the needs of your target audience, the scope of your website project and the best methods to get ahead of your competitors. Research how your industry is showcased online, how your customers behave there, and what your competitors are doing.

| Research and Planning Steps	Description
Understand the Target Audience	Define the demographics (age, income), location, Internet habits (comfort level with technology, method of access, where they congregate) and any challenges and information needs of those you are targeting.
Conduct Competitive and Industry Research	Examine your competitors' websites in terms of content, design/layout, features and functionalities, and keywords. What are their strengths and weaknesses? Industry research includes reviewing trends and best practices to ensure you are up to date with the latest developments.
Choose a Web Developer or Do It Yourself (DIY)	There are software applications that offer a "one-click" setup process for creating an interactive site, with self-editing and already designed templates (e.g. WordPress, Drupal Garden, Joomla and CMS Made Simple). But if you want more customized applications or need someone to troubleshoot existing functions, you may need to hire a web developer. Consider your comfort level with technology, your skill set and your available time when deciding whether or not to seek specialized help *(see Guidelines for Choosing a Web Develop/Designer).*

Research and Planning Steps	Description
Consider Usability and Accessibility	Always keep your site users in mind, taking into account their comfort level with technology and site access methods (dial up vs. high speed, mobile phones, tablets, TV). Be sure your site structure has a clear navigation flow so users can easily find what they need. Consider the accessibility needs of users with disabilities.
Budget	Dynamic sites typically require the services of a programmer or web developer to create the interactive elements. A major consideration is the amount of interactivity you want—and can afford—to put on your site. Dynamic elements have differing price points *(see Budgeting Guidelines chart)*.

Resources: www.mindgenius.com, http://bubbl.us, www.emarketer.com, https://adwords.google.com, www.compete.com, www.abakus-internet-marketing.de/tools/topword.htm, http://tools.seobook.com, www.spyfu.com

GUIDELINES FOR CHOOSING A WEB DEVELOPER/DESIGNER

- Do you like their style? Are they able to create code from scratch or customize existing code to accommodate your needs?

- Who does the actual work? Is it outsourced or do they do it themselves?

- What is their customer service like? Where are they located—can they be contacted by phone, or are they available only by email or by using contact forms? How quickly do they respond?

- Does their portfolio reflect the type of work that you are seeking?

- What is their process? How much involvement is there on their part post development?

- Are they experienced in programming dynamic content? That is, do they have a good understanding of XHTML, JavaScript, CSS, Ajax, MySQL, SQL, PHP?

- Do they have a good team of associates who can provide extra services such as content writing, photography, videography and search engine optimization if they can't do it themselves?

- Do they have the business acumen to clearly understand your vision and apply the necessary technologies to meet your goals?

- What will happen to the backend of your site if you choose to go to another developer down the road? Make sure this is written in the contract. Typically you will get your data but, in some cases, if you are not hosting your own content management system (CMS), you may lose the ability to edit your site in the way you previously did, until it is set up again in another CMS.
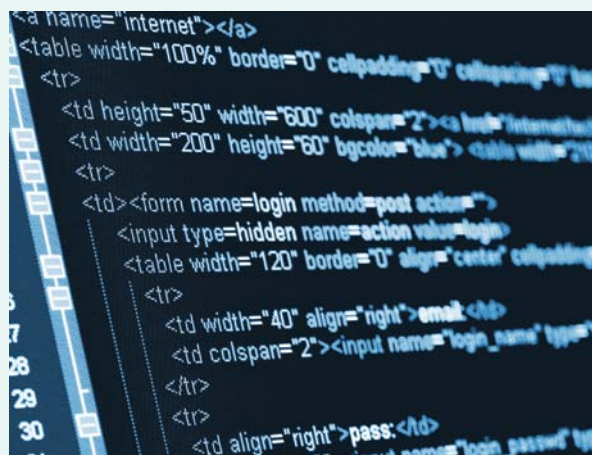
BUDGETING GUIDELINES FOR DYNAMIC ELEMENTS

Basic (less expensive)

- Subscriber section to collect names and email addresses for a newsletter subscription or free download of some valuable content

- Blog set up with comment sections for visitors. Blogs also offer a number of free plug-in and widget tools with interactive and engaging elements *(see Blogs for Small Business booklet for more details)*

- Contact Us form or Request for Proposal/Quote form on your site

Advanced (More functional and customized solutions, including database driven features that will be more expensive)

- Site search

- Business or service directory

- E-commerce—selling products or services online

- Customized and complex content management systems for self-editing

- JQuery or Ajax functional widgets like accordion menus, tab content areas, content sliders

- Surveys, calculators

2. Branding and Web Development

Staying true to your visual brand, your message and the way you do business is critically important when developing your web presence. Your branding should go hand in hand with any web development you do, delivering a clear and consistent message and design across all media. All of the interactive elements you incorporate, whether blogs, forms or other materials, should have a similar "look and feel" and reflect the professionalism of your business.

In developing your website, choose the right tools to support branding. They should be easy to use, to maintain and to update. Keep scalability in mind in order to keep pace with your business as it grows.

CAUTION: Many site owners also fall into the trap of adding more features and functionality to their websites to keep up with their competition but without really understanding how these elements will make a difference to their bottom line. It is good to stay current but choose wisely.

Nuts & Bolts

1. Select and Register a Domain Name

A domain name is your web address or URL (Uniform Resource Locator). This address can be purchased at a domain registrar that provides domain name search and sometimes other services like hosting, private registration and business name registration, Internet Protocol (IP) re-routing or forwarding, email accounts and hosting. Some examples of domain registrars are www.networksolutions.com, www.webnames.ca, www.godaddy.com.

When thinking about choosing a domain name, consider the following:

1. Make it easy to understand and avoid hyphens and underscores, if possible. If not, use only one hyphen.

2. Try to avoid duplication of letters (example: www.tuscanyyouths.com) or hard-to-type letters like "q" or "z".

3. Consider incorporating a highly effective keyword phrase of your offering, especially if your business name does not reflect what you do. For example, a better domain name for a company named ABC Ltd. that sells specialty grommets via the Internet would be *www.GrommetSolutionsOnline.com* rather than *www.abccompany.com*.

4. Choose a primary domain name with a suffix like .com if you have a commercial company, or .org for an organization, .biz for businesses, .mobi for mobile, .info for information driven sites, .net for networks and .me for personal. You can also consider country codes like .ca if you only plan to do business in Canada. You can purchase multiple domains with varying suffixes and then redirect them to your primary account.

5. Note that most domain registrars will list alternative names if the one you have decided upon has already been taken. Domain names are sold in time allotments of annual periods. If you are satisfied with the name that you have chosen, consider purchasing a longer time period. If you forget to renew your domain name, you may lose it. Remember that you do not own your domain name. Therefore, it is important that you keep your records of access to your account and renew before the expiry date so that you don't risk losing your web address.

For more guidelines on choosing a good domain name, refer to the *How You Can Profit from E-Business* handbook, pg. 29.

TIP: Even if you already have a domain name, it is sometimes wise to purchase other names that can be used for marketing purposes and also to prevent your competitors from picking up keyword-phrased domains (e.g. ABC Ltd. from point 3 above may want to purchase *www.SpecialtyGrommets.com* or *www.GrommetsOnlineDeals.com* when it is running a reduced-price promotion).

2. Review Hosting Requirements

Review your website assets like videos, images, FLASH and content and the required features you are considering that may add needed resources for hosting bandwidth and memory space. Make sure your hosting has the necessary capabilities for dynamic features and functionalities. Hosting review sites can give you a list of options and considerations when choosing a host provider (for example, www.topwebhostreview.net). Also ask associates and suppliers for recommendations and social media groups for suggestions about host providers to consider.

When reviewing these hosting sites, consider bandwidth speeds and larger memory space if you have videos and images. Most hosting providers offer value accounts that have ample space, but these are often shared by others. For some features like e-commerce and other applications that contain private sensitive data, opt for a dedicated hosting service which offers speed, security and reliability.

Cloud hosting provides businesses a choice of hosting options. It differs from local hosting because of its ability to spread the resources to maintain your website over multiple servers, thereby managing peak load and bandwidth issues. There are many host providers now offering cloud host computing which gives site owners flexibility and control of a dedicated server service without having to buy the equipment, and with better uptime, better performance and less hassle. Check with the host providers for costs and features. See *Cloud Computing* booklet for Tips on Choosing a Cloud Service Provider.

3. Generate Content

Regularly adding new content or updating existing content will keep visitors returning to your site and improve your search engine ranking. On a static site, the maintenance costs for a designer/developer can become high with frequent updating. To circumvent this, many sites are now being built with a content management system (CMS), allowing you, the site owner, to economically self-edit the content and keep the site updated and fresh.

HOW TO CREATE FRESH CONTENT

It is one thing to want to refresh your site with relevant, useful content, but sometimes quite another to create that content. Many of your content ideas will come from your marketing initiatives and from analyzing site metrics, but here are some ideas that can help you overcome a "content block." You may be surprised to find that you already have lots of great content that, with some repurposing and rewriting, would work well on your interactive website and social networks.

- Utilize customer comments and reviews for creating case studies and testimonials.

- Create "how-to" videos to support products and services.

- Share PowerPoint presentations, via Slideshare, among your social networks.

- Repurpose existing content. For example, one blog post can be repackaged for different media—you can extract 10 tips from a blog article and tweet each individually, you can create a podcast using information from your blog and you can put content on Facebook.

- Invite guest blogs or posts from respected sources.

4. Incorporate Interactive Tools

To engage customers and move them through the various stages of the buying process, consider using a variety of interactive tools. A range of customer contact points can serve to gain trust and credibility by increasing communication and sharing of knowledge to move the visitor along the path toward becoming a customer. Complementary campaigns, utilizing a combination of offline methods (print, QR Codes) and online methods (website, social networking, blog, mobile apps) that reach out to your targeted audience will help keep your business top of mind.

Once you have developed relationships with potential customers and built your customer database, the door is open to you to up-sell or cross-sell. The idea is not to hard sell or try to immediately close a deal, but instead to build a community of potential and existing customers with whom you interact. This relationship not only keeps customers loyal, but allows you to build on your understanding of their wants, needs and motivations—invaluable market insight for your business.

Current site design has moved from a static format built by web professionals to "Create your own" or at least "Self-edit" once a developer has set it up. This gives much more control and ability to the site owner to provide front-end user interactivity. Below is a chart of a few examples of interactive elements that can create a dynamic presence.

Examples of Interactive Elements To Create A Dynamic Presence

For Backend Site Editing with Frontend User Interactivity	• Content Management System (CMS)
	  – Joomla, Drupal, CMS Made Simple, Business Catalyst, Word Press
	• Searchable Databases
	  – Products, business listings directory
	• Image Gallery Database
	• News Management System
	• Advertising Management Systems
	• FAQ System
	• Event Management
	• Private-only, Password Protected Areas

For Social, Sharing, Collaboration	• Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, StumbleUpon, etc.
	  – Relationship-building through community exchange
	  – Widgets (e.g. "like," "share," or "follow") on articles/blogs to increase dissemination
	  – Icons on your website to increase awareness of social media activity availability
	• Blogging article posts and distribution via RSS

For Calculations or Productivity Utilities	• Mortgage Tool Calculators • Translation or Language Tools • Project Management Tools
For Lead Generation/ Conversion	• Contest Forms • Newsletter Subscriber Forms • Request For Quote Forms • Sign Up as Member Forms • Free Download Whitepaper, Articles Form
For E-commerce	• Interactive Transactional E-commerce Interfaces (e.g. Drag & Drop Products into Cart) • Product Variation Selections

Spotlight on Key Interactive Elements

Searchable databases such as site wide search functionality or even product catalogue searchable databases and business directories help visitors find things on your site more quickly. Rather than scrolling through static text for any reference to their search query, they can easily search either by category or enter a keyword phrase. In some cases (e.g. business directories), the site may also offer visitors the ability to upload profile content for business listings. This type of interactivity should be fine tuned to ensure that the results are relevant to visitors. Assessing the search queries can help you produce the kind of content visitors are seeking.

Tool calculators, such as mortgage calculators, home budget calculators, weight calculators, nutritional calculators and translation tools, are good ways to engage viewers and receive their input. These dynamic tools are typically programmed using Ajax or JavaScript and, if tied in with a lead generation form, allow you to collect personal data and email contact information from interested prospects and market to them. This is strictly opt-in collection of data.

Blogging and social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook, Google +, YouTube and Flickr are engagement tools that foster communication, moving you from

monologue to dialogue marketing by opening opportunities to engage with your site visitors. These dynamic tools offer comment postings, sharing of content and status updates, interactive widgets and plug-ins, ratings, Q & As, reviews and, in some cases such as Wikis, allow visitors to input content (see the *Social Media for Small Business* booklet and the *Blogs for Small Business* booklet for more information).

Conversion tactics that foster interactivity include tools such as lead generation forms for subscriber input, free download of whitepapers, discounted products or services, quick payment options, short contact forms and surveys built with skip logic that increase usability, providing a better and more fulfilling visitor experience.

Many factors such as usability, accessibility, web architecture, consistency of brand integration with the various media, and site optimization all play a role in the success of developing a dynamic site. These rules also apply when integrating new tools. Be strategic, choosing only those that will help you achieve your business goals. With new tools being developed daily, part of running a dynamic website entails continuous learning, testing with your audience and then updating and upgrading new features and functionality as necessary.

5. Address Security, Privacy and Legal Issues

Security. Collecting personal and credit card information on your web or mobile site requires using proper software and Secure Socket Layer (SSL) accounts to ensure transmission of content is safeguarded. Dedicated SSL certificates can be purchased as an add-on to your existing hosting service (or bought when ordering your web hosting if you are just starting out). They act as built-in verification systems of your firm's identity in order to give customers confidence that you are valid and trustworthy. To enhance your credibility, include, with permission, industry association and Better Business Bureau logos (see more details in the *E-commerce: Purchasing and Selling Online* booklet).

Privacy. When asking visitors to input personal data into your site server, the law mandates that you adhere to the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) rules in order to protect their privacy. Details about PIPEDA can be found on the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada's website at www.priv.gc.ca.

Legal. You should consult with your lawyer if you have specific questions about your legal rights and the requirements for your website (see *The Legal* and Privacy Issues *of Doing E-Business* booklet). Key legal issues include:

- **Copyright** – Ensuring you work with original content (text and images), or have the rights to use other people's content. All images that you use on your website must be either originally sourced (taken by you or your photographers) or purchased from stock photography houses for use on your site.

- **Privacy policy** – Letting site users know how their personal details will be used.

- **Terms and conditions** – Letting users know what they can expect from the site. Have a formal Terms & Conditions policy when selling online and when asking for participation in an activity online and be sure to make it clearly visible. You should also include an 'I agree' checkbox to ensure visitors have read it.

- **Disclaimer** – Setting out the limits of your legal liability. Disclaimers can be provided that clearly state that while you try to keep the content of your website current and accurate, you do not assume any legal liability for the accuracy, completeness or timeliness of any information provided.

- **Trademarks** – Protecting your Intellectual Property. You can register through the Canadian Intellectual Property Office to enhance your protection (www.cipo.ic.gc.ca).

It is recommended that you have a written contract when working with a web designer/developer that clearly covers copyright and who owns what. Typically all content and images, if sourced by the client, belong to the client. What is questionable is the actual code used to build the site. In most cases, straight HTML, JavaScript and CSS all belong to the site owner but there are times where programming language used to build a particular function—such as a searchable database, CMS or other feature—may belong to the developer, who is actually leasing you the use of the application. Clarify with the developer before assuming you own it.

6. Get Indexed

After your site has been designed, developed and optimized, it is important for your developer to submit an XML site map (www.xml-sitemaps.com) to large search engines such as Google and Bing. It is also a good idea to set up Google Places (www.google.com/places) and Google Plus Company pages (www.google.com/+/business) since both aid in having Google bots index your site sooner rather than later. Google builds in specific codes within their products that seem to make it easier for them to be indexed. Setting up the foundation of an optimized site following the search engine guidelines is very important (see the *Increasing Traffic to Your Website through SEO* booklet). Each time you update major sections of your site or add new features and functionality, it is wise to have your developer revisit your optimization set up and re-submit an XML site map. You or your developer should set up a Google/Bing Webmaster account to manage this submission (www.google.com/webmasters), (www.bing.com/toolbox/webmaster).

7. Market Your Website

Now that you have a great website, you want people to know about it. Develop a strategic marketing plan for your site, including specific goals and objectives. While you should promote your website in all of your marketing efforts, here are some strategies that work particularly well in the online world.

TOP 6 WAYS TO MARKET YOUR INTERACTIVE WEBSITE

1. Use SEO to ensure your site is top-of-search (see the *Increasing Traffic to Your Website through SEO* booklet).

2. Publish content on social networks like LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter.

3. Conduct e-mail marketing to draw people to your site.

4. Do content marketing, such as submitting articles to e-zines.

5. Advertise online to broaden awareness and generate web clicks.

6. List your website on all of your printed materials (stationery, business cards, brochures, newsletters, ads, etc.).

Test, Measure, Test Again

For site owners, the appeal of websites is being able to measure success or failure, coupled with the ability to instantly change anything that is not working. Testing and measurement are a combination of common sense, marketplace knowledge and utilizing metrics tools. Test all of the functionality on your site yourself, keeping in mind what your goals are and how you expect your audience will react. Listen to customer feedback and adjust accordingly. And use the tools at your disposal to measure the metrics. In addition to those listed below, many third-party applications have their own measurement tools, so be sure to investigate that, too.

Here are three key metrics to be implemented in your testing and measuring strategy:

1. Web usage stats—e.g. Google Analytics, your own host log stats (www.google.com/analytics)

2. Social media reach—e.g. Klout (www.klout.com), TwentyFeet (www.twentyfeet.com)

3. Website monitoring to check that your site is always up and running—e.g. Pingdom (www.pingdom.com), Internet Seer (www.internetseer.com), Site Uptime www.siteuptime.com

And, of course, an offline review of your leads, sales and number of sign-ups should be done regularly to ensure your dynamic web business strategy is getting results.

HOW TO MEASURE THE SUCCESS OF YOUR WEB PRESENCE

Key Measurements to Check in Google Analytics	Metrics Revealed
Unique visitors vs. total	Shows how many first-time visitors came to the site
Unique page views	Shows how many first-time page visits, revealing which are the most popular pages of the site. Will help you: a. reposition content b. provide more detailed/enhanced content for popular pages
Referrer pages or site	Shows which web or social networking sites brought visitors to your site (e.g. through tweets or as part of a special marketing campaign or links from external sites)
Goals	A specific goal is setup in your Google Analytics account. The metric shows the path or the funnel of activity that a viewer undertook within the site to finally reach the intended goal. This path will be displayed as well as the conversion rate for a given period of time.
Map location	Shows where visitors are located. Can be useful for: a. business expansion planning b. measuring success of a location based campaign
Keywords and search queries	Shows what visitors are looking for as well as what wordings used in your page content have shown best results. Will help you: a. gain insight into your target audience b. modify content to improve relevancy

As your business grows, so will your website needs. It is critical to set milestone dates in your marketing plan, and then revisit your metrics to assess whether you are meeting the needs of your site visitors, staying true to your company's vision and successfully showcasing your products or services. You can adjust accordingly.

Here is a quick summary of the points covered in this booklet on how to create a successful dynamic web site. Ensure that you are following these best practices:

Best Practices Checklist	
Research and Planning	• Understand your target audience • Set objectives and goals • Conduct competitive and industry research • Choose a web developer or do it yourself • Consider usability and accessibility • Establish a budget • Incorporate branding
Nuts and Bolts	• Select and register a domain name(s) • Review hosting requirements • Generate content • Incorporate interactive tools • Address security, privacy and legal issues • Submit for site indexing • Market your website
Test, Measure, Test Again	• Use measurement tools • Create measurement schedule • Set milestones • Update and maintain frequently

Where Are Websites Heading?

Watch for these trends:

• Growth in demand for complex functionality but easy-to-use features.

• More engagement and personalization with an increase in open source software, site owner apps, mobile technologies, mobile marketing campaigns and e-commerce.

• Expanded responsibility for social media from one assigned employee within a business to all employees who will be expected to represent the business individually and collectively.

• The continued leveling of the playing field between big and small business through technology.

• Increased knowledge by savvy site owners about how to reach customers online.

• Easier to understand metrics and reporting.

Related Topics Covered in Other Booklets

• *How You Can Profit from E-Business*

• *Integrating Mobile with Your Marketing Strategy*

• *Social Media for Small Business*

• *Blogs for Small Business*

• *E-Commerce: Purchasing & Selling Online*

• *Increasing Traffic to Your Website Through SEO*

• *The Legal and Privacy Issues of Doing E-Business*

To view or download these booklets visit Ontario.ca/ebusiness.

Glossary of Terms

Accessibility: The key principle of designing websites and software so that they are sufficiently flexible to meet different user needs, preferences, and situations. Making a website accessible can be simple or complex, depending on many factors such as the type of content, the size and complexity of the site and the development tools and environment.

Applications (Apps): Programmed software that can be integrated with other core functionalities to enhance or enable a particular operation feature.

Blog: A personalized online journal that is frequently updated and available for viewing by the public. Blogs are defined by their format, which is a series of entries posted to a single page in reverse-chronological order; they can be categorized and tagged for search engine optimization.

Bots: Short for 'robot,' which is a computer program that runs automatically (e.g. Google bots run through your website collecting data information).

Branding: Aims to establish a significant and differentiated presence in the market that attracts and retains loyal customers.

Cloud computing: A method of delivering information technology services in which resources are sourced from the Internet through web-based tools and applications rather than through a direct connection to a server. This type of system allows employees to work remotely.

CMS (Content Management System): A system used to manage the content of a website.

CSS (Cascading Style Sheets): Defines how different elements, such as headers and links, appear. These style sheets can be applied to any web page. The term cascading derives from the fact that multiple style sheets can be applied to the same web page.

Drupal: Free, open source software that can be used by individuals or groups of users—even those lacking technical skills—to easily create and manage many types of websites. The application includes a content management platform and a development framework.

E-Zines: An online digital magazine sometimes formatted in blog format, or full FLASH driven magazine that can be presented like traditional magazine with flip pages.

FAQ system: Customized search application for frequently asked questions.

Flash: A multimedia platform used to add animation, video, and interactivity to web pages.

HTML (Hypertext Markup Language): A standardized system for tagging text files to achieve font, colour, graphic, and hyperlink effects on web pages.

Integrated marketing: Strategy aimed at unifying different marketing methods such as mass marketing, one-to-one marketing and direct marketing.

JavaScript: A scripting language used mainly to create dynamic, interactive web pages. For example, web developers can use JavaScript to validate form input, create image rollovers and to open pop-up windows.

Joomla: A popular open source content management system (CMS) that is used worldwide to create and manage websites. The Joomla application framework enables myriad enhancements to be plugged in, including e-commerce, blogs, wikis, document management, image galleries and more.

Jquery/Ajax: A free and open source JavaScript library that is used by web developers to navigate HTML documents, handle events, perform animations and add Ajax interactions to Web pages. Ajax (Asynchronous JavaScript and XML) is a method of building interactive applications for the Web that process user requests immediately.

Link building: The process of building links back into the site preferably from relevant, high quality referrers.

Metrics: The process of collecting data that measures a quantifiable component of a company's performance.

Mobile apps: Small bundles of code designed and developed for use on a portable device intended to enhance the features by providing additional functionalities and utilities that increase the device's utilitarian and entertainment features.

MySQL: Pronounced either "My S-Q-L" or "My Sequel," an open source relational database management system. A website that uses MySQL may include web pages that access information from a database. These pages are often referred to as "dynamic," meaning the content of each page is generated from a database as the page loads.

PHP (Hypertext Preprocessor): A scripting language that is often embedded into HTML to add functions that let you interact with your pages—for example, tasks to print data, make numeric calculations, perform comparisons, etc.

PIPEDA (Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act): Rules governing the collection of personal information. You are legally responsible for having a privacy page on the site explaining your intentions. You must also provide "opt-in" permission based requests before emailing visitors from your website.

Plug-in: A hardware or software module that adds specific functionality or feature to a given larger system or application—e.g. Firefox browser has various plug-in tools to extend the functionality of the browser.

QR (Quick Response) Code: A two-dimensional matrix bar code that is used to identify products or services when scanned by a mobile device. QR Codes can contain a phone number, text message, plain text or a URL typically used on print campaigns but, when designed strategically, will contain information or offers of interest to the user, as well as a lead generation form to collect information about the person who scanned.

RSS (Really Simple Syndication): A family of web feed formats used to publish frequently updated works. RSS is a content delivery vehicle. When it distributes the content, it is called a feed. Think of RSS as your personal wire service.

Secure Socket Layer (SSL): A security protocol to enable websites to pass sensitive information securely in an encrypted format. SSL encrypts the data being transmitted so that a third party cannot "eavesdrop" on the transmission and view the data being transmitted.

Site search: Search box on the site that retrieves words that have been indexed from the site.

Skip logic: Also known as conditional branching, changes the course that survey respondents or web visitors take based on answers given or navigation choices made.

Social media: A rapidly evolving online medium including various online technology tools that enable people to communicate easily via the Internet through sharing information and resources.

Social networking: Use of a dedicated social website to communicate informally with other members of the site, allowing users to share content, interact and develop communities around similar interests.

URL (Uniform Resource Locator): A specific address to a website or web file.

Usability: Attributes that assess how a visitor interacts with the website. A website is considered usable if the visitors can find what they need and accomplish the goal for being there.

USG (User Generated Content): Content created and published by end-users online. USG comprises videos, podcasts and posts on discussion groups, blogs, wiki's and social media sites.

Widget: Interactive single purpose application used to enhance or integrate functionality on a website/blog. It can be either a tool or content and typically applied through a "drag and drop" technology.

WordPress: Popular blogging platform that is characterized by frequent posts (or journals) that are distributed through Real System Syndication (RSS) divided into categories; also used as a platform for a full site content management system.

XML: Short form for Extensible Markup Language, which are meta tag comments that better explain or markup the code language in order to display web pages on the web. In this booklet, XML refers to creating a file that tells search engines which pages from a website are to be indexed.

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This publication is part of an **E-Business Toolkit** which includes a series of booklets on advanced e-business topics and an introductory handbook *How You Can Profit from E-Business*. The entire Toolkit is available at ontario.ca/ebusiness.