

## Unit 6: Launching a Successful EC Website

### Contents:

- Planning Online Businesses (Business Plan, The cost-benefit, risk elements of a business case, funding a New Online Business, EC Model selection),
- The process of building a website, basic hierarchical website structure, website hosting and obtaining a domain name (cPanel management, upload EC site to the web Server),
- Web content creation and management: (Web content, Categories and Types of Content, Content Management and Maintenance, Catalog Content and its Management),
- Website design criteria, Site Map and Navigation, Web page layout grid, Colors and Graphics, Website Usability, Performance, Website Promotion, implementation of Payments system, Website Promotion, Search Engine Optimization (SEO).

### Planning Online Businesses

Planning an online business is similar to planning for any startup venture in that it centers on a business plan.

#### Business Plan:

- A business plan is a written document that identifies a company's goals and outlines how the company intends to achieve those goals and at what cost.
- It includes both strategic elements (e.g., mission statement, business model, value proposition, and competitive positioning statement) and operational elements (e.g., operations plan, financial statements) of how a new business intends to do business. Medium and large businesses, or those seeking external funding, must have a formal business plan.
- The primary reason an entrepreneur writes a business plan is to use it to acquire funding from a bank, an angel investor, a venture capitalist, or the financial markets.
- Similarly, in an existing business, **a business case needs** to be written for any new large EC project so management can decide whether to fund it.
- A business plan also is important for a new venture as a tool to recruit senior management and to convince business partners to make a commitment to the business.
- A business plan helps ensure a flourishing business by encouraging an entrepreneur to set goals, anticipate problems, set measures for success, and keep the business on track after starting it.
- A business plan forces the entrepreneur to be realistic about the business's prospects. Sometimes the most successful outcome of a business plan is a decision not to proceed.

#### Business case

- A document that justifies the investment of internal, organizational resources in a specific application or project.
- A business case for a large, resource-intensive EC project resembles a business plan. For a small or medium-size project, the business case can be much simpler.
- Business cases develop a systematic financial justification for projects; they assist in organizing and not forgetting all the necessary data; they point to drawbacks, constraints and risks; assist in collaboration with relevant partners, and help determine who needs a business case and how to use one. The business case structure is assisted by templates.
- Most organizations will have a standard approach to compose business case. However, key elements includes:

- i) **Reasons:** The reason for the project in context of corporate and program strategy.
- ii) **Options:** A brief description of the different options considered and option recommended.
- iii) **Benefits expected:** expressed in measurable terms against today's situation.
- iv) **Risks:** Summary of key risks of the project that could affect the delivery of the project outcome.
- v) **Cost:** An outline of the project costs and milestones from the program and project plans.
- vi) **Timescales:** Summary of the project plan.
- vii) **Investment appraisal:** An analysis of the cost of the project against the expected benefits over time.

## Components of business Case

**Goals.** Begin with a specific description of what the business intends to achieve through the initiative—increased sales, reinforcement of the brand or corporate image, improved customer support, reduction in communications and marketing costs, and so forth.

A useful approach is to define the problem, propose a solution, and describe the expected outcomes or impacts. Conclude this section with goals—one or more statements that briefly describe a desired future condition toward which the business will direct its efforts. Here, it will be advantageous to use a business model.

**Cost savings.** If one or more goals include reduction of existing expenditures, then calculate the following:

- (1) an itemized and quantified list of existing costs that the project will affect and

- (2) the estimated levels of savings that the project will generate (e.g., reduce long-distance telephone costs by 45 percent).

Multiply the costs by the saving levels to find the expected reduction of expenditures. You should estimate these savings for a short term time frame, perhaps the first 3 years of the project's operation.

**New revenue.** If one or more of the goals suggests an increased revenue stream, then calculate

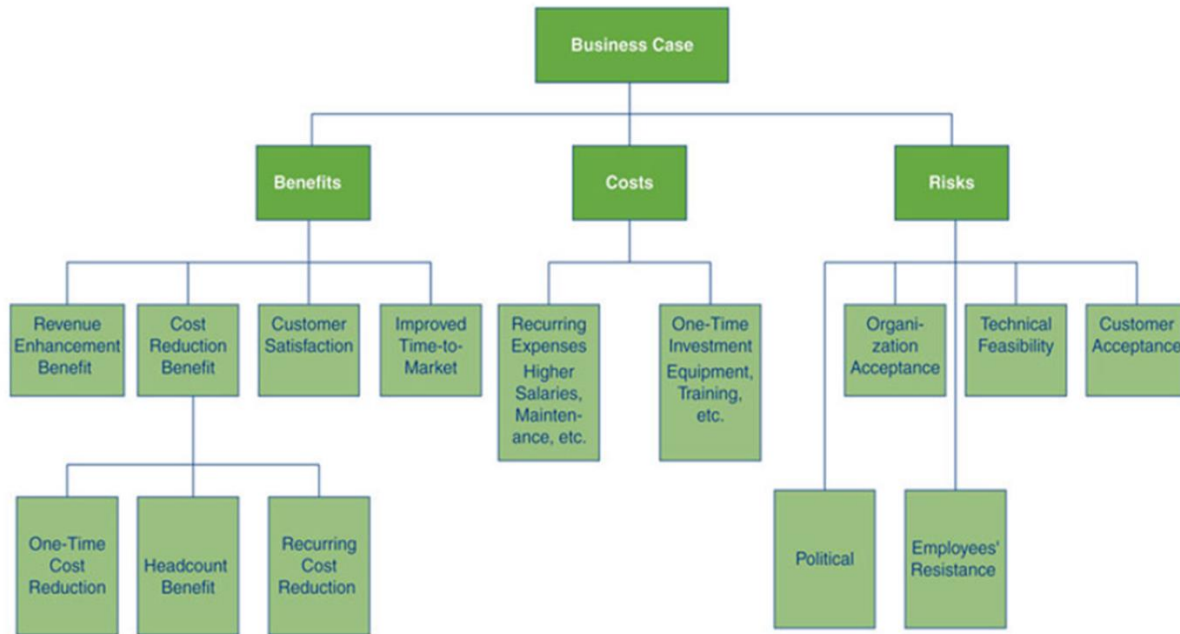
- (1) an itemized and quantified list of existing net income (revenue from sales minus cost of sales) the application or project will affect and

- (2) the estimated levels of new sales that you expect (e.g., increase product sales by 12%). When you multiply the net income by the increased sales levels, you get the expected amount of increased revenue. Do this for the same multiyear time frame as used in the cost-savings calculation.

**Extra benefits.** List and, if possible, quantify any additional fiscal benefits that are associated with the project (e.g., improved staff productivity, faster collection of outstanding debts). If these are difficult to estimate, it is best to list them but neither quantify them nor add them to the benefits identified previously. This approach will produce an overall more conservative estimate of benefits, building in an extra cushion for project success in the event that the business does not realize all quantified benefits.

**Cost of the solution.** This is an itemized and quantified list of costs associated with the online project. You should estimate both direct costs (e.g., amortized costs of website development and website hosting) and indirect costs (e.g., staff training) for the period.

## Cost-Benefit Elements of a Business Case



## Cost Benefit Analysis

Cost-benefit analysis is an economic evaluation of investment. It is the process of comparing benefits of the project with its cost. It is used to determine the expected financial returns and profitability of an investment or a project.

Similarly, different options can be compared with each other based on cost-benefit analysis. This can be the basis for decision-making and the selection of the alternative options.

The initial cost-benefit analysis results also serve as a baseline for the measurement of success in an ongoing project. It helps project managers, sponsors, and other stakeholders to measure, monitor and manage the value of project in creating against the original expectation.

Although the cost-benefit analysis is not an original risk management technique, its result can be used to access and consider certain risks of a project.

There are two main purposes of using cost benefit analysis:

1. To determine if the project is sound, justifiable and feasible by figuring out if its benefits outweigh costs.
2. To offer a baseline for comparing projects by determining which project's benefits are greater than its costs.

In developing cost-benefit analysis, we need to estimate some of the cost elements. Some of them are:

**Hardware cost:** Cost of the hardware components like computer, printer, networking devices.

**Personnel cost:** Cost of the human resources including: salary, benefits.

**Facility cost:** Cost spent in preparation of a site that is physical, where application or computer will be in operation. This includes: wiring, flooring, lighting, air conditioning.

**Operating cost:** Cost associated with day-to-day operation of the system.

### **Funding a New Online Business:**

Launching an online business can be expensive. The entrepreneur is expected to invest personal funds from savings, personal lines of credit, or taking a second mortgage on his or her house, but these sources of “bootstrap funding” may not be sufficient.

Entrepreneurs should “bootstrap” as long as possible, before tapping into the venture capital market. If the new venture involves a significant risk, traditional sources of debt financing, such as a bank loan, can be difficult or impossible to obtain.

### **First Round of Initial Funding: Angel Investors and Incubators**

When the entrepreneur’s personal funds are insufficient, the entrepreneur will go to friends, family members, or to angel investors. An **angel investor** is a wealthy individual who contributes personal funds and possibly expertise at the earliest stage of business development. Angel investors can be found through organizations such as the Angel Capital Association ([angelcapitalassociation.org](http://angelcapitalassociation.org)) and newspapers, magazines, and business-oriented social networks (e.g., LinkedIn).

- An angel investor may provide the developer with an office, hardware, software, salary, and access to human and financial resources.
- In most cases, the angel investor also provides guidance or access to management expertise. In addition to sometimes altruistic goals, the angel investor is looking for a reasonable return on the investment.
- An angel investor is an excellent source of funding for the entrepreneur; however, angel funding is scarce and difficult to find.

An **incubator** is a company, university, or nonprofit organization that supports promising businesses in their initial stages of development.

Although some incubators offer start-up funding, the primary purpose of most incubators is to offer a variety of support services—office space, accounting services, group purchasing, reception services, coaching, and information technology consulting—at little or no cost. In return, the incubator receives a modest fee, equity in the company, or both.

### **Second Round Financing: Venture**

Capital One major source of funding new ventures is venture capital. Venture capital (VC) is money invested in a business by an individual, a group of individuals (venture capitalists), or a funding company in exchange for equity in the business.

The downside for the startup business to acquire VC is minimal; it loses some control over the business in return for funds it is unlikely to acquire from any other source.

The more difficult problem is finding VC. Due to the many dot-com failures since 2000, many VC sources have disappeared, and competition for venture capital is fierce. However, currently there is a flow in VC financing social media and social commerce companies

Some well-known VC companies are vFinance, Inc. (vfinance.com), Westlake Securities (westlakesecurities.com), and Garage Technology Ventures (garage.com).

### **Additional Funding: A Large Partner**

As part of a VC investment or after the reduction of VC money, one or more large companies may step into the process. For example, Yahoo!, IBM, Microsoft, Motorola, Google, Time Warner News Corp., and Oracle have invested in hundreds of EC start-up companies. Eventually, they may acquire the start-up completely. Such investments are frequently done in complementary or competing areas. For example, Yahoo! is a major investor in Google and in Baidu in China; News Corp. acquired the start-up MySpace; and Google invested in dozens of companies related to advertising, including the purchase of YouTube in 2006.

### **The Initial Public Offer (IPO)**

Once the company is well known and successful, it will go to a stock exchange to raise money via an initial public offer (IPO). In such offerings, investors will pay a much larger amount of money per share than that paid by the initial and secondary funding source, sometimes 5 or 10 times more per share.

### **Crowdfunding**

A new approach to the financing of startups and small businesses is crowdfunding. Crowdfunding, also known as crowd financing, is based on using investors to fund startups. Each individual invests a small amount of money; the collection channels are Internet-based social networks.

## **CLASSIFICATION OF WEB SITES**

**Informational Web site** A Web site that does little more than provide information about the business and its products and services. The major purpose is to have a presence on the Web.

**Interactive Web site** A Web site that provides opportunities for the customers and the business to communicate and share information.

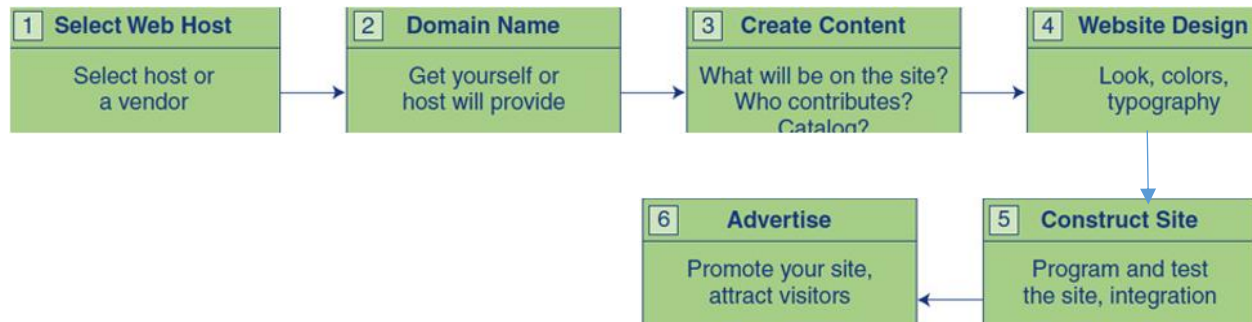
At a higher level of interactivity are **attractors**—Web site features that attract and interact with site visitors. Attractors such as games, puzzles, prize giveaways, contests, and electronic postcards (e-cards) encourage customers to find the Web site, visit again, and recommend the site to their friends.

**A transactional Web site** sells products and services. These Web sites typically include information and interactivity features but also have sell-side features, such as a shopping cart, a product catalog, a customer-personalized account, a shipping calculator, and the ability to accept credit cards to complete the sale.

**A collaborative Web site** is a site that allows business partners to collaborate (i.e., it includes many supportive tools. B2B exchanges may also provide collaboration capabilities.

**A social-oriented website** is a site that provides users with online tools for communication and sharing information on common interests. It empowers consumers to utilize their time around the converged media experience for social participation. Social-oriented websites like Facebook have emerged as one of the most powerful marketing channels.

## The process of building a website:



**1. Select a Web host:** One of the first decisions that an online business will face is where to place its website on the Internet. The website may be included in a virtual shopping mall, such as 3d-berlin.com, the-virtualmall.com, or pointshop.com/mall.

Alternatively, a web store can be hosted in a marketplace that is a collection of independent web stores like Yahoo! ( smallbusiness.yahoo.com ), Amazon.com, Etsy, or eBay. However, many medium and large-sized businesses build their own websites with either an independent hosting service or through self-hosting arrangements.

**2. Register a domain name:** In a mall or web store, the business's name may be an extension of the host's name. A stand-alone website will need its own domain name, and decisions will have to be made about which top-level domain name to use and whether the domain name includes the business name or only some aspect of branding. Registering domain names is essential to a business.

**3. Create and manage content:** The website also needs content – the text, catalog, images, sound, and video – that delivers the information that visitors need and expect. Content can come from a variety of sources, but getting the right content in place, making it easy for viewers to find, delivering it effectively, and managing the content so it remains accurate and up-to-date are critical success factors.

**4. Design the website:** This important task is design the web site. Stores in a mall or those using store builders may have limited options, but the stand-alone websites have many options.

**5. Construct the website and test:** Businesses must also decide whether to design and construct the website internally, contract it out to a Web design firm, or a combination of both. When the business owners are satisfied with the website, it is transferred to the website host. At this point, the website is open for business, but it requires final testing to ensure that all the links work and that the processes function as expected (e.g., acceptance of credit cards).

**6. Market and promote the website.** At this stage, the business promotes the location of the website, both online and offline. A business can use any of (online or offline) advertising strategies.

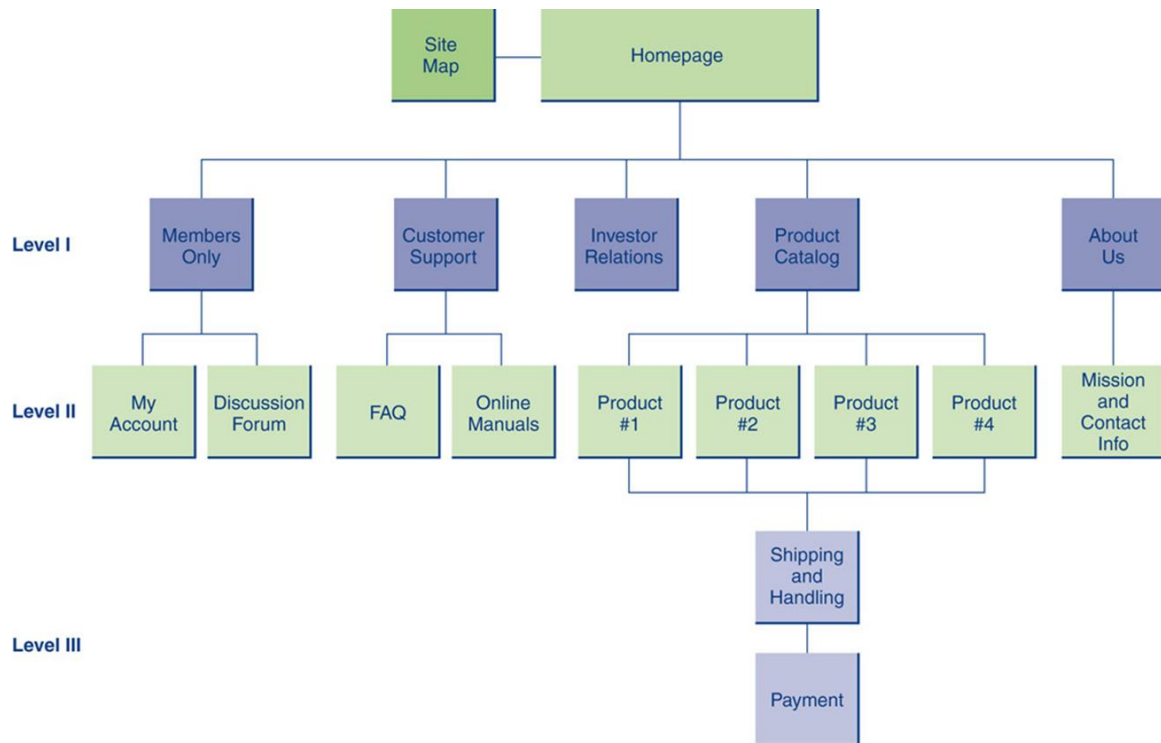
**Table 16.1** How website visitors evaluate websites

<b>How website visitors evaluate content</b>	
<b>Criteria (and related subcriteria)</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
Relevance (applicable, related, clear)	What is the relevancy, clarity, and quality of the information?
Timeliness (current, continuously updated)	How current is the information?
Reliability (believable, accurate, consistent)	How accurate, dependable, and uniform is the information?
Personality	Is there any personalized content? Is it pleasing to the customer?
Scope (sufficient, complete, covers a wide range, detailed)	What extent of information, range of information, and amount of detail does the website provide?
Perceived usefulness (informative, valuable, instrumental)	What is the likelihood that the website's information will facilitate a visitor's purchasing decision?
<b>How website visitors evaluate website design</b>	
<b>Criteria (and related subcriteria)</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
Access (responsive, loads quickly) (see <a href="http://w3.org/WAI">w3.org/WAI</a> )	How long does it take to access the website, and is it always available?
Usability (simple layout, easy to use, well organized, visually attractive, fun, clear design)	Is the website visually appealing, reliable, and easy to use?
Navigation	Are the links to needed information appropriate and active on the website?
Interactivity (customized product; search engine; ability to create list of items, change list of items, and find related items)	Is there an ability to utilize the search engine and the personalized features of the website?
Attractiveness, Appearance	Are multimedia and colors used properly?

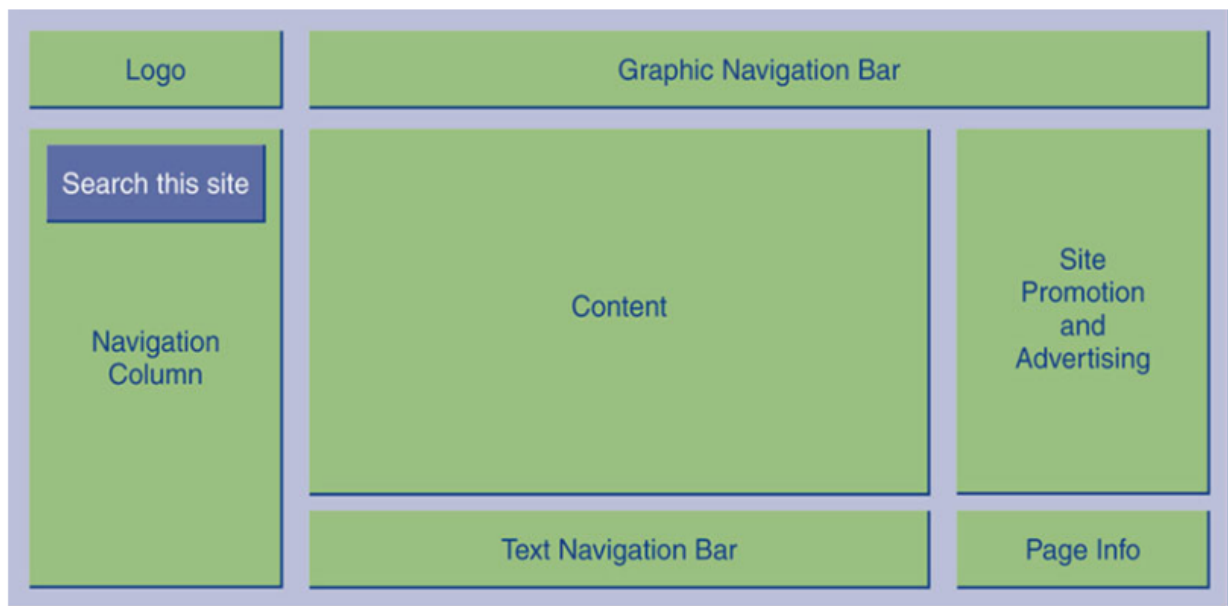
## Basic hierarchical website structure

The structure or layout of the website determines how the components of the website are arranged and grouped. Some of the types of website structures are:

1. Hierarchical Model
2. Sequential Model
3. Web Model
4. Composite (Hybrid Model)
5. Matrix Model



**Figure 16.4** A typical navigation bar



**Figure 16.5** Web page layout grid



## **Website hosting and obtaining a domain name:**

- Web hosting is a service that allows organizations and individuals to post a website or web page onto the Internet. A web host, or web hosting service provider, is a business that provides the technologies and services needed for the website or webpage to be viewed in the Internet.
- Websites are hosted, or stored, on special computers called servers. When Internet users want to view your website, all they need to do is type your website address or domain into their browser. Their computer will then connect to your server and your webpages will be delivered to them through the browser.

## **The Domain Name**

- Domain names provide the address of the server so that when people type in your domain name they will be taken straight to your rented space where the data that makes up the web-page is stored. This process is known as “delegation” this is when the domain name points to your direct hosting account on the server. The Servers job is to “Serve” the files to the browser.

## **Selecting and Registering**

- A Domain Name A domain name is a name-based Internet address (owned by a person or an organization) that identifies a specific website and its Internet-connected server. It is an “online identity,” which allows users to identify one or more IP addresses. Most domain names are assigned by an agency called Domain Name Systems, or DNS. Usually, a domain name is designated by the portion of the address that comes right before the “.com” or “.org” (or other top level designation), and it includes the “.com” or “.org” portion.

The short steps to register a domain name are:

1. Choose a reliable domain registrar (like Hostinger, ipage).
2. Find a domain availability checker tool.
3. Run a domain name search.
4. Pick the best available option.
5. Finalize your order and complete the domain registration.
6. Verify the ownership of your new domain.

Note: .np domain free, you can create your own domain from mercantile company.

## **Web Hosting Options:**

### **Storebuilder service:**

A storebuilder service (also called a design-and-host service) provides Web hosting as well as storage space, templates, and other services to help small businesses build a website expeditiously and inexpensively. An example of a company that offers comprehensive storebuilding services is Yahoo! (smallbusiness.yahoo.com/webhosting ).

However, using a storebuilding service has certain disadvantages, one being the lack of certain functionalities (e.g., accepting payments through PayPal may not be possible).

### **Dedicated Hosting Service:**

A Web hosting service is a type of hosting service that allows individuals and organizations to make their website accessible on the Web (providing websites with space on the Internet). Companies such as Go Daddy, iPage, Shopify, Web.com, and BlueHost offer more and better services than a storebuilder service offers. Almost all Web hosting companies also have internal Web design departments to help the clients.

In addition, features such as shipping, tax calculators, and comprehensive site statistics are likely to be available.

### **Self-Hosting:**

With self-hosting, a company is doing the job in-house (build your own website and host themselves). For this purpose, it needs hardware, software, IT staff, and dedicated telecommunications services.

Self-hosting is beneficial when a business has special requirements, or a large and complex site. Some of the disadvantages of self-hosting are the high cost and the low speed of construction. The other Web hosting options enable the hosting company to share the costs of site hosting among many of their customers.

### **Free Web Hosting Services:**

Several companies offer free web hosting, but they do not offer the many features offered by the dedicated web hosting companies. For example 000WebHost.com, InfinityFree.net, Sites.Google.com, FreeHosting.com etc.

### **cPanel management, upload EC site to the web Server**

**cPanel** is the web hosting control panel, or software that facilitates the management of a web hosting server, developed by cPanel, L.L.C., an American corporation. The software provides a graphical interface (GUI) and automation tools designed to simplify the process of hosting a web site to the website owner or the "end user".

cPanel is part of a software suite called cPanel & WHM(Web Host Manage) which provides capabilities for administrators, resellers, and end-user website owners to control the various aspects of website and server administration through a standard web browser using a three-tier structure. While cPanel is limited to managing a single hosting account, cPanel & WHM allows the administration of the entire server.

cPanel is an online Linux-based graphical interface (GUI) used as a control panel to simplify website and server management. cPanel allows you to publish websites, manage domains, organize web files, create email accounts, and more.

### **Common tasks performed through cpanel:**

1. Connect domain names to your hosting
2. Set up emails for your site
3. Install WordPress (or another content management system)
4. Back up your website
5. Upload files to your server
6. Create sub-domain
7. Check your bandwidth and other usage stats
8. Change various security settings
9. Install add-on apps on your server
10. Create new databases / manage existing ones
11. Set up various optimizations

### **How to Upload Your Website**

1. Pick a Reliable Web Hosting Company.

2. Choose Your Website Upload Method. File Manager. File Transfer Protocol (FTP)
3. Upload Your Website File. Using File Manager or Using FileZilla.
4. Move the Website Files to the Main Root Directory.
5. Import Your Database.
6. Check If the Website Works.

## Website design

Web design includes information architecture, navigation design, use of colors and graphics, and maximizing site performance. The purpose of this section is to enable users to understand and possibly contribute to the design of a website when working with Web designers.

Successful website design is about meeting the customers' expectations and enabling the selling of the products or services. Design starts with identifying the customer's needs, expectations, and problems. A site is then designed to meet those needs and expectations.

### Information Architecture for a Website

A website's information architecture describes how a site is organized. It lists all the components of a site and how they are connected together. The most common site structure in hierarchical websites are built with wide and shallow structures, putting 3–10 components in level II (see above figure) and limiting the components in most other levels.

Other, less frequently used structures are **circular and linear**. A circular structure is useful for presenting training materials. A linear structure is useful for tutorials. A website typically includes a homepage that welcomes visitors and introduces the site; help pages that assist the visitor in using or navigating through the site; company pages that give the visitor information about the e-business; transaction pages that lead the customer through the purchase process; and content pages that deliver information about products, services, and related topics.

### Site Navigation

The purpose of site navigation is to help visitors quickly and easily find the information they need on a website. Among the questions considered in the creation of site navigation are:

- How will visitors access a site?
- How will visitors use the site?
- How will they find what is available at the site?
- How will they go from one page to another and from one topic to another?
- How will visitors find what they are looking for?

Site navigation has to help visitors find information efficiently, because visitors do not want to take the time to figure out how to access a site.

There are many elements to navigation such as:

Global navigation: The parent level items from the site map.

Local navigation: The child pages from the site map, displayed in varying depth, depending on site need. These can be automatically displayed based on hierarchical relationships.

### Performance (Speed)

Speed is a major design success factor. Visitors who have to wait more than a few seconds for a Web page to load might leave the site. A number of factors affect the page speed, some of which are out of the control of the Web designer (e.g., the visitor's Internet speed). The factors that are under the control of the Web designer relate to the content and design of the page. For example, videos and large images should be minimized.

## **Usability**

Usability refers to how well users can learn and use a product to achieve their goals. It also refers to how satisfied users with that process. Usability measures the quality of a user's experience when interacting with a product or system, including: Websites, Software applications, Mobile technologies, any user-operated device.

### **Usability factors include:**

Intuitive design: a nearly effortless understanding of the architecture and navigation of the site

Ease of learning: how fast a user who has never seen the user interface before can accomplish basic tasks?

Efficiency of use: how fast an experienced user can accomplish tasks?

Memorability: after visiting the site, if a user can remember enough to use it effectively in future visits

Error frequency and severity: how often users make errors while using the system, how serious the errors are, and how users recover from the errors

Subjective satisfaction: if the user likes using the system

## **Colors and Graphics**

Rich media that includes colors, images, sound, and videos can improve the attractiveness of websites. Therefore, designers try to find what visitors like in rich media and give it to them. For example, dashboards need to use multiple colors, and so do maps and videos.

While choosing the right color, you should consider: branding, audiences, trend, emotional and balance between the colors used.

**Table 16.2** Website design criteria

Navigation	Is it easy for visitors to find their way around the site?
Consistency	Are design elements, especially look, terminology, icons, and users' feeling, consistent across all pages? Does everything match?
Response time	How long does it take to access the site? Does the site comply with efficient rules (e.g., the 12-second rule?)
Appearance	Is the site aesthetically pleasing? Are the colors visually pleasing? Does the site's look express the company's desired image? Is the content easy to read, easy to navigate, and easy to understand?
Quality assurance	Are the site's calculators, navigation links, visitor registration processes, search tools, etc. in working order?
Availability	Are all broken links fixed promptly? Is the site always available to access?
Interactivity	Does the site encourage the visitor to play an active role in learning about the business's products or services? Are all appropriate contact details available on the website for visitors to submit feedback and ask questions? Is the information (contact names, e-mails, addresses, telephone numbers, etc.) current?
Content	How much multimedia is on the site? How current and relevant is the content? Is it easy to read? Informative?
Usability	How easy is it to use the site? How easy is it to learn to use the site?
Security	Is the customer's information protected? Does the customer feel safe accessing and using the site and, for example, submitting credit card information?
Scalability	Does the site design provide an easy format for future updates? Will the site's growth and increased usage protect the initial investment in site construction?

## Web content creation and management

Web content is content (the text, images, sound, and video) that is included on a Web page. Creating and managing content is critical to web-site success because it presents the company and its products to customers. In Web design, "Content is king!".

### Categories and Types of Content

- Providing content to EC sites may be a complex job due to the variety and quantity of the contributing sources.
- In addition, content may include foreign languages and must be updated frequently. Content may include all types of media. Finally, content may involve security, quality, privacy protection, and permission issues.
- Frequently changing content (e.g., weather news) is referred to as dynamic Web content. Static content is constant and may updated infrequently (standard HTML pages).
- Up-to-the-minute dynamic content is what attracts new and returning customers ("eyeballs") and makes them stay longer ("stickiness"). Therefore, dynamic Web content contributes to customer loyalty.
- **Primary and Secondary Content:** Content should include more than just information about the product itself (the primary content. A website also should include **secondary content** that offers marketing opportunities, such as the following:  
**Cross-selling.** Using content for cross-selling means offering complementary or related products and services to increase sales. Amazon.com offers people who read personalized

recommendations such as “customers who bought this book also bought...” and items “frequently bought together.”

**Up-selling.** Creating content for up-selling means offering an upgraded version of the product in order to boost sales and profit. Amazon.com offers “great buy” book combinations (buy two related books for slightly more than the price of one). (It also practices **down-selling** by offering visitors used copies of a book at a cheaper price than the new book.) Up-selling activities usually include offering products with a different design, color, fabric, or size.

**Promotions.** A coupon, rebate, discount, or special service is secondary content that can increase sales or improve customer service. Amazon.com frequently offers reduced or free shipping charges, (e.g., to Prime members or with a purchase of \$35 or more).

**Comments.** Reviews, testimonials, recommendations, or ‘how to use the product’ supplement content. Amazon.com book pages always have editorial and customer reviews of the book, and the “look inside this book” feature sometimes allows website visitors to pre view some book chapters.

**Content management** is the process of collecting, publishing, revising, updating, and removing content from a website to keep content fresh, accurate, compelling, and credible.

Almost all sites begin with a high level of relevant content, but over time material becomes dated, irrelevant, or incorrect. Content management makes sure a site remains relevant and accurate long after it was placed on the site.

### **Content Management Software (System)**

Content management software enables nontechnical contributors to create, edit, and delete content on a company’s website. This way, companies empower and induce content owners to manage their own content. There are numerous software packages available on the market that help with content management.

The basic features of a CMS are:

Content creation – allows users to easily create and format content.

Content storage- stores content in one place, in a consistent fashion

Workflow management – assigns privileges and responsibilities based on roles such as authors, editors and admins.

Publishing – organizes and pushes content live

Some of the popular content management software packages available in the market are: wordpress, magento, weebly etc.

### **Electronic catalog**

- An electronic catalog is a supplement, or in some cases, a replacement for the traditional printed catalog where buyers can view a company’s entire product line, e-catalog websites do not have live shopping features.
- Typically, manufacturers, importers and wholesalers are the type of businesses that can maximize the usage of an e-catalog. Once the buyers are interested in the products, they would use a contact form to express their interest to the company.

- Customers can fill out a form on your website and you will then process the order offline. An e-catalog website allows you to showcase your products online with the option of hiding or revealing the price of the item. You can choose to display the features, specs, pictures, and even downloadable forms if needed.
- Much of the content in B2B and B2C sites is catalog based. Although there are many positive aspects of e-catalogs, poorly organized ones may deter buyers. Companies need to make sure that their catalog content is well created and managed.
- For B2B internal catalog creators, who aggregate suppliers' catalogs on their own websites, content management begins by interacting with suppliers and then collecting their relevant content. That is no small task, considering that most large buying organizations have hundreds, or even thousands, of suppliers, each of which may use different data formats and terminology to describe their catalog items.

### **Website promotion**

- Website promotion through advertising (e.g., banner ads, pop-up ads) and marketing strategies (e.g., banner swapping, use of video ads, use of blogs, chat rooms, or groups in social networks and virtual worlds). This section focuses on internal website promotion, i.e., conducting marketing communications on the site itself.

### **Internal Website Promotion**

- Internal website promotion begins by including content to attract customers so that they will return and refer others to the site. To do this, the website needs compelling content, useful links to other websites, and features that will make customers want to return (e.g., provide entertainment). The results derived from **Web analytics** are used to plan promotions and ads.
- **Web analytics** is the measurement, collection, analysis and reporting of web data for purposes of understanding and optimizing web usage.

### **Search Engine Optimization (SEO)**

- Search engines are a good mechanism for most people to find information, and therefore, a good platform for online advertising. Placing online ads on Web pages that show results from querying a search engine is known as search advertising.
- If the search result includes your company and product, it is a free advertisement for you. The problem is that the results of a search may include thousands of items, and your product may be not on the first or second page of the results. Note that, search advertising includes mobile search and social network search. Two major forms of search engine advertising are: **keyword advertising** and **URL listing**.

#### Keyword Advertising

- Keyword advertising links the appearance of ads with keywords specified by the advertiser. It includes "pay per click." Businesses select the keywords to which they want their advertisements to be searched and matched.
- Advertisements appear on the screen along with the search results when the chosen keywords are searched. This can substantially increase the likelihood that the advertisement will be viewed and possibly acted on because of its high relevance to user interests.

#### URL Listing

- Most search engine companies allow businesses to submit their URLs for free, so that these URLs can be searched for by the search engines. Search engine spiders crawl through each site, indexing its content and links. The site is then included as a candidate for future searches. Because there are quite a few search engines, advertisers who use this method should register their URL with as many proper search engines as possible.
- In some cases, URLs may be searched even if they are not submitted to the search engines. The major advantage of URL listing is that the listing can be very relevant to the subject of the search. This is the key to Google's success.
- The second major advantage of using a search engine as an advertising tool is that it is free. Anyone can submit a URL to a search engine and be listed. People searching for a certain product will receive a list of sites that mention the products. However, the URL method has several drawbacks.
- The major one is that it is difficult (or expensive) to get your ad to appear in a good location on the list generated by the search engine. Search engines find a very large number of related Web pages for each inquiry made by a user. The chance that a specific company's site will be found and included at the top of a search engine's display list (say, in the first 10 items) is very slim. Hence, many companies provide a service to help advertisers improve the location (usually targeting the first page) of the search result. This is called **search engine optimization**.

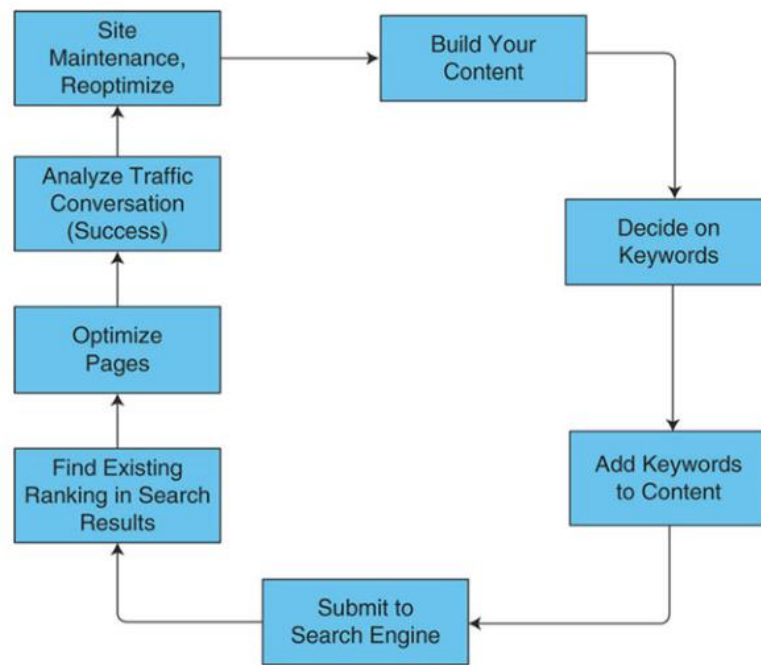
#### Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

- Search engine optimization (SEO) is a process that improves the visibility of a company or brands on the results page displayed by a search engine. Ideally, the results should be in the top five to ten on the first page. Companies hire search optimizers or try to optimize by themselves. SEO can increase the number of visitors to a website, and therefore companies are willing to pay for this service.
- SEO is performed in all types of online searches, including video search, social network search, and image search. According to Google AdWords, "to get your ads to appear when people search for your product or service, the keywords you choose need to match the words or phrases that people use, or should be related to the content of the websites your customers visit"

#### Sponsored Ads (Paid Inclusion)

- In addition to optimizing your Web pages so that they will appear on the first page of the search results, you can buy keyword ads to appear on the first page of the results. This is referred to as paid inclusion or sponsored ads. Your ads will show up on the first page of the results, at the top of the page or on the right side based on the amount you decide to spend. Google uses auctions (first page bids) to sell the best locations to advertisers.





The process of search engine optimization

### Implementation of payment system in website

An online payment form allows your customers to easily make purchases or pay invoices online, on any device, at any time.

Steps to setup an online payment system using third party software

1. Research your options – you should be aware of setup fees, funding practice, monthly service fees, and additional per-transaction fees.
2. Set up your merchant account
3. Build the payment form
4. Integrate into your system

The advantages of using third party software are: Simplicity, Security, Guidance, Easy website integration, Low upfront and ongoing costs.

Steps to setup an In-house online payment system are:

1. If you're not the expert, get one
2. Set up a hosting platform
3. Register your site
4. Build the payment form
5. Find a processing solution with an applicable API
6. Integrate the processing platform with your payment form
7. Test and launch
8. Make support easy to find

The advantages of using In-house online payment form are: Control, design as you like and flexibility,