

10-Second Web Site Commercial

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10-SECOND COMMERCIAL. Buyers typically take only 10 seconds to make a decision about whether the information in a prospective seller's Web site is useful to them. This is critical information for companies that market their goods and/or services on the Internet, and they should respond accordingly. With a well-designed Web site, small businesses can make an equally good impression as a larger company in cyberspace.

Buyers want to quickly know four key things when your home page first appears: 1) the name of your company; 2) what specific goods and/or services you sell; 3) your mission statement, and 4) what makes you different than the competition. Answering these questions encourages the buyer to continue to review your Web site. Conversely, not answering these questions does the opposite. Your Web page should also load quickly to keep their interest.

SUCCESS FACTORS. There are two key success factors in having a buyer want to review your Web site. First, a communications plan helps make sure you target your message to each potential audience group. Second, you need to understand that online buyers are different than their real-world counterparts.

Each Web site should have a message or theme. The process starts with developing a communications plan for your company's Web site. The communications plan does the following:

1. Identifies all the potential users of your Web site
2. Targets the types of messages you want to communicate with them, and
3. Lists the methods of communication such as an online catalog, customer testimonials, product reviews, etc.

The second factor is understanding the nature of online buyers. They are different than real-world buyers in several respects. Some key differences are:

- **Control.** Online buyers want to control the purchasing process. Your site should make it easy for them to guide their way to your products and/or services.
- **Loyalty.** Online buyers tend to be less loyal. This is because the Internet gives them so many other choices of suppliers.
- **Personalization.** Online buyers like personalized service. That's why it's a good idea to design a feature on your site that provides a personalized Web site for each buyer.
- **Price Flexibility.** Online buyers can quickly compare your prices with others using automated shopping software robots (or "bots"). The Internet provides

buyers with information that makes it quick and easy to compare prospective suppliers. This gives buyers a lot of leverage.

The key thing to understand is that the Internet shifts the power from the seller to the buyer. This occurs due to increased information, more choices, and increased competition. It also means more potential resistance from buyers who want to scope out all their options before buying from you.

Creating a Web site can be a major investment of time and money. Taking time to develop a communications plan to prepare for the first critical 10 seconds can be the difference between success and failure. Understanding the nature of online buyers also helps you maximize the use of your 10 second review.

Brevity is important, so it's important to make your point quickly. Remember, the old rule of 15 minutes of fame is now 10 seconds on Internet time. Make it count!

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