

The Ten Reasons Why 99% Of Local Business Websites Are A Total Waste Of Time And Money

**How to take full advantage of the
business-building power of the Internet
and not get left behind as consumers
swarm online to find local businesses**

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For local business owners, the Internet represents either a huge opportunity or a pending disaster



If your community is like most, your prospects are now using the Internet to find local businesses.

In most communities over 90% of searches for local businesses are occurring online.

In fact, traditional advertising is effectively dead, **having been completely displaced by Local Internet Search**. In addition, with over three billion people now actively using Facebook, social media has become the new word-of-mouth.

In the following pages I'll show you exactly how to take advantage of this trend to help grow your business.

Our research has consistently shown that the vast majority of local businesses are throwing their money away on poorly designed and ineffective websites.

That means only a small percentage **of local businesses have websites that are effective in bringing in new customers.**

What are these businesses doing?

Well, for one, **they are making a lot of money**, each and every month by making the Internet an integral part of their business and **getting new customers every month, with little extra effort.**

In other words, the Internet represents a huge opportunity for local businesses.

It is a great lead-generation tool, but more importantly, with only a small percentage of business owners doing the right things, it is possible to effectively **own the Internet** for your local business niche within a geographic area.

However, due to how the Internet works, it could be a pending disaster for many business owners. **Here is why.**

- Local Search companies have gotten billions of dollars in investment capital.
- Local business category domain names (e.g., milwaukeeattorney.com) are being grabbed up in mass (one company paid \$160 million to acquire 100,000 such domain names).
- Paid Search (pay-per-click advertising like Facebook Ads and Google Adwords) is exploding for the local business market.

In other words, if local business owners don't act soon with a comprehensive Internet marketing strategy, they may be left out in the cold.

During the age of Yellow Pages, if there were more advertisers, they just add pages. But, with the Internet, once spaces on the first page for a given Internet search phrase are gone, they may be gone forever – or only available at a ridiculously high price.

Bottom line, you can't afford to NOT be one of the small percentage of business owners who are doing things right – because the upside opportunity for your business is so large and the downside risk of being locked out is so great.

My name is Allen Oelschlaeger and I've been involved in helping local businesses take advantage of the business-building power of the Internet since 2007 as one of the co-founders of the Martial Arts Marketing Network.

During that time, I've worked with local business owners from throughout the U.S. and Canada to improve how they use the Internet to give them a very real and sustainable edge over their competition. As you'll see, the local businesses I've worked with have experienced tremendous success.

Why? Because I know what it takes to be one of the winners of the Internet game – where a business:

- Has established claim to one of the top Internet positions for search phrases used to find their local business
- Has a fully-integrated online presence that converts interested visitors to paying customers

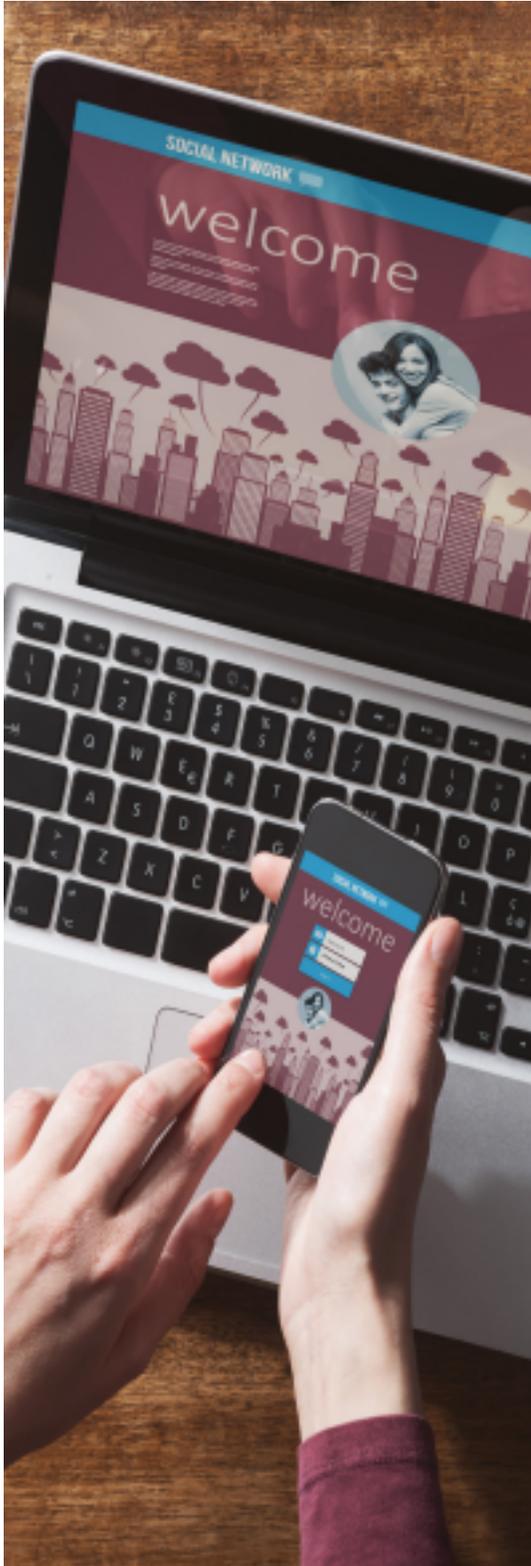
In these pages I'm going to disclose the secrets for accomplishing this.

To get started, let me share the ten reasons why the vast majority of local-business websites are a total waste of time and money.



1

Reason #1 Not having a local website



This one is pretty obvious. It's darn tough to get new customers from the Internet if you don't have a website.

What's surprising is how many local business owners are making this costly mistake.

They don't have a website despite the fact that over 85% of all North Americans are using the Internet to find local businesses and social media has become the new word-of-mouth.

Not having a local business website is just plain crazy.

Businesses without an effective website are missing out on a big opportunity to get new customers with almost no extra effort, but, more importantly, they are taking the risk of giving up the prime Internet real estate to their competitors – potentially forever. Why are so many local businesses missing this opportunity? Our research tells us there are four primary reasons:

1. Confusion as to what to do (being effective at Internet marketing can be extremely complicated)
2. Bad experiences in previously trying to develop a website (some of the stories I've heard would curdle your blood)
3. Lack of time and/or interest to hassle with "this Internet stuff" (local business owners have plenty to do beyond fussing around on the Internet)
4. Believing there are effective alternatives (e.g., Facebook Page) to having your own local website.

Later, I'll offer up a solution on how to deal with each of these issues. But, for right now – don't be the proverbial "deer in the headlights" to your competition. If you are a local business owner and don't already have a website you need to act quickly.



Reason #2 Not having Traffic and Conversions as the top priorities

To get new customers from a website, there are ONLY two things that matter: Traffic (prospects finding and visiting our website) and Conversions (visitors deciding to contact you or make an online purchase). You want lots of prospects to visit your site and you want a high percentage of them to contact you.

Let me state this again because it's critical to success on the Internet.

Traffic + Conversions = New Customers

What is so disappointing is how few website developers understand this fundamental principle. Instead of concentrating on what is important, they focus on such trivial issues as:

- Selecting the coolest technology
- Designing the fanciest graphics
- Developing the slickest logos and slogans

We call the resulting sites “brochure-ware” – because, just like fancy four-color glossy brochures, they are very expensive to develop (sometimes ridiculously expensive) and they do almost nothing to help grow a business.

In fact, much of the “brochure-ware” work actually detracts from what should be the two goals for any website – traffic and conversions (I'll give you some examples of this problem later in this report).

You have to ask yourself why this happens.

If the equation – Traffic + Conversions = New Customers – is so fundamental to success on the Internet, **why do so many web developers get this so wrong?**

- They **don't know any better**. Often business owners try to get by on the cheap by hiring a family member, friend or customer to develop their website who, honestly, know very little about how to be successful online.
- The website developer is like a **carpenter with only a hammer**. If they're a technologist, they want to use cool technology. If they're a graphic designer, they want a fancy look. If they're an advertising agency, they want to promote your “brand” or “image” (more about this misconceived idea below).
- **The ego of the business owner**. Yes, sometimes, the business owner's ego gets in the way of creating an effective website. They put form (cool-looking design) over function (traffic and conversions) and the site ends up being completely ineffective as a business-building tool.

If you want to have a website to generate new leads, you must protect yourself from these barriers to developing an online system that prioritizes Traffic and Conversions – the two essential factors for the success of any Internet strategy.

3

Reason #3 Building a website that is invisible to the search engines

There are only four ways for someone to find your website:

- Entering a keyword phrase (e.g., martial arts school in Milwaukee) into a search engine like Google
- Following a link from another Internet property to your website
- Clicking on a paid advertisement
- Learning about your website from an offline promotion (e.g., postcard, flyer, media article)

If you know anything at all about the Internet, you understand that **the first one is critically important**. Most people who are looking for a local business just go to Google and enter keywords they think will get them to what they are looking for.

Sadly, many local business websites are built in such a way that they are **completely invisible to the search engines**. In other words, these websites will NEVER show up in the search results – no matter what keywords are entered.

What a travesty!

You have paid good money to have a website developed, due to mistakes made, no one will EVER find it via an Internet search.

There isn't room here to explain all the ways a web developer can make a website – for all practical purposes – invisible to the search engines. But, trust me, there are a bunch of them.

Here are just a few:

- Not including appropriate “Title Tags” in the source code for your site
- Not using “SEO-friendly URLs”
- Implementing “tricks” that get your site banned by the search engines
- Not having a version of your website that can easily viewed on mobile devices

Whatever you do, make sure your website is visible to the search engines



4

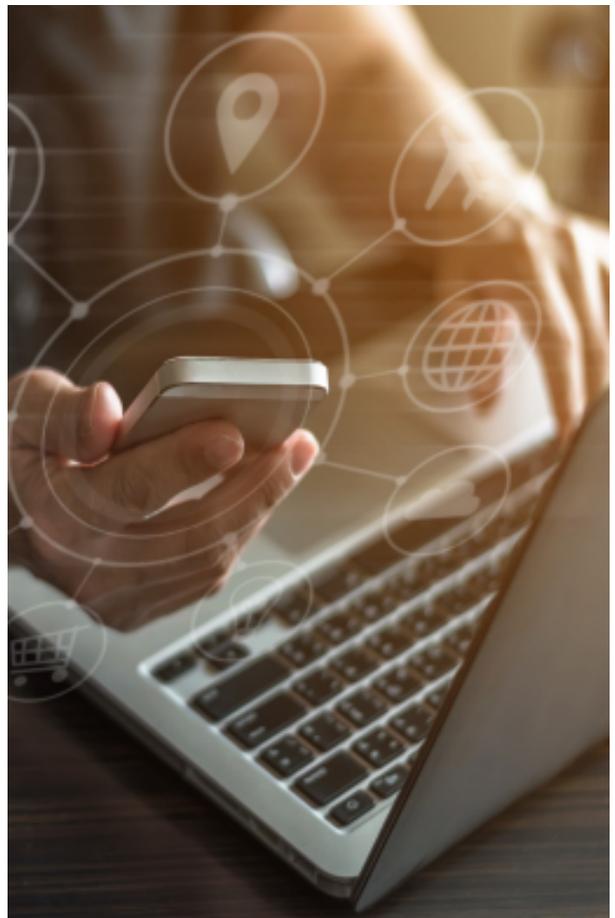
Reason #4 Thinking you can hire a search marketing expert to get traffic to your site.

With well over 1.7 billion websites on the Internet, getting your website found isn't easy – and requires some effort.

Business owners faced with this problem often hire search marketing experts (known as SEO or search engine optimization experts) – individuals or companies who charge hundreds to thousands of dollars a month to fiddle with a company's websites in an effort to increase their search engine ranking.

There are four problems with these supposed "experts."

1. As Perry Marshall, a world-renown Internet guru says, "70-80% of SEO guys are incompetent and 5-10% are Con Men." Here are just a few of the cons these guys get away with:
 - They use SEO "tricks" that end up getting a site banned from the search engines.
 - They make a big deal about the value of search engine submissions. The truth is that search engines will find your site on their own – if your site is findable – so there is almost no value in this heavily promoted practice.
 - They focus on "on-site" SEO when effective "off site" search marketing accounts for 80% of the difference in search results – but off-site efforts are difficult so it's often completely ignored.
 - They apply the same methods across all market segments when Google actually uses different criteria for ranking sites in different business Categories.
 - Rather than trying to optimize both Traffic and Conversions, they only emphasize getting visitors and few leads are generated.
 - They fail to apply the 80/20 principle, focusing their energies on the 80% that produces meager results rather than the 20% that has the most impact.



2. Even if you find a search marketing expert that isn't incompetent or a Con Man, they will likely know **little about Local Internet Search.**

See, the goal of traditional search marketing is to get traffic from all parts of the world. As you can probably imagine, **this is a completely different challenge than getting traffic from interested prospects who live within a few to several miles of a local business.**

For example, to be effective with Local Internet Search, here are just a few of the search categories that need to be understood:

- Organic Search (Google, Bing)
- Paid Search (Google Adwords, Facebook Ads)
- Local Search Directories (Google My Business, Yahoo! Local)
- Online Yellow Pages (YellowPages.com, Switchboard, com)
- Online Review Sites (Yelp, Angie's List)
- Local Deal Sites (Groupon, Living Social)
- Local groups within national social media (e.g., Facebook)
- Business Category Search (business-specific category directories)

Knowing how to work with these search categories is a completely different animal than knowing the ins and outs of national/global Internet search.

That's the problem most national organizations make. They implement national search marketing strategies to try to get local traffic to location pages on a national website – a losing proposition.

3. Even if you learn of an individual who claims to be a local search marketing expert (you probably get calls from these folks every week), their "expertise" likely comes **from taking a \$1,000 to \$2,000 Internet course about local online marketing** and working with a few local clients. I personally know of five outfits that offer such courses and they're quite successful – meaning there are tens of thousands of these minimally-trained "experts" competing with each other for local clients (and calling you).

4. No matter who you use, **it's going to cost a ton of money.** Local Internet Search is such a hot area right now that these experts – whether real or not – have extremely high rates. The true experts charge a few hundred dollars per hour and the individuals signing up for the local online marketing courses are being told they'll be able to charge \$2,000 to \$5,000 per month – per client! – for their services.

This is crazy – but that's the kind of money they're trying to get from local clients who don't know any better.

So, for a local business, hiring a true website traffic expert who can help a local business at a reasonable cost is **almost impossible.** I'm sure you get plenty of calls from companies who say they can help, but they all have at least one of these problems:

- Generally incompetent or are a con man
- Unknowledgeable about Local Internet Search
- Minimally trained by some "business opportunity" outfit
- Too expensive

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Reason #5 Not doing anything about “off-site” traffic generation

Remember in Reason #3 I said there were only four ways for someone to find your website:

- Entering a keyword phrase (e.g., “martial arts school in Milwaukee”) into a search engine like Google
- Following a link from another online property to your website
- Clicking on a paid advertisement
- Learning about your website from an offline promotion (e.g., postcard, flyer, media article)

Well, search engine optimization targets the first way by optimizing a site for selected keywords and phrases. This is called “on-site” SEO.

But, as I said above, “**off-site” search marketing (the other three items above) can account for 80% of the difference in search results** – but it’s often ignored because it is too much work.

Off-site search marketing includes such tasks as:

- Submission to local business directories
- Pinging search engines that your blog has been updated
- Article and press release marketing
- Video marketing
- Search-engine-optimized online business profiles
- Pay-per-click campaigns (e.g., Google Adwords)
- Social networking (e.g., Facebook, Twitter)

The other significant “off-site” source of website traffic is “**offline” promotions** (direct mail, advertising, flyers, business cards). For most national businesses, few visitors come from non-Internet efforts. But, **local businesses often find a great deal of their traffic comes from their offline work.**

These off-site search marketing (“offline to online”) tasks are absolutely critical to get all of the traffic available to a local business.



6

Reason #6 Not designing a website with clear priorities as to what you want visitors to do once they get there

Think for a moment ... **after someone has visited your website, what would you most like them to do?**

Frankly, it seems that local businesses who spend a lot of money on their website, expect their visitors to call and say, “Loved your website... It’s gorgeous... Please sign me up.”

How many times do you think that happens? Not often – if ever – but many local businesses have websites where that’s the only possible outcome. And, even then, sometimes it’s almost impossible to find a phone number to call!

Instead, an effective lead-generation website needs to consider four realities:

1. Visitors need a very compelling reason to respond (visit, call, complete an online form). Having a nice-looking website will never be enough.
2. Visitors need multiple reasons to respond. What might be compelling to one visitor might be a big bore for someone else. The goal should be to convert as many visitors as possible, so you need multiple offers.
3. Visitors need ways to respond that require various levels of commitment. For example, calling is a pretty big commitment for some people and, if that’s their only option, you will likely never hear from them. But that same person might be willing to request a coupon or a special report on a topic of interest.
4. Not all visitors are ready to take action the day they visit a website. However, they may be willing to sign up for a newsletter so you can stay in touch with them on a regular basis until they are ready to make a purchase.

It is critical that a website is designed with these four realities in mind and with a crystal-clear understanding of what you want visitors to do once they make it to the site. For example, most businesses would want the following to happen, in this priority order:

1. Visit your business or make an online purchase
2. Call your business
3. Get a special-offer coupon via a request form
4. Get a compelling free report via a request form
5. Sign up for a weekly newsletter via a subscription form

In other words, a website should have a range of offers to pique the interest of as many visitors as possible and cause them to identify themselves so they can be followed up with.

7

Reason #7 Relying on a website developer to write the content for a site or for the local-business owner to write it by themselves

I hope it is obvious from reading Reading #6 that the content of a website is critically important to its success. You absolutely must have compelling reasons for visitors to respond and provide their contact information – and those reasons generally come in the form of written content (website text, coupon copy, reports, newsletters).

But, **writing this content is a very specialized skill.** For a local business website, it requires:

- Professional writing ability
- In-depth knowledge about the benefits of the local business niche for a target market
- Detailed understanding on how to correctly use keywords to search-engine-optimize a site
- Expertise in direct response marketing so that the copy compels visitors to respond
- Proficiency in website usability to ensure visitors don't get frustrated in navigating the site

Reasons #1 through #6 may not apply to your business and you can still end up with a worthless website if this mistake is made. **Writing good website content – using all of the specialized skills listed above – is that important.**

Hardly any website developers have these skills and I'm guessing that you don't either.

That's one of the reasons why **the “template websites” are of almost no value.** These widely-promoted websites make all of the mistakes – in spades. But they also have the additional problem of requiring the business owner to write their own content.

Sure, some of these companies provide some boilerplate copy to use and/or a collection of links to other websites of interest. But this content is generally of little interest to prospects, the content isn't search-engine optimized for your business, and the external links just suck away hard-earned traffic.

Bottom line – you must involve a professional, website copywriter who has an in-depth knowledge of Search Engine Optimization to help develop the content for your website.

8

Reason #8 Not considering the long term management and maintenance of a site in the initial decisions prior to starting development.

Here is the **most common complaint I hear from business owners** about their website (besides the complaint that their website rarely, if ever, generates any new business).

Every time they want to make a change or addition to their site, they need to go back to their web developer to have the work done. This creates three problems:

- **Delays** – the work almost never gets done in a timely manner
- **Cost** – each little change gets billed at the developer’s hourly rate
- **Hassle** – just explaining the change usually takes more time than what it takes the developer to complete it

The most common result is that the website ends up almost never getting changed. It is just too untimely, too expensive, and too inconvenient to make it worth the effort. This creates issues on multiple fronts:

- The site begins to look old and out of date to visitors
- The search engines begin to ignore the site because it looks abandoned (this is happening more and more -- search engines are giving great value to fresh content in their algorithms)
- The business misses opportunities to creatively use their website as an integral part of their marketing effort

The good news is that it is now possible to develop a website using a Content Management System. **Such systems make it possible for a business owner or staff person to make changes and additions to their site without the need for any technical expertise.**

This eliminates the ongoing hassle/cost of working with a web developer for every little change, but more importantly, it enables the tight integration of offline and online marketing initiatives. For example, a good CMS will allow the business owner to easily create an unlimited number of “landing pages” that can be tied to offline promotional efforts.

Such changes only require a few minutes (or, often, just several seconds) so **it’s possible to fully manage a website very cost-effectively.**

But, not all of these systems are created equal. Some are so complicated they can take hours or days to learn. Others allow you to make simple changes but doing more complicated tasks like adding images, creating links, or adding videos (a critical component of Internet marketing) still must be done by a developer – **all which can cost lots of money.**

But, whatever system you select, using a Content Management System for your website is almost ALWAYS a better decision than developing a traditional website using HTML.

In addition, there are now systems that allow content authors to submit video, audio, images and text to their online properties **from a single page on their website** without even having to know anything about Internet marketing.

If you are a national organization, you have a different problem. For you, the issue is control. You have a brand to protect and letting your local managers/owners compromise that brand with hugely variable web sites makes no sense.

Instead, you want to be able to manage your Internet presence from a central location. From my experience, that's the primary reason why national organizations opt to have pages for each location on a central site, rather than having a separate website for each location (the highly preferred approach to maximize local Internet search traffic). They don't want to lose control of their brand and they can't imagine dealing with the cost and hassle of having tens or hundreds of websites to manage.

But, that's another technology development that is now available. **It is now possible to manage hundreds of individual websites with less work and expense than managing one large, traditionally-constructed website.**

The technologies that make this possible are called Multi-Site Management and Content Syndication. These technologies enable software upgrades and "pushing" content to all or a subgroup of sites from a central dashboard.

For national organizations, the combination of a Content Management System, Multi-Site Management and Content Syndication **creates the ideal environment to maximize the business-building power of the Internet.** With these three technologies, national firms get all the benefits of having a local website for each individual location without giving up any control over their Internet presence and with none of the management costs and hassles.

It is this combination of technologies that makes the services of the Martial Arts Marketing Network possible.

Another factor to consider relative to the long-term maintenance of your website is how to address the technical issues, such as:

- Selecting a reliable website hosting provider
- Interacting with the host when problems arise (and, trust me, there are always problems)
- Registering and renewing domain names
- Regularly updating the server software used on the site
- Monitoring the site for technical problems

Here you need a technical team to help out – so it is important to have access to a good one. Bottom line, you must consider the long-term management and maintenance of a site prior to starting development

9

Reason #9 Not taking advantage of the power of the Internet to build customer loyalty and transform business operations.



If you are like most local business owners, you are inundated with ideas on how to retain customers and better your business operations – how to improve your customer service, how to add value to your programs so you can raise prices, how to be more efficient so you can devote more time to higher-priority tasks, and on and on.

Here are the problems with these ideas:

- Many require significant investments in labor to implement and maintain
- Some just aren't practical to implement unless you have a big operation
- The ideas to increase business efficiency often don't create the impact promised

Large companies faced these problems years ago but then **they discovered the power of the Internet** – to improve customer service, add value to their products and services, enhance their marketing and increase their efficiency. At the time, the cost of the technology was enormous (often in the millions of dollars) but the results almost always produced a positive return on investment.

The mistake local business owners make today is thinking this business-transformation technology is still out of their reach. It's not.

Due to rapid advancements in technology, it is now possible to take advantage of the power of the Internet to transform business operations – **to improve marketing, customer retention and business efficiency.**

Here are some of the components of such technology:

- The Content Management, Multi-Site Management and Content Syndication systems described above
- Customer Relationship Management systems that automate contact list capture and prospect/customer follow-up via email, text, mail, and voice broadcast
- eCommerce functionality
- Private member-only websites
- Mobile applications

While these technologies are quite complex at their core, they can all be set up in such a way that **almost anyone can manage them.**

The problem is that most technologists don't have clue how to do this (see Reasons #2 and #8). They view systems that are impossible for most people to understand as "simple" – so they end up blaming the user instead of the system when they hear usability complaints.

In order to take advantage of the power of the Internet to build customer loyalty and transform business operations, you need to know what technology to use and how to set it up – but it's now possible to compete with large companies who have millions of dollars to spend.



10

Reason #10 Not having a comprehensive online system that goes far beyond just having a website

None of the reasons above might apply to your business and you still may not be successful online.

Now, that didn't used to be true. Up until the last few years, just having a website (although one that didn't make the mistakes discussed above) was sufficient. What's happened in recent years is that **the Internet has become hopelessly complex.**

First, the search engine algorithms have become much more sophisticated. It used to be that, if you just had well done title and meta tags, your site would be ranked high by the search engines.

Well, no longer. Now you need more advanced on-site search engine optimization, placement in local search directories, lots of backlinks and a plan to add more over time, active social media accounts, regular addition of multi-media content to a blog, a mobile version of your website, accounts at article and video repositories, aggressive use of video and audio marketing, and more.

And, you need to take into account that the search engines now know where people are located when they are searching online – so they are much better at presenting local business results.

Second, the Internet is now far more than just a collection of websites. Now there are blogs, business directories, online review sites, social media accounts, article repositories, podcasts, Web TV, local deal sites and much much more.

Third, there is a **major trend with the use of video** on websites, blogs and social media accounts.

YouTube has made it simple to put a video online, but if you want to use video in your marketing there are all sorts of challenges. You need to record the video, move it to your computer, get it transcoded to the right format and file size for the web, deal with file-storage issues and then, the hardest of all, get it placed correctly on your online properties.

Fourth, most online systems are set up where all of these various elements are implemented in a piecemeal fashion. So, if you can even remember where everything is, you need to login to multiple accounts with different user interfaces in order to manage your online presence.

What's needed is a fully-integrated online system that includes all of the above elements. However, **it must be manageable with little time commitment and without the need for any technical ability.**

In other words, an effective online system needs to require just a few simple tasks to do on a regular basis, with everything else getting taken care of automatically.

My dilemma – do I do what my client asks or what I think is right?

Now that you know the ten reasons why the vast majority of local-business websites are a total waste of time and money, let me tell you a brief story about a dilemma I faced in late 2007.

One of my clients (a martial arts school owner) was organizing a national conference for local business owners. The focus of the conference was on business growth, so he had decided to include a two-hour session on how to develop and maintain an Internet website.

He and I had worked together for several years and I had helped him expand his business pretty dramatically. Part of this work included developing and maintaining his website, so he was aware that I knew a thing or two about the Internet.

As a result, I was his first choice to give the Internet presentation at his conference.

After we had done so much work together, **you can imagine his surprise when I told him I wouldn't do it.**

See, I had been in this situation before. I had given plenty of presentations about developing and maintaining a web-site and the results had always been the same.

Do you know what these results were? Let me give you a bit more detail about my experiences with these presentations and I bet you'll be able to make a pretty good guess.

WHAT
CAN WE DO
FOR YOU



Here is an outline of the normal course of events:

- I worked my tail off to put together a presentation that explained EXACTLY how to develop and maintain a website that would get lots of traffic and convert that traffic to lots of interested leads
- I flew to the meeting destination and spent two miserable nights at some fancy hotel (business travel lost its luster years ago after spending three years as the global marketing director for a large medical device company).
- I gave the presentation with all of the energy and clarity I could muster – with the audience of business owners taking copious notes. Again, my presentations explained EXACTLY what was required to have a successful Internet presence.
- The meeting ended and everyone went back home to run their businesses (and dig themselves out from the pile of work that accumulated when they were gone).

What do you think happened from there? Here's what you would hope these business owners would do:

- Interview a bunch of web developers and professional copywriters to find a team who seemed to know what they were doing
- Review with the team they selected what they had learned from me
- Put together a project plan to get the website done in a timely manner and at a reasonable cost
- Manage the project to completion, referring regularly to their notes from the presentation to ensure that mistakes weren't being made
- Put in place an ongoing effort to do on-site SEO, off-site search marketing and site maintenance

So, what do you think? Did all of the business owners go home and take these steps?

Do you think any of them did?

If you are a local business owner, you know the answer. No small business owner on the planet has the time, interest or energy do any of this stuff.

Therefore, what were the results of all the hassle and hard work?

Nothing!

Sure, there might have been a few who realized they absolutely MUST have a website (given the explosion of Internet search). And these few might have found some web developer and try to communicate to this person what they had learned from me.

However, I'm sure their experience went something like this:

- The person hired would share their biases (“You really need to use this cool technology;” “You need to spend a bunch of money on a fancy graphics”)
- The conversation would deteriorate into the use of a bunch of incomprehensible technical jargon

- The business owner would get hopelessly confused
- The priorities would shift away from Traffic and Conversions to whatever the web developers biases were
- The business owner would be tasked with writing all of the content
- Traffic generation tasks would be put off for sometime in the future
- The entire project would cost much more than it should

The end result – another website that is a total waste of time and money.

So, given these previous experiences, I had a BIG dilemma. Did I just do what my client asked or did I reject his request?

Well, at the end of the day, I just couldn't get myself to accept my client's invitation to present at his conference.

I knew it would be a big waste of my time and the conference attendee's time. In addition, I was worried that my presentation might just create a lot of frustration – where the local business owners knew they HAD to do something but didn't have the time, interest, or energy to do it.

Given that he was such a good client, I felt an obligation to search for another option

Here is what I found -- an approach to website development that could be used to create a world-class online system for my client and then duplicated for other businesses in my client's niche in other geographic locations.

So, my client and my company used this approach to do just that. It required thousands of dollars of investment as well as hiring some very specialized talent, but the results were worth it.

I could now go to the conference and offer something with real value rather than just a bunch of empty words. And, the conference attendees saw that value -- 19 of 20 purchased the online system we had developed.

If you are a local business owner, what should you do?

If you have gotten to this point, I'm sure you are feeling a bit overwhelmed.

You know you need a fully-integrated online presence and you now know why the vast majority of websites are a total waste of time and money -- but what do you do now?

In my opinion, you have two options:

1. Use your new-found knowledge to either:

- Search for a broad-based technology company that fully understands all these reasons for Internet marketing failures. Then contract with them to build out your online presence; or
- Put together an internal team with the wide range of expertise necessary to be effective in developing a fully-integrated online system and managing a local business Internet marketing effort

2. Find a company that has developed a world-class online system for your business niche in another geographic location and ask them if they can duplicate that system for you. However, realize this may be a challenge due to federal copyright laws. Unless the web development firm developed all the content themselves, using it on another site won't be possible

What you DON'T want to do is develop something piecemeal with separate individuals or groups handling the different elements of an effective online presence, such as:

- Website infrastructure
- Graphic design
- Copywriting
- Search marketing
- Technology maintenance
- Social media marketing
- Video management
- Mobile version of site
- Business directory listings
- Customer relationship management (CRM) system

And, if you need them:

- Membership site
- eCommerce functionality

Instead, you want to find one group who can develop and manage all of this and, ideally, do even more (e.g., podcasts, Web TV, local deal sites).

Will the Internet be a huge opportunity for your local business or a pending disaster?

As I said at the beginning, you can't afford to NOT be part of the business owners who are making the Internet an integral part of their business and, as a result, **making lots of money and getting new customers every month, with little extra effort.**

The Internet is going to become more and more important media for the marketing of any local business. However, unlike the Yellow Pages of the distant past, it's possible for your competitors to lock you out of the top search engine rankings potentially forever.

Instead, what should be happening is that it's you who are locking them out.

I hope the information presented on these pages allows you do just that

About the Author

I mentioned above that I've been helping run a company called the Martial Arts Marketing Network since 2007 -- a digital marketing agency focused on helping martial arts school owners grow their business.

Prior to that, my background includes getting an MBA from Wharton and over 20 years of experience as a corporate executive for such companies as Eli Lilly and Company, and Marquette Electronics. In 2000, I left the corporate world to develop business ventures and, since then, have founded several companies.

In addition, for three years, I was part of the marketing faculty at the University of Wisconsin -- teaching Principles of Marketing and Entrepreneurial Marketing -- and have done a lot of speaking at large and small conferences. If you want to discuss booking me for a conference, please contact me.

I formed Martial Arts Marketing Network due to my frustration, within my own businesses, with Internet marketing. I can genuinely say that I made all the mistakes discussed above over and over again because I didn't know any better and neither did the teams I was working with.

Once I started working with clients beyond my own businesses, I quickly learned the ten reasons listed above were prevalent in almost all local businesses and, as a result, they were getting almost no value from their online efforts.

Now, sadly -- at the time of this writing -- this is as true as ever. Local business owners are still making big mistakes, but the Internet has become even more important as a marketing medium and there is now real competition online -- so businesses are falling further and further and further behind.

In response to this situation, the Martial Arts Marketing Network has been working to address this problem. The technology we originally used to develop the online system for my client in 2007 (and then duplicate for other geographic locations) is no longer available so we had to develop our own. This proprietary technology is now in its fourth generation.

Our latest system has been used with hundreds of fully integrated local online systems, for these reasons:

- Our long history in developing online systems for local businesses, specifically in the martial arts industry
- The system we've put in place to enable multi-media content to be submitted at a central portal and have it automatically syndicate to each node on a network of local sites
- Our proprietary technology that enables the complete management of a business' online presence from a single website page -- including the recording/uploading of video and audio
- Our exceptional expertise in local search marketing
- Our acute awareness of who's interacting with our products and services -- overworked business owners and professionals who have no interest in becoming tech wizards

**To learn more, please visit us at:
www.MAMNetwork.com**