

When I was asked to contribute to this directory, I knew immediately where I would start, what I wanted to say. Having worked with many companies since 1999 I speak daily to people who just have no idea where to begin. “How do I choose a web designer?” “Do I need flash?” “What about search engine promotion?” And the questions go on. Truthfully, and disappointingly, the answer is often more complex than they hoped and starts with “well, it depends upon a number of factors.”

Allow me to elaborate and take you through the labyrinth that is promoting your company on the Internet.

Back in 1999 when I established my first web design company, it was my

belief that there were some companies, or perhaps groups of companies, that truly didn't need a website, and just maybe the World Café in Crouch End London doesn't need one now? (Great breakfast by the way - just fabulous!)

It is almost trite to say that the Internet has expanded at such a pace that I truly believe now, however, that if your business is to expand, you have to embrace the potential of the World Wide Web, and I guess if you are reading this article that you have taken that first step. But what is that potential? And how can your company take advantage of it?

Following the (now infamous) dot-com crash of the mid 90's, there was an understandable reluctance

for investors to get involved (in Web projects) but I can't help feeling that many of the ideas that “launched and crashed” were just too early, and the only thing their principles could be accused of was investing heavily in something the World wasn't ready for; or at least not yet!

I can remember discussing this with my technical director at that time, when we observed that many websites were far too complex and as a consequence far too slow to download (open on your PC), as a result of which they would never be successful.

Enter stage left. Broadband, which has transformed the face of Internet access and ushered in an age of much, much faster and cheaper

access, making more complex (web) sites, flash video, multiple windows and bigger better quality images a practical option. On the back of this, the vast majority of people with Internet access (in the UK certainly) enjoy the benefit of Broadband access speeds, and the popularity of websites has been growing at a pace that not even Tim Berners-Lee could have imagined when he took us down this path back in 1989/90.

This new phenomena of social interaction, or social networking, across the (World Wide Web) has become known as Web 2.0 - the World's 2nd attempt at making it work!

Do I need a website?

Is this not just the most basic question, but I'm

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Capitals prove very difficult to read

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works fine - good differentiation in the weights, and good differentiation in the sizes of the heading v the text below

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18 point

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14 point

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10 point