



A SERVICE OF
**COMPUTERS
MADE EASY**

Scot Noel
2615 Detroit Street
Grapeville, PA 15634

724-523-3001

Scot@InWestmoreland.com

For Your Information

We have prepared three informative documents.

1. When Considering a Website.

(Why should your business have a website? What to look for in a good designer and host, and how much you should expect to pay.)

2. Making the Most of Your Website.

(Promoting your website successfully with both traditional and online methods.)

3. Important Information on Your New Website.

(Passwords, renewals, the danger of slamming, and other considerations.)

Each document is provided at the appropriate stage of development.

Making the Most of Your Website

During the development of your website, your responsibilities include working cooperatively with your web design team and considering how much effort you will put into promoting your completed website.

First, let's talk about working cooperatively to get the job done.

Your Responsibilities During Web Development

1. Communication

While we have a great deal of experience in web design, we may know little or nothing about your business or industry. We rely on you for the data needed to make your website an effective source of information.

- You don't need to be a writer or know how websites work to keep us informed. Typically, we set up one or more interviews where you have the opportunity to bring us up to speed on the facts of your industry.
- We appreciate it when you take the time to keep in touch with us throughout the development process, so that we are always aware of any changes, concerns, or corrections on your part.

2. Supplying Needed Materials

Your company may already have a wealth of information that can be used in the development of your website, including logo art, brochures, flyers, and print advertisements. Supplying us with these materials on a timely basis can speed the development of your website and reduce review and approval time.

Your website may also require various pictures, graphs, charts, or clip art. Working with us to supply existing materials, or produce and review new materials will be critical to completing your project.

3. Review of Completed Design, Copy, and Development Previews

At several stages in the development process, you will be asked to review our work for approval. Mainly, these are:

- Approval of the Initial Design (at which time an initial payment is made).
- Review and Approval of Web Content (the text).
- Review and Approval of the Completed Site before Publication.

Your timely reviews are a critical component in completing your website on schedule.

Your responsibilities during web development include:

1. ***Timely and effective communication with your web developer.***
2. ***Supplying needed informational materials and photos.***
3. ***Timely review of completed design, copy, and previews.***

Making Your Website Effective in Internet Searches

Just having a website is no guarantee anyone will be able to find it in an online search using Google, Yahoo, MSN, America Online, or any of the major Search Engines.

Before your website can be found, it must be registered with the major search engines, at least with Google, Yahoo, MSN, and one few people have heard of: the Open Directory Project (a.k.a. DMOZ).

InWestmoreland automatically provides this basic registration for all the websites we develop. It usually requires 4 to 8 weeks for your registration to become effective and your site to become searchable on the Internet. (Websites listed on the InWestmoreland.com website generally receive a boost and are accepted into the major search engines even sooner.)

It is generally believed that Google penalizes brand new websites and integrates them into searches at a much slower rate than other search engines.

How do Search Engines decide what to display when you search for something on the Internet? The true answer is, no one knows exactly. Those trade secrets are as important to Google and Yahoo, for instance, as the formula for coke is to Coca Cola.

Even so, a great deal of research is done by web developers to find out what works, and the most important thing everyone agrees on is this: Content is King. That means the search engines pay more attention to well-considered and well-written information than to almost anything else. It makes sense if you think about it. The job of the search engines is to find the appropriate information their users are looking for, not sales hype, not pretty pictures or animations, not technical tricks, but information.

The art of making your website friendly to searches is called Search Engine Optimization, or SEO.

During the planning discussions for your website, you may have stressed that Search Engine Optimization is important to you. If so, here is a little more information about this service.

Every website we develop is designed with basic Search Engine Optimization in mind. Not every web developer provides or has training in SEO, and SEO specialists sometimes charge thousands of dollars just to look at your website and develop a report.

For those clients whose vision for their website includes aggressive Search Engine Optimization, we can develop a detailed optimization approach, including keyword research and careful optimization of every page on your website. As SEO does add to development and research time, it also adds to the expense, so it is important to consider how important optimization is to the success of your website.

SEO sometimes involves hiring outside research services that are able to determine what "keywords" people are typing into search engines such as Google when they are looking for services like yours. It includes specialized writing techniques to use both keywords and key phrases to the best effect. While competition on the Internet remains fierce, it is often possible to have your website appear high in a results list when your services and your location are

searched for together. (i.e. as of this writing, were you to search for *Catering, Greensburg*, our search engine optimized website for Court Yard Catering would be the number six result in Google.)

SEO also includes careful thought with regard to choosing a domain name, the titling of the various pages on your website, the use of style sheets and bullet lists, inclusion of service area information, and more.

Because the major search engines occasionally change their algorithms (mathematical formulas) for determining search results, it is sometimes necessary to reevaluate and tweak optimization strategies. Your website will move up and down in search results over time.

While Search Engine Optimization can be very effective, you should know that no one can guarantee your website will appear near the top of any given search. Search Engine results are simply not in the power of web developers, or anyone else, to control. Anyone who promises miraculous results is misrepresenting their true abilities.

Promoting Your Website via Traditional Means

The Hub of Your Advertising Wheel

If your website is the central source of information for everything about your company, what are some commonsense ways of promoting it? To begin, think of your website as the hub of a wheel. All of the spokes on your wheel point toward its all important center, where the information is. The spokes (places where your website needs to be mentioned) are:

- Any advertisement you run in any other media, including:
 - Yellow Pages
 - Radio and TV
 - Newspaper and Magazine ads
 - Coupons
 - Flyers and Brochures
- List your web address on your business card.
- List your web address on all corporate paperwork, including:
 - Letterhead
 - Purchase Orders
 - Invoices
 - Packing Slips
- Include your web address as part of the *Signature* in your emails.
- List your web address in any signage, including:
 - Building signage
 - Roadway signage (such as billboards)
 - Vehicle signage
- List your website on promotional items
 - Pens
 - Mugs
 - Mousepads.

You should also have your web host set up email accounts using your web domain. For example, if your website is www.widgetsplus.com, your email address should be YourName@widgetsplus.com.

- This gives a more professional appearance than if you use a non-domain email address.
 - Your domain email address will never change, no matter what host you use.
- Customers who know your email can find your website; all it takes is adding a www.

Promoting Your Website Online

Pay-Per-Click and Banner Advertising

Most of the major search engines offer Pay-Per-Click or Pay-Per-Impression advertising. This can be a very effective and affordable.

Pay-Per-Click ads are the small blocks of advertising you usually see running down the right hand side of the page after doing a search on Google or Yahoo. (To the right is an example of our InWestmoreland.com ad. It appears in a Google search for “Westmoreland County.”)

[Westmoreland County, Pa](#)
Businesses, services, and events.
Great Places, **county** parks & more.
[InWestmoreland.com](#)

When the ads are Pay-Per-Click, it means you only pay when someone clicks on them and ends up on your website. When they are Pay-Per Impression, you only pay when they appear online in response to someone’s search. It is a little more complicated than that, but some key features are:

- Your ad appears only when users search for certain “keywords” you have chosen.
- The amount you pay for each click or impression is a bid, and could be as low as ten cents per click or per thousand impressions.
- You are bidding against other advertisers who want their ads to appear when the same keywords are used.
- How high in the list your ad appears depends on both the amount you bid and the relevance (popularity) of your ad. (If no one clicks on your ad, it doesn’t matter what you are willing to pay, your ad will be slowed down or discontinued.)
- You can usually set a budget limit. Google uses a daily budget.
- It is often possible to target your ad regionally.

InWestmoreland has experience in running Pay-Per-Click ad campaigns and can either provide you with some basic training, or provide complete setup and maintenance of an online campaign for you.

Banner Advertising on the major search engines is usually out of the reach of most small companies.

Budgets often start at thousands of dollars per month. You may be able to find more affordable banner advertising on small, local search engines in your area.



Advertising on Local Portals or Search Engines

The entire Internet audience does not belong to the major search engines. There are many local and regional search sites, or themed search engines (centering around a topic, like Health Care, or Restaurants). You will sometimes hear these referred to as Portals, and they are often run by small businesses.

InWestmoreland.com is an example of such a local search engine. We list businesses, services, and events for Westmoreland County. As of this writing, our site receives over 500,000 hits per month, or around 1,400 pages of information viewed every day. (Another way to think of it is: every minute of every day, all year round, someone is reading something on InWestmoreland.com)

Local search engines and portals usually offer very reasonable advertising rates. For example, websites can be listed on InWestmoreland.com for only \$30 per year, and we feature online coupons for a similar price. Other websites may list for free, but charge for banner and other advertising.

A few examples of local and regional sites in Pennsylvania and the Westmoreland County area:

www.paontheweb.com

www.pavisnet.com

www.laurelhighlands.org

www.mynorthhuntingdon.com

www.mygreensburg.com

www.InWestmoreland.com

Finding a Host, Now That Your Website is Complete

The cost of hosting is a recurring, yearly fee. Once your website is complete, it must be published to a host computer to make it available on Internet, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Hosting services vary widely in cost. As we use Microsoft FrontPage as our web development tool, at a minimum your host must provide what are called "FrontPage Extensions."

We recommend hosting with our partner company, Giraffe Digital Solutions. GDS offers two business level hosting plans, one for \$299.40 per year (with a one time setup fee of \$34.95) and one for \$419.40 (setup fee waived). These prices include our support in troubleshooting any email or hosting problems throughout the year.

We will make every effort to work with a different host of your choice. You need to be aware, however, that in working with hosts other than our partner company (Giraffe Digital Solutions), we must charge a rate of \$40 per hour to follow up and resolve troubleshooting issues, including difficulties in publishing your site.

As a general rule, it is best to work with a hosting service your web developer is familiar with, or with whom they have established a business relationship. This is especially true if timely updates, maintenance, and troubleshooting are concerns. Remember, a low cost hosting service unaffiliated with your web developer has no reason to hurry, or even respond in a timely fashion when work needs done on your website.