

HOW MUCH DOES A WEBSITE COST?

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I can't tell you how often I get asked this question, and I always answer it by using automotive analogies. "How much does a car cost?" I say. A website development investment depends on so many variables. Much like that car, it depends upon your needs, wants, and bottom line...your budget. But, unlike a car's depreciating expense, a good website is an investment that will pay dividends for years.

Ask yourself these questions...Do you want or need a sports car, an SUV or maybe a sedan. Once you ponder that, it then comes down to your budget...do you want a Hyundai, a Rolls Royce...or maybe something in between.

Variance in website development depends on several of the following...

- If you have the budget, it's worthwhile to conduct a focus group before building your website, so as not to build it in a vacuum. This way you find out what your customers truly want/need from you.
- Next is the strategy - from the research you will know what information and functionality to include in your site plans.
- The creative component—higher-end sites will require the creative talent to match. In addition, you may need to incur the expense of a photo shoot, or perhaps you'll need to purchase stock photos.
- Then you have the technical component, which could include specialized people from basic coding to more complex talent to incorporate items such as databases, shopping carts, e-commerce, content forms to technically creative elements, site optimization and even marketing. Yes, marketing, meta tag creation and implementation for the best SEO results is essential to any company's bottom line.

- Finally you have post development maintenance...this can easily be done by an internal employee with a simple software program called "Contribute." Or, if you prefer you can retain someone to make periodic changes for an hourly rate. In addition to site changes, it's important to do random analysis of the site to know how much traffic you are receiving, where they are going, how long they are staying, etc. This will give you valuable data which you can use to make modifications to your site content based on traffic patterns.

Please visit Your Marketing Coach at www.ShubicMarketing.com for any questions about website development. Mike Shubic is a 16-year marketing veteran and Gold Canyon resident.