



The M/WBE Strategic Supplier



E-MBE.net Newsletter

August 2006

5 WAYS TO TUNE-UP YOUR WEB SITE

By Richard J. Hernández, CPCM

E-MBE.net

Introduction The purpose of this article is to provide small, minority- and women-owned businesses with information on how tune-up your company's Web site to enhance your marketing success. Having an effective Web site is one of the first steps toward becoming a strategic supplier.

Background Your Web site is one of your most important and effective marketing tools. A good Web site can impress potential customers with your capabilities and encourage them to contact you. However, the opposite can occur if your Web site is outdated – or if you don't have one.

One of the most common – and serious - problems is having outdated information. This occurs in several ways to include outdated product lists, outdated contact person(s), old (non-working) web links, outdated price lists, and information about projects your company did 2 or more years ago. Outdated content is one of the fastest ways to lose a potential customer who visits your Web site.

Update Checklist Below is a checklist of recommended ways to update your Web site:

1. **Content.** You need to regularly update your Web site content in the following areas:

- Price Lists
- Contact List
- Web Links
- Client Testimonials
- Success Stories / Case Studies
- Frequently Asked Questions

You should review your Web site content at least quarterly. This will help avoid outdated information.

2. **Branding.** You need to establish your expertise in a particular niche area. This will help you differentiate yourself from the competition. It will also help establish you as an expert in your field, and avoid appearing as another “me too” company. Be sure to list the ways your company is different from your competitors. Below is list of effective and proven differentiators.

- International Experience
- Ability to Handle Difficult Cases / Projects
- Bi-Lingual Staff
- Special Licenses / Permits
- Unique Product
- Unique Technology
- Knowledge and Experience
- Ease to Use (Simplicity)

Part of your tune-up should be to remove clichés such as “providing quality and service to customers”. These phrases, while nice-sounding, don't add any value. Buyers take quality and service for granted and want potential suppliers to give them something else (like the above items) that will add value.

3. **Call to Action.** You need a “call to action” for your Web site. This can occur in several ways:

- Call for a free 15-minute consultation
- Download a free assessment checklist
- E-mail link for visitors to send you questions

4. **Supplier Diversity Certifications.** You need to make sure all your M/WBE certifications are up-to-date. This is something corporate and government buyers look for. A recommended format is:

Type Certification	Start / End	Certificate
NMSDC Certificate No. CHI1001	Start: 7 July 2006 Expires: 7 July 2007	<Click to Access MBE Certificate>
SBA 8(a) Case No. 1208848	Start: 3 March 2002 Expires: 3 March 2009	< Click to Access 8(a) Welcome Letter>

5. **Meta-Tags.** Electronic key words, or meta-tags, are used by search engines to find your Web site. Based on the author’s experience, over half of the M/WBE Web sites surveyed don’t have meta-tags. Since 90 percent of all Web sites are found by search engines this is a serious concern. In addition to meta-tags that describe your company’s core capabilities, diversity suppliers should also add the following ones:

- MBE
- WBE
- SDB
- 8(a)
- SDV
- HUB Zone
- NMSDC
- WBENC
- USPAACC
- Veteran-Owned

Success Tips Some additional Web site success tips for small businesses are:

- HTML Code. Make sure your Web site’s HTML code works with the latest Web browsers.
- E-mail. You need to respond to e-mails. Many go unanswered.
- External Review. It’s a good idea to have an independent review of your Web site. This can alert you to any problems (which require a tune-up) or help you make it more effective.
- Spelling and Grammar. Poor English and misspellings are common problems. Get a proofreader.

Summary Having an effective Web site is no accident. The above tips can help you succeed.

For Assistance E-MBE.net (www.e-mbe.net) offers services to small, minority- and women-owned businesses who need hands-on help on becoming strategic suppliers to major corporations and/or government agencies.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION. Please visit us at: www.E-MBE.net (60 Free Tutorials)

Free **NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTION.** Sign up below to get on our mailing list:

- 1) Type: Subscribe MWBE List
- 2) Send an email to the address: info@e-mbe.net

Sponsors



E-MBE.net Strategic Services for Small, Minority- and Women-Owned Businesses	P.O. Box 617995 Chicago, IL 60661 312-404-2224 (Phone)
--	--

Please Feel Free to Send Us Your Article Ideas / Comments

Copyright 2006 Richard J. Hernández, CPCM