



Notes:

"Web" also acquired a secondary meaning. Anyone who had the tools to create hypermedia documents (meaning documents containing references to nontextual information such as sound and graphics) stored in a network connected to the Internet that were linked to other such hypermedia basically created their own "web" that was accessible through the Web. Creating all these links to other areas of the Web was akin to a spider spinning its own web.

Why should a business spin its own web? Consider, for example, searching for information about Myrtle Beach on the Internet. The author obtained close to 580,000 hits with the excite search engine and more than 200,000 hits using the Alta Vista search engine. This gives us an idea as to how much information (primarily tourist attractions, hotels and restaurants, and real estate) about Myrtle Beach is available on the Web. Of course the usefulness of this information is another question. The Grand Strand is undoubtedly one of the most popular tourist areas in the U.S. As familiarity with the Internet increasingly becomes common for everyone it comes to no surprise that practically every city is becoming even more visible through the Web. Nowadays, tourists access the Web to shop around for information regarding a particular area of interest prior to visiting that area. They get up to date information about the weather, the latest and best attractions, and most importantly for ideas on what they can spend their money on.

Most businesses that have gone on-line by spinning their own web have realized the potential of the Internet for online commerce. Its support for multimedia facilitates delivering customer-based, interactive information through sounds, full color graphic images, video clips, online order forms, or even surveys on the Web. Most have also discovered the Web as a cost-effective advertising media, in contrast to more traditional media such as the newspaper, television, and the radio. Advertising on the Web allows you to broadcast your information to a world wide audience of more than 46 million people, 24 hours a day.

There are, of course, other reasons why businesses should seriously consider spinning their own web. It is not just considered the "in" thing to have a WWW address on television commercials and on most new products. Having a WWW address indicates that your business is serious about your customers' needs. Some companies are already replacing standard brochures, flyers, and business cards with WWW addresses that display dynamic pages that can be accessed from all over the world via the Internet in just a matter of



ics to put on a page based on your target audience remains a major decision in Web page design.

### Notes:

Using the Web to supplement traditional business methods also implies adopting a change in how one does business. Adopting Internet technologies within a firm can dramatically lower information publishing and dissemination costs by eliminating the need for paper broadcasting processes (Kambil, 1997). Through the Web, companies have to redefine how they communicate with their customers. These customers can place orders, seek out detailed product and technical information, check out prices and order status, and even configure products on a corporate Web site. Some sites even allow users to program automatic software agents to alert them of special offers and new product arrivals - a service tailored to the specific customer. Internet access also allows small and large firms alike to access expertise, information, and resources worldwide at low costs. This lowers information and entry barriers across various industries, allowing smaller firms to better leverage resources and compete on a global scale (Kambil, 1997).

#### How does one spin their own Web?

What exactly does one need to start spinning their own Web? You really do not need to have a computer to set up your Web documents. If you do not currently have a computer, you can get in touch with an Internet Service Provider (or ISP) to furnish you with the necessary tools to publish on the Web. Various ISPs provide a choice of packages depending on the types of services that you need. These services may include housing and maintaining your Web pages, providing you with an Internet address so people around the world can access your Web pages, as well as other Web-based programming jobs. Various services may also provide choices for network technology, depending on the speed of access you want to your audience to have. The rule of thumb here is that the more graphics your Web pages have, the higher bandwidth required to transmit them at an acceptable rate.

Businesses should remember not to limit themselves to local ISPs. In general, if your business is in a small- to average-sized city, you may be better off doing business with a provider in a larger city, perhaps even in another state. It seems that ISPs in small cities charge slightly higher than those in larger cities because they do not attract as many customers. Further, ISPs in larger cities tend to have Internet connections with higher bandwidths at competitive rates.



