

Your Super-fast, Super-easy, No-cost Web Site

By Angela Booth

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<http://>

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Summary: Want a really fast Web site --- one that you can put up in a few minutes, as fast as you can type? Here's how.

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Got a Web site? Come on, 'fess up. No?

OK, assuming you've got a spare five minutes, we're going to build your first super-easy, super-fast Web page.

Look on this page as a combination calling card and portfolio. It's not going to make you rich. However, it will make communication with prospective clients and current clients super-quick, and get you listed on Google.com so that you gain credibility.

For this exercise, we're going to use a site called Online HomeBase.com:

<http://www.onlinehomebase.com/>

I love this site because it's so useful. It's also free. Don't be put off by that. In the case of Online Homebase.com free doesn't mean that it's more overgrown with ads than a vacant lot is with weeds. No ads. As the site develops more features, they may start charging a small amount, but as of March 2003, it's free.

Here's some more info on Online HomeBase.com:

OnlineHomeBase is an online organizer and notepad. The wonderful thing about this service is that you don't have to click your way through dozens of mysterious menus and fill out endless fields.

Its pages are called sheets, and that's just what they are --- blank Web pages with a few buttons along the top.

When you create a new sheet, you decide the format: blank page, calendar, columns or column and calendar. Then you just start typing, or paste in information you've found on the Web, or that's stored on your computer.

Once you've got the info in your password-protected OnlineHomeBase account, you can access it from any computer anywhere and anytime.

You can also share a sheet with other people, by selecting the "Share" option, so that the page gets a unique address outside your protected account. This share option means that you can use a page as a separate, public site, to post anything you like about you and your business.

Since a sheet on OnlineHomeBase can have 100,000 characters of text, or roughly 20,000 words, you've got sufficient space to use it as an online portfolio or resume, or as a mini-site.

(And before you ask, in the interests of disclosure, NO I don't have an interest in, or connection with, this company. They've just got a great useful product, and I like it a lot.)

Before you rush over to Online HomeBase.com and sign up, we've got some thinking to do. What will you put on your mini-site/ Web page?

Of course, you can simply type in the material on your business card, but since you've got enough space for 20,000 words you may as well use it.

Here are some ideas of what you may want to include:

= Your Unique Selling Point

This is a business page, so we'll start with your Unique Selling Point (USP). You've already got a business name, or maybe you're using your own name, that's fine. So what's unique about your business?

Think about your business. Who are your clients? Why do they come to you, rather than to a competitor?

If you're starting out, and you don't have any clients, what will be unique about you?

If you're a photographer, do you shoot wedding videos? Portraits?

If you're an artist, do you do graphic design? What sets you apart from other designers?

If you're a writer, what do you write? For whom?

Think about your target audience, and their needs, and slant your USP to those needs.

= Testimonials

Browse through your files, and look for testimonials. You may be like me. When someone compliments me on work I've done for them I smile, say "thank you", get a nice warm glow, and then forget about it. This is not the attitude of a born sales person.

Testimonials can work for you. Someone took the time to compliment you, so take a moment yourself to not just thank them for the kind words, but also to ask them if they mind if you share those words with others.

They always say yes --- it's a compliment to them, that you think their words are important enough to share.

= Your bio

In last week's Creative Small Biz, we discussed bios and why they're important to freelancers. We said:

Your freelancer's bio is a vital job-hunting tool.

While traditional job hunters have CVs and resumes, independent writers and other independent professionals have biographies, because as an independent, you're working **with** your clients as a consultant, rather than working **for** them as an employee.

Yes, bios, plural. You need at least four bios of various lengths: 200 words, 100, 50 and 25. Over time, you'll create dozens of bios, as you emphasize your various strengths to suit a situation.

If you missed this article, you'll find it online in the CSB archives. Go to:

<http://www.digital-e.biz/newsletter.html>

Click on the Archives button, and find Issue 24, or use the Search feature. The article's called " Maximizing The Effect Of Your Freelancer's Bio".

= Be creative: what else could you put on your page?

You can put anything you like on this page.

Think about the material you usually send to prospects. Anything you send out --- especially if it makes a thick, heavy bundle that costs a mint in postage or courier fees is a candidate.

How about:

- * Your media kit;
- * Work samples;
- * A list of credits;
- * Your client list; or
- * Articles you've written.

OK, enough reading. Start thinking. Hurry up and create your page --- and then you'll be able to smile, and say: "Yes of course I have a Web site. Here's the URL. Drop by anytime."

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