

## Websites for Personal Training

Since 80% of searches for ANY product or service is done via the Internet, a website is a critical marketing tool for any personal training business. Prospective clients used to ask: "Do you have a web site?" This is no longer the case. The question that is more commonly posed is "What is your website address?" There is currently an assumption amongst PT clients that a professional fitness business will have a website.

Some of the major benefits of a website are:

- In many cases, a website can replace the need for printed brochures and it is a marketing tool that is working for you 24/7.
- If you have a content management system (CMS) built into your website, as most fitness websites should, you can update your information, pictures, etc... in "real time," without having to reprint and mail informational pieces.
- Once you are live you can add an e-commerce section to sell and charge your clients for products, services, workshops and e-books. Some services allow your clients to pay and sign up for sessions on-line.
- A website with an effective email opt-in will allow you to build your email marketing list effortlessly. The larger your email marketing list, the greater your chance of converting prospective clients into paying clients.
- Once you have a website you can tap into a wide range of very effective web marketing strategies such as Pay-Per-Click advertising, Article Marketing/Submission, Video Marketing, etc...
- If you are interested in creating a virtual community amongst complimentary service providers in your area, you can add a links/resources page to your website.
- In order to have success with the PT directories it is very important to have a website address in your listing. Getting listed on directories is another great way to drive traffic to your site without having to spend a lot of money in advertising.
- You can make your website an educational resource for your clients by adding educational sections such as FAQ's, article and newsletter archive pages and pages with video.
- Consider adding a membership section to your website and granted access to your existing clients. This is a great way to add value to the services that you already offer and specifically for those clients that purchase a series of sessions. You could set it up with a username and password that changes each month and is sent to existing clients in an email newsletter. In this section you could add features such as special educational articles, videos or e-books.

There are several options in terms of getting your website designed or re-designed. Here are a few:

1. You can hire a web designer to build a custom website. This may be the best option for those of you who have many different components that you want included in your site. Make sure that they are easy to track down when you want to make changes to your site on a monthly basis. A custom-made website will typically start at \$1500-\$2000 and can get much more expensive depending on features and design.



2. Web design software programs such as Microsoft FrontPage (which is now no longer available) or Dreamweaver can be acquired which will allow you to build and publish your website on your own. Home-based programs such as FrontPage is moderately technical but can be self-taught and will give you the ability manage and build your website for just the investment in the software. The main disadvantage is that it does take time to learn and typically the results are low quality designs. Dreamweaver is used primarily for web designers and is fairly technical but can produce high quality designs. In many cases the learning curve for this program would be too large for the average user that is designing one website.
3. Build-your-own website programs are web-based programs that are tied into hosting plans and are offered by Yahoo and Go Daddy as well as other hosting companies. These may cost a bit more but are probably a better option than FrontPage. The user-friendliness in these programs can range significantly and the design quality is still limited since a professional designer is not involved in the design process.
4. There are a few companies that offer a mix of having a design team who develops your site so you have a very professional look, feel, and functionality, but with the added benefit of being able to update the site on your own through a Content Management System (CMS). The costs are higher than the build-your-own website programs but are typically lower than straight custom websites. WebFlexor PT Websites ([www.webstesforpt.com](http://www.webstesforpt.com)) offers such a service with designer-built websites starting as low as \$199.00.

Do your research and decide on the option that best suites your budget and needs and the bottom line is that not having a website could be costing you business.

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