

OurShop.com™ Website Implementation Strategy Checklist

Date Completed	Action
_____	Define the purpose of your web site. It could be something as simple as "I want to sell my 5 products through my web site" or "I want to create a site where my organization members can get a schedule of events and view our employee handbook through a password protected area." You can and will most likely refine your definition as you go but make sure you have some clear direction.
_____	Decide whether or not you are going to hire a web site designer. There are many programs available that make it easier for the general public to create their own websites. If your site will mostly involve using a shopping cart provided by your web hosting company you may only need to design one welcome page. If you are uncomfortable or unfamiliar with designing a web page yourself you should be able to find good web designers that will put together a simple site and link it to your store for under \$100. Web site designers should also be familiar with most of the following steps, making this process much easier for you. If you are going to hire a web designer this would be the time.
_____	If you have not done so yet, order your domain name. If you are planning to order a web hosting plan right away, you should be able to wait on this however you may risk someone else registering the domain name you want. The hosting company will give you some information about their name servers that you will eventually need to update at the domain name registrar. Later modifications are usually a fairly simple process. Tips: http://www.ourshop.com/resources/domain_names.html
_____	Order your web hosting account (and shopping cart if an e-commerce site). If the web hosting company has a shopping cart program that you are planning to use, you need to find out what payment processing companies (or payment gateways) will work with the shopping cart. If you currently accept credit cards and you plan to process payments manually through your existing system you will not be concerned with payment gateways. Consider using our recommended cart (osCommerce) which is a very full featured free shopping cart that has installation included with all of our recommended web hosts. Tips: http://www.ourshop.com/resources/web_hosts.html Tips: http://www.ourshop.com/resources/shopping_carts.html
_____	Update your domain record at the domain registration company or order your domain name if you haven't done so yet. After you have signed up for your web hosting account you should receive an email with information regarding the name servers that the company uses. The domain name registrar needs this information. Most registrars have web based management where you can go to enter this information. After updating the information at the registrar it can take up to 3 days before the domain points to your new hosting account allowing you to see your new site via your web browser (using the domain name).
_____	If you do not plan to process payments manually using an existing merchant

account you need to order a merchant account. This can be one of the most confusing steps in the process of getting your online store to process payments automatically. Various merchant account providers have specific requirements and it can take anywhere from a few days to a couple of weeks depending on what company you use. Be sure to ask them what payment gateway will work with their services (next step). Some merchant account providers have agreements with gateway companies and can also set up your gateway account. Be sure that your shopping cart will interface with the gateways that are available. (read the next step before taking action on this step)

Tip: http://www.ourshop.com/resources/merchant_processing.html

If you do not plan to process payments manually using an existing merchant account you need to order a payment gateway account. Payment gateways are usually ordered along with the merchant account as a complete package. Be sure you have a gateway that will interface with your shopping cart.

Tips: http://www.ourshop.com/resources/merchant_processing.html

Set up your products and configure your online store. If you are going to use a shopping cart provider by your hosting company, you should receive instructions on how to access it and set it up. You will need to enter information regarding your payment gateway account if you are processing payments automatically.

Upload your web site and set up email accounts. If you have hired a web site designer, they will do this for you. Be sure to review any other applications that your web hosting company may provide. You may want to integrate them into your site as well (such as a web based calendar). Most web hosting companies also allow you to set up your own email accounts using your browser.

Tips: http://www.ourshop.com/resources/web_host_switch_3.html

You should now be finished and can now market your new site. If you haven't done so yet, please visit our resource page on "traffic" (getting visitors to your site).

Tips: <http://www.ourshop.com/resources/traffic.html>

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