Writing Storyboard Scripts for Multimedia Demos

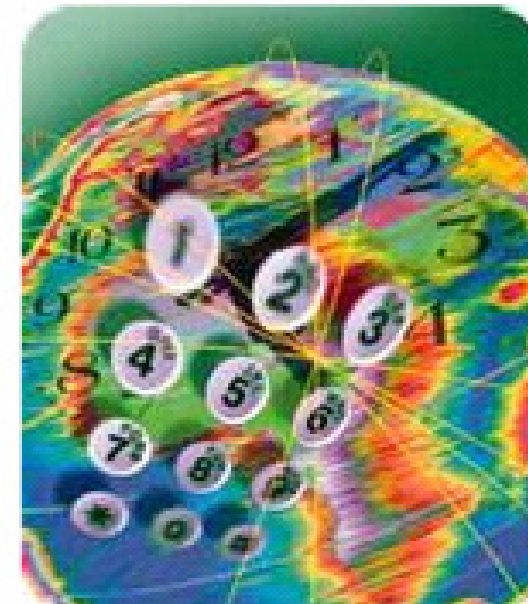## 'Building a website
for a national audience'

Building a website for a national audience

Whether you are already a national company, or you want to become one, a website can provide you with the ideal platform from which to expand your business.

The following 5-step guide covers the key things to consider when designing a website for a national customer base. Your business could be up and running with a successful website within a matter of hours.
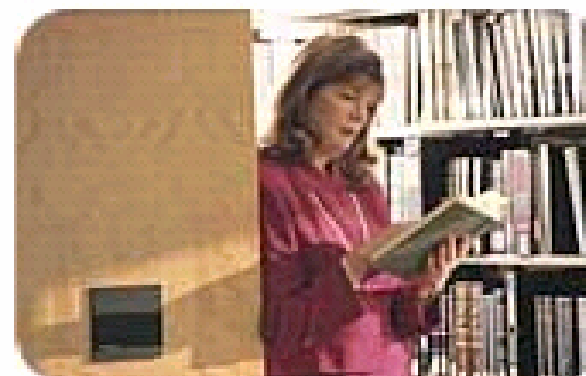
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What are the objectives for my website?

If your company operates on a national scale, it is likely you will have an established customer base, many of whom may well expect your business to have a website.

For example, a haulage company based in Leeds might have clients all over the country, so would benefit from a website that keeps customers fully up-to-date with its range of vehicles and company news.
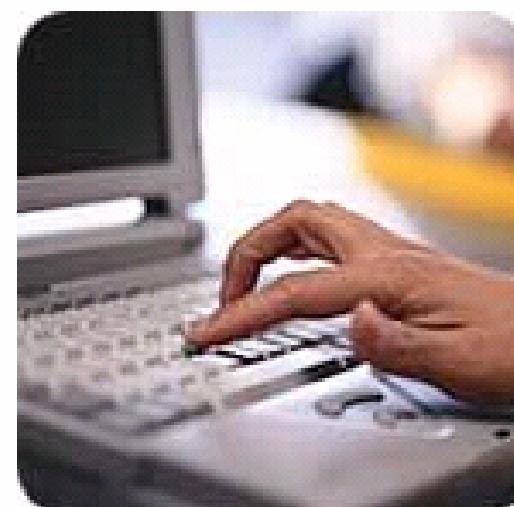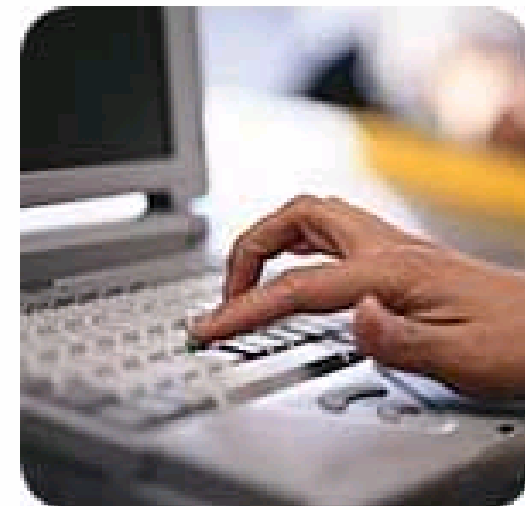
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What are the objectives for my website?

Strengthening and developing customer relationships online would be the first objective of your new website, leading to:

- Increased service levels, such as quicker and more efficient responses to customer orders and enquiries;
- Value being added to business activity through providing customers with extra information on products or services.

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What are the objectives for my website?

- Ensured long-term customer loyalty due to improved customer service;
- The exploration of new markets through the worldwide reach of the Internet;
- Successful growth through the generation of new customer enquiries.

In short, a website is the most cost-effective and powerful means of advertising your business nationwide.
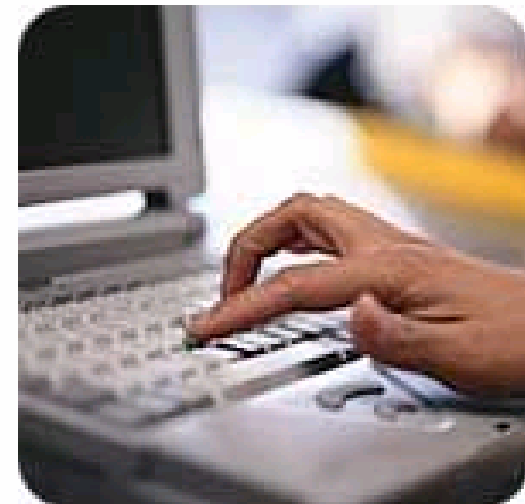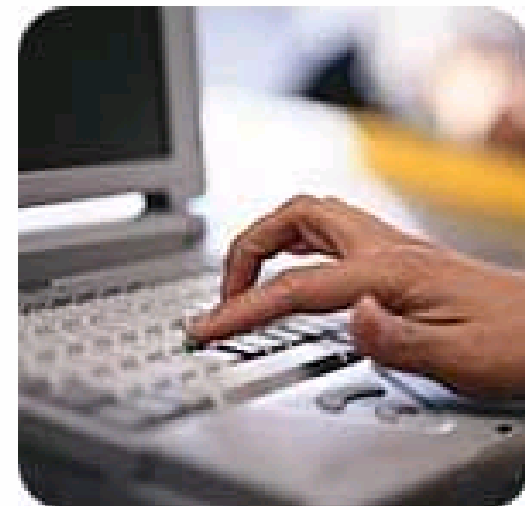
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What are the objectives for my website?

You could be a knitwear specialist in Bolton and, providing you can do mail order via your website, there is no reason why you shouldn't be selling your creations throughout the UK.

Simply assess what you hope to get from your website, and then visit the e-business solutions area of our website to learn how Sage can help you make the most of the Internet.

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How should I structure my website?

While a basic starter website, ranging from 5 to 10 pages, may be sufficient for your present needs, a larger website clearly requires a more complex structure. The following 6-point list contains the most important issues to consider when structuring a website for a national audience.

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How should I structure my website?

- Make it as easy as possible for visitors to navigate their way around, so they can quickly find what they are looking for - that is, make your website direction signs clear;

- Always include links that make it easy to backtrack from dedicated areas that are used for certain products and services;

- Have a 'home' link on every page to take the visitor straight back to the home page menu.
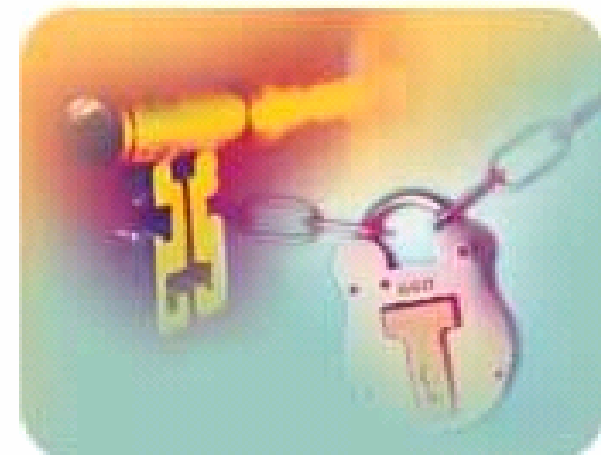
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How should I structure my website?

- Think about including password-protected areas on your website, which are dedicated to individual customers, suppliers and sectors;

- Allow for flexibility and expect changes as an inevitable part of your website's ongoing development;

- Your website will need to respond accordingly and quickly to changes in your business and your target audience.

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What content should my website contain?

It is said that on the Internet, 'Content is King', meaning that the level and value of information provided can determine the success of a website. Think about what your customers might want to know and not just what you want to tell them.
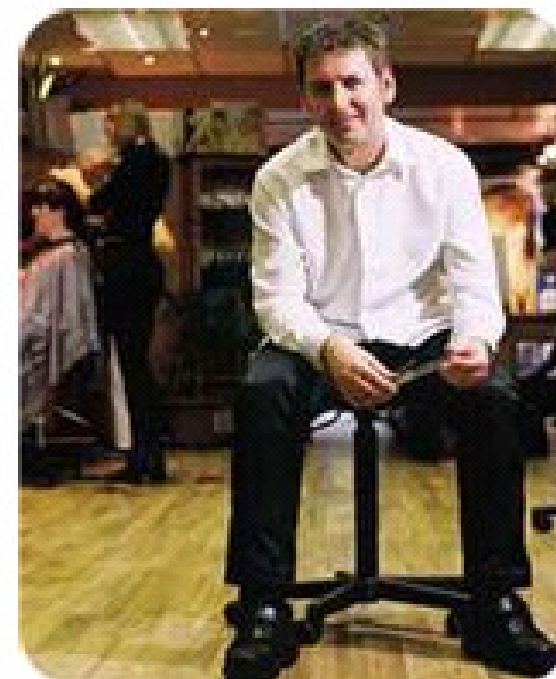

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What content should my website contain?

Say, for example, you ran a national chain of hairdressers, don't just include a list of salon addresses and prices. Why not feature certain styles of the month, seasonal haircare tips, competitions to win products, and so on?

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What content should my website contain?

Emphasise the online ease of obtaining your product, which is potentially a specialist item or service produced miles away from the customer, but is now only a few mouse clicks away.

Also highlight the fact that you can offer lower prices because of the reduced overheads which have resulted since going online.
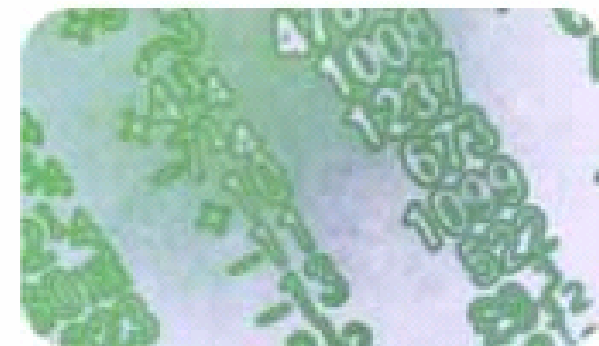
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What content should my website contain?

To ensure people return time and again to your website, keep the core content (information about your business) relevant and fully up-to-date. Dedicate other areas of your site to regularly changing and updated content, as this will encourage people to 'drop by' your site to see what's new.


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How do I market my website?

Offline promotion of your website is crucial, so make sure your website domain name is included in all business correspondence, advertising and marketing material.

Competitions, surveys and other information provided on your website can make good news stories, especially if technology is used in a new and interesting way.
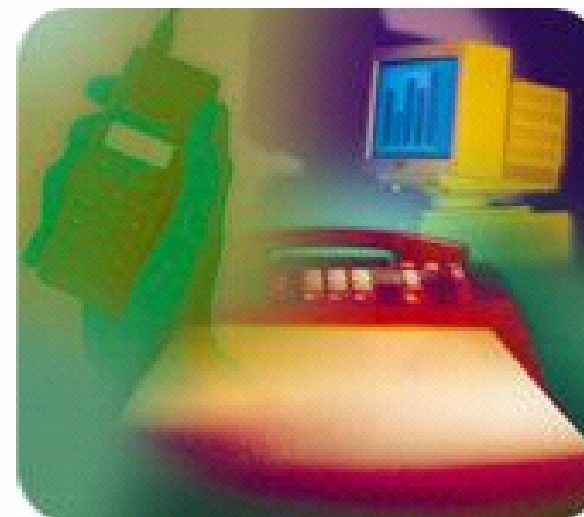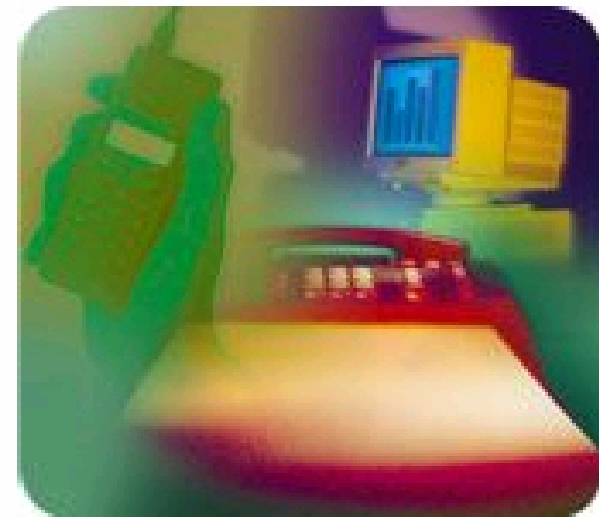
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How do I market my website?

Another example could be that of a vet, who decided to set up an e-mail facility for farmers in remote areas to send in non-urgent queries. This is exactly the sort of story that local and trade press thrive on, and the media coverage gained will raise the profile of the website further.

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How do I market my website?

Registering your site with search engines and national online business directories, such as www.yellowpages.co.uk or www.ukbusinesspark.co.uk, will play a major role in guiding people to your website.

Make the most of other website links by contacting sites that may be complementary to yours and suggesting a mutual link-up.
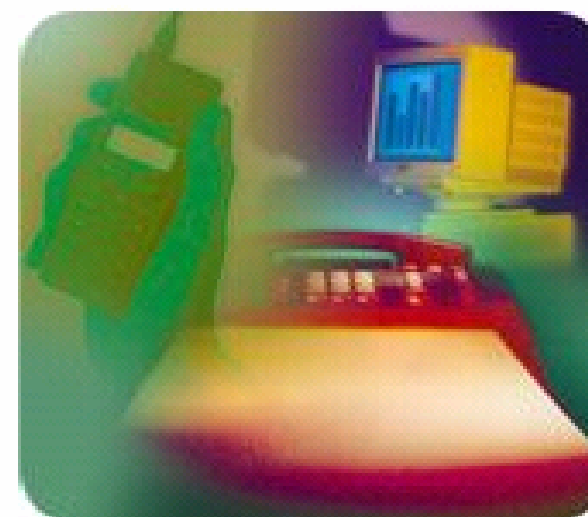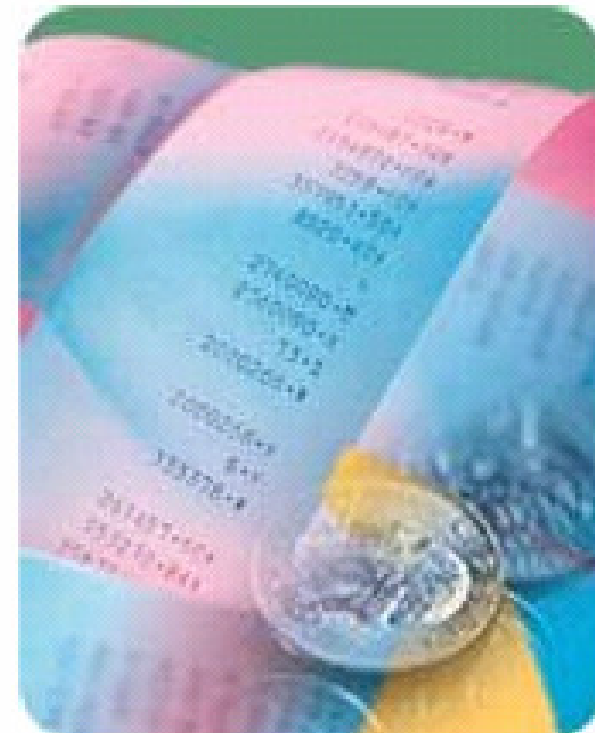
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What about my website's capability?

The possibilities for adding interaction to your website are growing at a rapid rate. Interaction consists of features such as:

- Chatrooms
- Secure online sales
- Games

- Chatrooms
- Secure online sales
- Games

When deciding which features to include, focus once more on what you think will most benefit visitors. As with your core content, give users what they want and they will keep coming back.

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What about my website's capability?

Once your site has been active for a while, introduce a quick survey from time to time (normally with a prize), to find out what visitors think of your website and what they would like changed. This is very easy to do and provides invaluable information "straight from the horse's mouth".

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Conclusion

Remember that levels of competition are growing all the time, as more and more businesses set up on the Internet. How will you add value to the service you provide through your website and keep your organisation one step ahead?

For more information on how Sage can help you get the most out of the Internet, call the Sage e-commerce team on 0800 585 609, visit our e-business solutions area at www.sage.com or e-mail e-businessales@sage.com.

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active support for business

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