

## A Company Website is No Longer Optional

By *Mel Luigs*

It was just 10 years ago that the local Telephone Yellow Pages in every town was the first place every business put their advertising dollars.

For as little as \$25 a year, a small business could be listed in this amazing reference book, which every consumer reached for first in locating the business services and products they needed. A consumer even had to call their local Better Business Bureau to get information, which took time and was very inconvenient for most individuals.

Many local businesses paid individuals to put circulars on windshields and door knobs in their targeted marketing area. This was the best and most effective method of mass merchandising. Many of you reading this, including myself, earned some great spending money in our teens this way.

Small businesses never thought about doing business outside a 10 mile radius from their shop or their small town. The "Mom and Pop" business was content to service the customers in their geographic area and did not conceive they could compete outside their market area for any number of reasons. Many small retail establishments were more interested in doing everything they could to use their City Council to keep Wal-Mart from entering their market. Small manufacturing companies were watching their product being produced in China and Mexico and not being able to compete with these new manufacturers.

### The "Internet" Cycle of Business

Every business cycle has its winners and losers, and the cycle of the "Internet" has caused many small and medium businesses to fail while it has allowed many businesses to make dramatic changes, keep up with the new marketplace and increase their profitability.

I continue to be amazed at the small and medium businesses that do not feel the need to have a presence on the Web and continue to believe they are secure and happy with their local geographic marketplace. These, unfortunately, are businesses waiting to fail and close. This statement sounds harsh but is as factual as "death and taxes."

My 20-year-old son has never used a YellowPage book and only knows to use [www.yellowpages.com](http://www.yellowpages.com) or [www.superpages.com](http://www.superpages.com) to find a business service or product locally. He believes my stories about the annual YellowPages are as useful as my father's discussion with me about his walking to school in the snow. My son automatically uses Google to find whatever he needs and purchases products from all over the world with ease.

My point is very simple here for every businessman who either doesn't see the need or is afraid of taking the next step – DO IT and DO IT NOW!

Article from [www.manta.com](http://www.manta.com), January 29, 2009