

The Insurance Marketing Department Ltd

Sales and Marketing guides

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Topic: Making your Website Work for you.

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Many insurance intermediaries, both independent financial advisers and insurance brokers, either already have a Website, or are currently planning one. It is worthwhile asking oneself at an early stage, precisely why you want a Website. If it is simply that everyone else has one and you don't want to be left out, even this can be valid. After all, many of your customers will now expect you to have some form of Website if only as a shop window and a way in which they can easily contact you.

However if you are going to spend a significant amount of money on developing an Internet presence, or have already done so, you must have a strategy that allows you to generate a financial return on your investment. At the most superficial level, this can often be seen as acquiring new customers and there are a number of Websites which have tried to cash in on execution-only trading in order to acquire large volumes of business at minimal expense. This can, of course, be a rational business objective, both because current technology allows the use of

decision trees in order to simulate the most simple forms of financial advice and also because clients, once acquired in this way, can be "mined" in order to secure additional business in other classes.

For many intermediaries, however, the creation of a Website is seen as being far more of a service to existing customers and a way of reinforcing other marketing activities, rather than being expected to generate business directly. This is probably a good thing, because the market is very crowded. A recent search on the Internet for independent financial advisers generated more than 46,000 entries whilst the search for insurance brokers generated 55,700 entries, both in the UK alone. Some search engines appear to be rather more accurate and the Freeserve version produced fewer than 7,000 entries, in each case. The point remains that relying on search engines to bring visitors to your Website is unlikely to be highly effective.

What your Website can do for you.

Your Website can make you available to both existing and prospective clients 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It is a shop window on your business that can be permanently up-to-date and always fresh – unlike corporate brochures, which can become dog-eared.

Your Website can be used to enhance relationships with different types of clients, including individuals, businesses and

professional introducers. It can deliver information of a general nature or, provided you have the appropriate back office system, of a client-specific nature. Any Website can be used to receive information direct from your customers including requests for meetings and other service contacts. This is usually achieved by the use of automatically generated e-mail.

Many Websites today also include a facility for delivering quotations, particularly for simple classes such as life assurance and critical illness.

Many IFA and insurance broker



Your Website makes you accessible all the time