



Web Sites that Work! Marketing Machines...



Web sites are a marketing tool and a ***timesaver*** for concrete contractors that ***never sleep***, they operate 24 hours a day 7 days a week. A Web site is a ***powerful*** tool these days. No matter where you look, it seems like ***everyone*** is ***surfing*** the ***Internet***- which makes it one of the best marketing tools around. ***Continue >***



A Web site offers concrete contractors the gift of time. With a Web site, you can send your customers to your site before you meet with them. They can learn about your firm's capabilities before they ever see you in person. Your site can inspire and motivate the customer.

It is ***important*** to talk about ***yourself***, or ***others*** in your company, and get across the ***personality*** of the ***company***.

If your site is set up properly, customers will be able to peruse color samples, pictures and anything else that usually makes up your sales portfolio. By creating a gallery on your site, your sales time will be reduced and your meetings with customers will be more productive — often they will know what they want and be ready to make a purchase by the time you actually meet. A great way to organize a gallery is by type of product — for example, commercial jobs, residential projects, and industrial projects. You can drill down even further by also organizing by application, such as by price level or area of town.





Visit:



on the web at:

<http://www.tomralstonconcrete.com>.

Tom Ralston's Web site is a winner. Tom Ralston Concrete offers a variety of concrete and masonry services and is located in Santa Cruz, California. Immediately upon entering www.tomralstonconcrete.com, the visitor sees Ralston's decorative concrete showroom, and the concrete paving surrounding the showroom. The result is immediate credibility..... most decorative concrete contractors don't have showrooms.

Next the site visitor sees a comprehensive navigation bar that outlines many of the services offered by Tom Ralston Concrete. The navigation bar breaks down his services into categories such as concrete countertops, pool decks, and interior concrete. This is critical, a site visitor may not know they want or need staining or stamped concrete, what they do know is they want a pool deck, or an interior floor. It is important to communicate in the language of the customer, not just in our own industry-centered language. This applies if you are appealing to consumers who are seeking out residential services or general contractors looking for commercial concrete work.

Another category on Ralston's site navigation bar tells about Tom Ralston himself and the history of his company. It is important to talk about yourself, or others in your company, and get across the personality of the company. Potential customers are looking for the personal touch, a connection. If they want anonymity, all they have to do is deal with their bank, phone company, department store, or any of the other faceless mega corporation they are forced to deal with each day.



Visit:



on the web at:

<http://www.coloradohardscapes.com>

Presenting your personality is particularly important when marketing decorative concrete. A large part of the appeal of concrete countertops, interior concrete floors, and stamped concrete pool decks, patios, and driveways, is that these are craft products. Buyers enjoy the interaction with the craftsman. So show your personality! If you don't give any details about yourself it begets the question – don't you have anything to say about yourself?

Still another important category on the Tom Ralston Concrete Web site is his press room. A site visitor clicking here will immediately see that Tom Ralston is an industry leader. Articles in various magazines such as Concrete Construction and Sunset Magazine show he is experienced and has been deemed worthy of being written about by major media.

Another company with an effective Web site is Colorado Hardscapes. A visitor to www.coloradohardscapes.com immediately knows they have discovered a professional company. The recent projects section of their Web site includes spectacular concrete projects from around the Colorado area.

The Colorado Hardscapes Web site also shows off their decorative concrete showroom and has the concrete applications they offer broken down into easy to navigate commercial, municipal, residential, and theming (check out the 350' long sea creature they built at the Arvada Center for the Art and Humanities) sections.





Listen to the Audio Version of this Guide [here](#) on the Concrete Network.

Action Steps to a Web Site That Works

1. Give your Web site visitors information. Explain a process. Show a special job. Provide available colors, patterns, styles, or finishes. Web surfers are information gatherers—give the information to them.
2. Invest in a design. A Web site that looks like it was put together quickly and is void of design is going to present a poor image of your company.
3. Organize site navigation using language your potential customer understands. Don't get caught up in concrete industry speak.
4. Talk about yourself. Give the potential customer a flavor of what it is like to work with you. Tell them about your background.
5. Update your site regularly. Have a current projects page. Keep adding to your galleries of work.
6. Organize galleries by the type of work. Interior floors should all be shown together, for example. This will help when you call a potential customer to ask about bidding a project – you can email your Web page showing your gallery of interior floors, for instance.
7. Have a press room on your site. Media stories about your company establish to site visitors your role in the industry and in your geographic location.
8. Show your address and phone number prominently on your Web site. Not all clients want to email your company or fill out a form. Make it easy for a potential customer to reach you in the manner that is most comfortable to them. Many folks still want to pick up the phone and call you instead of interacting by email.





Decorative Concrete Contractors

Join the



*and get your own
free website
here!.*

Going forward, it will be even more vital to have a Web site that works. Each month over a million more people sign up for high-speed Internet connections provided by DSL, wireless services, or cable modems. In mid 2004 the ‘tipping point’ was reached where over 50% of online connections were high speed. Your potential customers, those ‘information foragers’ with always-on connections can maneuver around the Internet easier and faster than ever before. They can be gone from your Web site in seconds if they don’t immediately see how your site will help them.

On the other hand, a Web site that works can engage and communicate with potential customers so as to make a major contribution to your company’s success in attracting new customers and growing your business.

Increase Your Web Traffic

Having a site that is well designed and gets your message across is one thing, but how do you increase your traffic.

At no cost to you:

- Record your Web addresses on your voice-mail message, and spell it out, so there is no mistaking what it is.
- Add your Web address to the signature line of all outbound e-mails.
- Ask your suppliers to give out your Web address along with any other company information they release about you.
- Ask satisfied customers and Web visitors to refer your site to a friend. Nothing drives traffic as well as satisfied users.





Increase Your Web Traffic (continued)

At minimal cost to you:

Include your Web address in all corporate materials, product literature, advertising and business stationary.

Put the Web address on company vehicles, all shipping labels, packing materials, and all corrugated boxes.

If you do decorative concrete work- advertise on The Concrete Network (<http://www.concretenetwork.com>). The site logs 350,000 to 500,000 visitors per month- mainly from people looking for decorative concrete work.

*They can be **gone** from your Web **site** in **seconds** if they **don't** immediately **see** how your site will **help** them.*

An effective Web site should be helping you find more customers, presenting your company in a positive light, and reducing your selling time with the prospect. How is your site doing?





Sherpa info

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Sherpa info

SUMMIT DATE

This document reached the summit (was created) on January 6, 2005 and is based on the best information available to the Sherpa at that time. To check for updates please click here <http://www.ConcreteSherpa.com/websites>.

NAVIGATION & USER TIPS

You can move around this guide by using your mouse or keyboard arrows. Left mouse button goes to the next page, right mouse button goes to previous page. Click on the right arrow (→) for the next page and the left arrow (←) to go the previous page.

KEYBOARD SHORT CUTS

	PC	MAC
Zoom in (Larger)	[Ctrl] [+]	[⌘] [+]
Zoom out	[Ctrl] [-]	[⌘] [-]
Full screen/normal screen view	[Ctrl] [L]	[⌘] [L]

ABOUT THE CONCRETE SHERPA

The Concrete Sherpa is a team of people that represent the experience, teaching and learning of our team members and other industry leaders *on a mission to make life better for the concrete contractor*. We are an idea center striving to deliver thought provoking ideas based on “Concrete Advice for Business and Life” to stimulate you to reach new heights. As a user, you should remember to consider all information you receive, here at the Concrete Sherpa or elsewhere, not as a *cast in concrete* recommendation, but rather as an idea for you to consider and ponder.



Sherpa info

THE JOURNEY LEADING TO THE CONCRETE SHERPA PROJECT

The Concrete Sherpa Project (A [Sherpa](#) is a “guide”) was born at The Concrete Network in mid 2004. Here is how it happened:

The biggest surprise, or gift, since starting The Concrete Network in 1999 has been the concrete contractor friends from around the country we’ve made and witnessing the passion they have for what they do. These people include Dave Pettigrew, up in the San Francisco Bay Area, or the Verlennich brothers in Minnesota, or Bob Harris in Georgia, the list goes on and on. It’s quite inspiring.

We were once asked, “How are you so excited every day about concrete?” Well the answer is simple, it is impossible to not be excited about concrete when you have the job we do—interacting with hundreds of concrete contractors from every state in the country.

The thing we’ve learned about concrete contractors is that most are passionate *craftsmen*—they are often less passionate and experienced in the “office stuff”. Human nature channels us to do what we are most comfortable with; learning how to use a new saw-cutting tool is comfortable; learning and implementing a new estimating strategy, or job management tool, is not so comfortable.



Sherpa info

THE JOURNEY CONTINUES...

So Sherpa was born to provide FREE and easy to use information on topics many Contractors are not too comfortable with.

- Concrete Sherpa is here to provide help to contractors who are often ‘Lone Rangers’ and don’t have anyone to get solid business advice from.
- Concrete Sherpa is here to provide help for contractors who have to work too hard and too many hours in their business, and one day realize they need to work *on their business, not in their business.*
- Have fun with Concrete Sherpa and go faster towards reaching success than you might have on your own.
- To skeptics who think something free can’t be valuable, or there must be a trick- visit Concrete Sherpa and decide for yourself.

We hope you make great use of the Concrete Sherpa and it helps you to become an awesome success for yourself, your family, your church, and your community.

VISIT THE CONCRETE SHERPA

To visit the Concrete Sherpa click here <http://www.ConcreteSherpa.com>.