

# It's tough to do business without a Web site

By Lynanne Lasota  
Special for The San Tan Monthly

A business without a Web site is handicapped, according to San Tan Area Chamber of Commerce president Jack Malpass.

It has no place to send a potential client for more detailed information.

"It's really about having a business strategy that employs all of the available tools to create success," Malpass said. "Today, one of those critical tools is the Web site."

Julie Still, owner of GraphicsGraphics Website Design & Development in Tempe, said a Web site gives businesses a way to reach a market they wouldn't have if they used only print advertising. For example, mailers are sent to a targeted group of prospects whereas potential customers with specific needs search for a business or service on the Internet.

"The Internet is more cost effective than print marketing because it attracts more qualified leads," Still said.

Malpass agreed, saying a Web site gives one of the greatest returns on the investment. The Web site is a way of getting your logo out and advertising who you are, he said.

"No matter how big or small your business is today, part of your business strategy must include a Web site," Malpass said.

Recently, Still said she convinced a doc-



Submitted photo  
**Julie Still owns GraphicsGraphics Website Design & Development in Tempe. She said Web sites give businesses a way to reach a market they wouldn't have if they used only print advertising.**

tor's office to set up a site.

"People are looking up doctors online, Still said, adding that professionals who don't have a site will get left out.

The main purpose of any business' Web site is to turn visitors into customers, Still said. You want a "call to action" on every page to direct the customer to act, she said.

GraphicsGraphics helps businesses define a Web site business strategy. They consult with their clients to determine the goals for the site and develop a plan to reach those goals.

"Some people don't know where to start," Still said.

She recommends starting by checking out different design companies, asking for references and comparing quotes.

Malpass recommends going to someone who has an appealing, successful Web site and finding out who created it. Take time to look at the sites of competitors, he said. Determine what you like and don't like, and take that information to a Web designer.

Still's company does custom Web site design. The one-time starting fee for a small business ranges from \$1,000 to \$5,000. Fees will increase as more features are added. When the site is completed, the business can either have control to make changes and updates themselves or can pay the company to maintain the site. A typical monthly hosting fee is \$25 to \$50.

She said a site should be visually pleasing and very easy to navigate.

"When people come to your site, they will spend only seconds to decide to stay on the site or leave," she said.

Malpass said it is also crucial to get good position in search engines so people can find the site.

But Still warns against design companies that make promises they can't keep.

"The only way to guarantee someone the

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number one spot in Google is to pay for it via Google Adwords," she said.

Stay away from companies that claim to submit your site to thousands of search engines, as there are only a few that really matter like Google, Yahoo and MSN, she said.

Malpass and Still recommend setting aside a budget for search engine marketing because a business can spend anywhere from \$500 to up to \$30,000 per year. For example, having your business pop up as a result of a keyword search for "art" would be more expensive than for a search for "oil paintings phoenix." Broader term keywords in the search engine cost more than specific term keywords.

# Main Street Commons plans gain hotel, lose movie theater

By David van den Berg  
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A planned Gilbert retail center will gain a hotel and see offices replace a previously planned multi-screen movie theater.

Main Street Commons, at Val Vista Drive and the Santan Freeway,

lage, a retail project Westcor is developing. Harkins Theatres, Borders Books & Music, Banana Republic, the Disney Store and Paradise Bakery are among the committed tenants at SanTan Village.

Gosnell said he isn't focusing on SanTan Village as competition.

"We're just trying to go forward

was "hard to determine if that's a missing area."

Gilbert has one multiplex now, in Gilbert Town Square south of Gilbert and Warner roads. Harkins Theatres plans to open a 16-screen movie house in SanTan Village, and a 12-screen theater on the Chandler side

is a good idea, said Greg Tilque, Gilbert's business development manager.

"Keeping the employment uses in our community has always been one of our objectives here, so we're very pleased to see that," Tilque said.

Not only will visitors be able to

The first phase of Main Street Commons will feature 160,000 square feet of restaurants and retail. Planned tenants include Kona Grill, Yard House, Tommy Bahama and Face Me Luxury Cosmetics & Skin Care.

The first group of tenants is