

**Ask SCORE...**

Counselors to Naples Area Small Businesses

**SCORE Naples**  
[www.scorenaples.org](http://www.scorenaples.org)



*Got business questions?*

## ***Ask SCORE***

*By: Gray Poehler, Business Counselor*

### **CREATING A WEBSITE FOR YOUR BUSINESS**

***QUESTION:*** *I am thinking of starting a home based business utilizing the Internet. Is there an easy and inexpensive way for me to design and promote my website? Peter J., Naples*

***ANSWER:*** *Peter, you're in luck! Coincidentally, the Naples Chapter of SCORE, Counselors to America's Small Businesses, will conduct a FREE workshop titled "Creating a Website for Your Business." Saturday, March 29, from 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM, at the Collier County Public library, 650 Central Avenue, in downtown Naples. You may register by logging on to [WWW.SCORENAPLES.ORG](http://WWW.SCORENAPLES.ORG) and click on "Workshops" or call 239-430-0081.*

*The workshop will review the steps required in setting up a website, including naming your site, hosting options, design, coding, implementation, search engine optimization and promotion of the site. In a nutshell, the seminar will touch on everything you will need to start a website. It will also address the basics of selling your product or service on the Internet and accepting credit card payments.*

*A number of service providers such as Interland, Yahoo Small Business, and BigStep offer simplified do-it-yourself packages that make the setup process user friendly. Even with little technical know-how, you can get a basic website registered, designed and online quickly for as little as \$25 per month.*

*Microsoft Small Business Center is another portal that offers nearly everything you'll need to get up and running – all in one place. MSBC offers a helpful suite of tools and services such as web marketing, payment processing, online catalog creation, shopping carts, banner ads and search engine submission. Visit their site at [www.microsoft.com/smallbusiness](http://www.microsoft.com/smallbusiness).*

*You will still need to work hard at attracting customers. Remember you are competing with many others doing the same or similar thing. Make sure your website is listed with the major search engines. Help is available for search engine submission at [www.SearchEngineWatch.com](http://www.SearchEngineWatch.com) . This site offers submission and searching tips, search engine reviews and other resources.*

*To get visitors more involved in your website, add surveys, guest books, auto responders and downloadable documents. Your Web host may offer some of these. Helpful resources include [www.ConstantContact.com](http://www.ConstantContact.com) and [www.Topica.com](http://www.Topica.com) .*

*In conclusion, if you are looking to start a small business quickly, with little capital, and run the entire operation yourself, there is good news. Thanks to the many web-based services that offer everything you need affordably, you can get your venture off the ground in no time at all.*

*Launching a business of any kind is never as simple as it may seem. No matter how small the business, you still need a legal structure of some type, i.e., corporation, LLC, partnership or sole proprietor. Then there are computers, phones, Web connections, insurance, taxes, financial issues, and much more.*

*To learn about the many operating issues facing your business, contact the Naples Chapter of SCORE. **FREE** business counseling is offered to US citizens and legal aliens. Here you'll meet knowledgeable volunteers ready to help you realize your dream. Just call 239-430-0081 or visit [WWW.SCORENAPLES.ORG](http://WWW.SCORENAPLES.ORG) and click on "request counseling now as a first time client." The SCORE business office is located at 900 Goodlette Road North, in the Fifth Third branch bank building. Office hours are 9:00 AM to Noon, Mondays through Fridays.*

*If you would like an answer to your question, please fill out the form located at [www.scorenaples.org/askscore](http://www.scorenaples.org/askscore). A counselor will contact you within 48 hours. Please include your name, email address and a contact phone number.*