

Part

II

**Guerrilla Marketing
at Work**

Chapter

Beyond Web Sites

Create a Client-Centered Web Presence

Toiling away in a lab in Geneva, Switzerland, Tim Berners-Lee brought his creation, the World Wide Web, to life on Christmas Day 1990. At the time, some people appreciated his ingenuity, but most could not envision the practical applications. So, Berners-Lee used his creation to speed up access to the lab's telephone directory. Some of his colleagues resisted even that use, arguing that what they had was just fine.

For many consultants, the Web is still an untapped resource, when it should be a central part of their strategies to differentiate themselves from their competitors. Most consultants realize that they must have Web sites, but have created poorly designed sites that often do more harm than good.

■ SO WHAT'S WRONG?

When customers enter a new store, they notice little things that they ignore in their favorite shopping spots. They quickly size up the store's layout, the quality of the merchandise, the attentiveness of the sales staff, and the overall feel of the place. They form a quick impression and decide whether to shop or move on.

Web site visitors, especially those new to your site, are no different from other shoppers. They make decisions about the credibility, value, and professionalism of your site, often before the home page finishes loading. If the site appears unprofessional, slow, or out-of-date, your visitors are likely to move on, leaving you with lost opportunities.

In our era of self-service, consumers routinely make vacation plans, buy presents, and form impressions of consultants solely on the basis of contacts they make on the Web and through e-mail. So, they demand that sites be easy to navigate and understand. Although the standard of quality for Web sites seems to increase monthly, many consultants fail to keep up. They simply convert recent brochures to their sites and hope they'll generate leads.

■ WHY YOU NEED A GREAT WEB SITE

When a potential client can access the archives of the Smithsonian Institute, the Library of Congress, and the complete works of Leonardo Da Vinci using a mouse and a browser, they are unlikely to be satisfied if their review of a consultant's Web site turns up nothing but marketing babble. Potential clients expect consultants' sites to look and feel professional, with insightful content that helps them understand whether you and your firm can help them.

Patterns for buying consulting services are quickly changing, and there's no going back. A study by the Information Technology Services Marketing Association (ITSMA) found that 77 percent of decision makers now find service providers, including consultants, using the Web, even after they receive referrals.¹

Clients use the information on the Web to make preliminary assessments of consultants' talents and to gauge how well they would fit with their organizations. Nearly 75 percent of buyers find consultants through their own research, not through contacts initiated by consultants.

Without a great Web site, you will not be considered a serious player, and the most desirable potential clients won't invite you to the game. As technological breakthroughs emerge, it will become even more important for consultants to establish an outstanding presence on the Web.

And that's not all. As the Web penetrates organizations further, consultants will need to use it for many routine business matters such as delivering proposals, processing billing and collections, and creating client-specific microsites for projects, to name just a few.

GUERRILLA INTELLIGENCE: SEVEN DEADLY SINS OF WEB SITE DESIGN

Most consultants' Web sites suffer from one or more of the following seven deadly afflictions:

1. *Templates and artists.* Web sites are often designed either by local programmers using inexpensive cookie-cutter templates or by graphic artists who create eye-pleasing, but sluggish sites. Both tend to drive visitors to your competitors. When you look for help with your site, balance the need for an effective, high-performing site with a design that conveys your professional image.
2. *Gratuitous images.* Some Web site owners paste stock images of unknown people on their home pages and other parts of their sites. You may see a group of individuals gathered around a conference table staring at a computer screen that another person is operating. This meaningless scene conveys no message. Every image on every page of your site should have a purpose.
3. *Us/our syndrome.* Many sites are filled with navigation buttons, or tabs, bearing titles such as "Our Services," "About Us," "Our Clients," "Our Qualifications," and "Our Clients." Clients want more about their issues and less about your triumphs. Vincent Flanders, author of *Web Pages That Suck*, says the biggest mistake consultants make is "to talk about how wonderful, smart and brilliant they are."^a The fatal flaw for thousands of such sites is that they are consultant focused, not *client focused*.
4. *Splash pages.* Web sites that incorporate the latest flashy technology—explosive graphics, streaming video intros, and

^aVincent Flanders' quote is from the interview, "This Month's Featured Master-Mind: Vincent Flanders on Web Pages That Suck," *Management Consulting News* (September 3, 2002). Available from www.managementconsultingnews.com/newsletter_sept_02_final.htm.

Flanders reminds consultants that "people come to your site for one reason: to solve a problem. They don't care if you're wonderful and they probably don't care about much of anything other than "Can you solve my problem now? You've got to convince your visitors that you can solve their problems, so the information you provide should be about that, not about you."

(Continued)

shock ware—may initially be fun, but they quickly grow old. These annoying, graphic-intensive pages are slow to load, waste your visitors' time, and imply that you'll waste even more of their time once they get past the splash page. If you're trying to attract potential clients, cool it on the overly cool.

5. *Errors.* No matter how small, errors send visitors scurrying away with a bad impression of your practice. One visitor to a consulting firm's site commented, "I thought the firm was reputable but I spotted two spelling mistakes right on the home page. How professional is that?" Even the smallest typos can mean a lost opportunity.
6. *Confusing navigation.* If visitors can't easily navigate around your site or can't instantly figure out where they are, they'll quickly exit. Steve Krug, author of *Don't Make Me Think*, a book on Web site usability, says that you "should not do things that force people to think unnecessarily when they're using your site."^b You want visitors to focus on reading the content, not on trying to navigate your site.
7. *Poor writing:* With the advent of the Web, anyone can be a publisher. But not everyone is a great writer. One consulting firm's site proclaims that its mission "is to connect you with information and resources to achieve your maximum potential." That is so vague that it's not worth saying. Creating prose for the Web is not exactly like writing a memo to your staff. Web site prose must be crisp and easy to read, and must motivate visitors to look at all pages on your site.

^b Steve Krug's quote is from the interview, "Meet the MasterMinds: Common Sense Web Design with Steve Krug," *Management Consulting News* (September 3, 2002). Available from www.managementconsultingnews.com/newsletter_sept_02_final.htm.

Krug goes on to say that the first law of Web site usability is "Don't make me think. I've used it for years with my clients, and it really means exactly what it says: Don't do things that force people to think unnecessarily when they're using your site. I find that most people are quite willing and able to think when it's necessary, but making them do it when there's nothing in it for them (other than compensating for your failure to sort things out properly) tends to be annoying—and worse, confusing."

The information-intensive consulting industry is perfect for Web marketing. Seize on its capabilities to make your site credible, valuable, and easy to use. Tap into the Web's low-cost power to draw leads to your practice and to build your presence in the market.

As the marketing hub of your practice, your Web site is equal parts consulting office, demonstration lab, library, and publicity machine. Its content, appearance, and ease of use show your competence and professionalism.

Your site paints a powerful portrait of your visual identity by reflecting your style, taste, and presentation. It serves as your showroom in cyberspace, a display case for exhibiting your wares. The site provides a platform from which to tell your story, describe your mission, list your clients, and distribute information. It also gives you visibility both within and outside your industry.

Firms can create a repository on their Web sites for their intellectual assets—articles, papers, proposals, studies, surveys, and reports—which prospective clients can examine. These materials help visitors understand how the consultants think and how they tackle problems.

■ TEN CHARACTERISTICS OF A KILLER WEB SITE

1. *Show legitimacy as a business.* You will build credibility with visitors by including such basic information on your site as the physical address of your business and photographs of your offices, or by listing membership in professional and industry associations.
2. *Update content frequently.* Some sites fail to regularly change the content of their site, leaving outdated information about time-sensitive items such as conferences and other special events. Web visitors assign more credibility to sites that are current, or at least demonstrate that they have been recently reviewed.
3. *Encourage action.* On each page of your site, find a way for visitors to interact with you, whether by signing up for a newsletter, requesting a special report, linking to another page on your site, or sending you an e-mail. Your site should engage visitors, not just let them “click and go.”
4. *Exchange value for time.* Web site visitors, particularly those looking for consultants, will gladly exchange their time for value and insight. Provide relevant, valuable, and usable content, and prospective clients may put you on their short list. In addition to content such as white papers, some consultants'

sites provide interactive diagnostic tools that help clients measure the impact of issues they're facing.

5. *Provide rapid response.* If you receive an e-mail inquiry from a visitor, follow up immediately, no matter how busy you are. That e-mail inquiry about your services will not improve with age; don't let it get moldy in your e-mailbox.
6. *Keep it simple.* Create your site for clients, not for the artist within you. Make its design simple, intuitive to use, and easy to read. Provide lots of white space on pages because visitors tend to skim pages and seldom read every detail. And stick to a simple, eye-pleasing color palette. Your site layout should be logical. Navigation buttons and features such as newsletter sign-up boxes should be in the same place on all pages. Make it easy to download material by providing explicit instructions and confirming for visitors that they have successfully received the material they downloaded.
7. *Speed doesn't kill.* Make sure each page and link loads quickly, no matter what type of browser or machine a visitor uses. Don't assume that all visitors are using high-speed connections when they access your site. Visitors will leave your site in a heartbeat if your pages load too slowly.
8. *Test it.* Before you launch a new or revised site, ask clients and colleagues to thoroughly test every element. Ask them, Is the site easy to use? Does it provide useful information? Would you go back to it?
9. *Maintain ongoing site quality.* Some consultants create a site just because "we need a site," but then let it languish. Your site should not be an afterthought, but an integral part of your external marketing program. Assign accountability for its long-term strategy and tactical uses to someone in the practice so your firm can take full advantage of the Web's potential.
10. *Go easy on data collection.* On some consultants' sites, visitors must provide pages of information before they can receive a simple white paper. Keep it simple. Ask only for their e-mail addresses, and send them the information they requested. If they find value in your material, they'll call you.

An effective site must contain more than a firm's name, contact information, sales pitch, and eye candy. The best graphics and other splashy features can't make up for meager content. The site must convey how you think, how you operate, and what your perspective is on issues of concern to clients. Provide visitors with the details they seek.

■ THE DEVIL IS IN THE DETAILS

When visitors form an initial impression of your Web site, they will either stay on the site to find out more or move on based on their answers to four simple questions:

1. What does your firm actually do?
2. Do you prove that your firm is able to handle the client's issues?
3. What makes your firm uniquely qualified to solve the client's problems?
4. Have you clearly described the benefits and results that clients can expect?

If you answer these questions to the satisfaction of prospective clients, you'll likely get e-mail or a telephone call. Web site designs vary and each must be structured to reflect your own unique talents and mission. However, all consultants' sites should allow prospective clients to quickly answer those four essential questions.

Remember that your site will serve a diverse audience that may include current and prospective clients, media representatives, researchers, students, other consultants, or aspiring consultants. Try to make the experience easy and valuable for every viewer.

GUERRILLAS AT WORK: SITE CONSTRUCTION

Most consultants focus on developing the content of their Web sites and let computer programmers handle the technical details. Guerrillas stay involved and in control of the construction process to make sure they end up with client-focused sites that include the following sections:

- Home
- Solutions and results
- Case studies and testimonials
- How you work with clients
- Your story
- Alliances and affiliations
- Media center
- Resource library
- Terms of use and privacy policy

■ THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

Your home page is the most frequently visited page on your site. Your home page is the front door to your practice. It directs visitors to other parts of the site and presents the overall format and design.

As the first page that visitors access, your home page must have visual appeal. It also must be clean and uncluttered. Never incorporate graphic elements that are painfully slow, excessively long, or don't always work. Links to other parts of the site must be clear and easy to follow.

Forget about using sappy welcoming statements on your home page and get straight to the mission at hand. In clear, compelling language, demonstrate to visitors that the content on your site will help them. Emphasize how you can make a dramatic difference in their businesses.

Include your contact information on the home page and on every page of your site. Each page should also contain a link for visitors to sign up to receive your electronic newsletter, or zine, if you publish

GUERRILLA INTELLIGENCE: WHAT'S A BLOG?

A *blog* (short for "Web log") is a Web-based journal. Blogs can be news columns or personal communications; they can focus on one subject or a range of topics. A blog can be part of your Web site or a stand-alone feature. Blogs are not sent to readers. Rather, interested readers find them. Blogs are updated frequently—sometimes daily—with commentary, links, or photographs. Unlike Web site design, creating and updating blogs is easy because most blog software requires no technical background.

Use a blog to keep an updated, personalized message on the home page of your site, or to provide information on the latest developments in your industry. You might want to use a blog to announce a new service, rant about a controversial issue, or solicit client feedback.

You can scan a directory of blogs at www.google.com, www.yahoo.com, and other search engines. Just enter the search term "blog directories" in your browser. Some widely used blogging software tools are Blogger (www.blogger.com), TypePad, and Moveable Type (www.typepad.com). Some blogging products are free and others are offered for a fee.

one. Most important, keep your home page short and simple, while encouraging visitors to review other parts of the site.

■ SOLUTIONS AND RESULTS

Most consultants' Web sites drone on about their "world class" services, "best practices," and "methodologies." Clients don't buy services; they buy solutions. Guerrillas dump the consultant-speak and focus on providing solutions. Clients may not be interested in the latest high-tech inventory management system, but they do want to hear how you can help them manage inventory better.

So talk about the solutions you offer, giving real-life examples of the results you helped clients achieve. For example, "We helped Allied Rock improve working capital by 30 percent and cut supply costs by 22 percent in four months." Follow up each statement with a link to a case study that summarizes how you worked with that client to achieve those results.

GUERRILLA TACTIC: GET DOWN TO BRASS TACKS

State your solutions and results as specifically as possible. Use your clients' names, if you have permission. Everyone pays more attention to and retains information about names they recognize.

Many consultants mistakenly believe that by describing their services broadly, they will appeal to a wider audience and acquire more clients. Actually, the opposite is true. The less specific you are, the less likely it is that clients will think of you when they need help with a particular problem. By being ambiguous, you also might attract clients who wouldn't be a good fit for your practice, which—at the very least—will waste your time and energy.

Providing details on solutions and results serves two important purposes, one for prospective clients and the other for you. For clients, it demonstrates what you have to offer and how you are different from your competitors. For the consultant, it weeds out those clients who may find your material interesting, but don't need the particular solutions you provide.

■ CASE STUDIES AND TESTIMONIALS

Case studies have long been a staple of consultants' proposals and, more recently, their Web sites. But many clients breeze right by them, believing them to be self-serving, puffed-up promotions of consultants' accomplishments. As a result, case studies have become an anemic tool for winning client work, instead of the powerhouse-marketing tool they could be.

Include links on your Web site to case studies for your most challenging and successful assignments. Make it easy for visitors to download them. These documents can answer the number one question clients ask consultants: How will your team work with our team to achieve the results we need? Case studies also clarify approaches, strategies, and resources that you have successfully employed on other projects.

Infuse the materials that you post on your site with a sense of the challenges and obstacles involved. Explain what, why, and how you and the client attacked issues. Always stress that the solutions came from working together.

Keep case studies short—no longer than one or two pages. For each case study, name the client company, if possible. Some clients prefer confidentiality, and you must honor that trust. But case studies have more punch if the company is named, instead of being referred to as a “large, industry-leading plumbing supply client.” Exclude the name of your contact in the client's company, but be willing to disclose it in response to inquiries.

SEVEN ELEMENTS OF A GUERRILLA CASE STUDY

1. Tell a story; don't just list facts.
2. Place the client's success, not yours, at the center of the story.
3. Define the problem the client faced and your role in solving the problem.
4. Describe how you worked with the client's team to achieve results.
5. Don't overstate results.
6. Keep it short.
7. Provide access to references whenever possible.

Include a limited number of testimonials on your site. Instead of an extensive testimonial section, post a list of all your clients and let visitors select whomever they wish to call. They can give you the names they select and you can arrange for the calls. Testimonials are of questionable value because everyone knows you won't let them near a bad reference. However, visitors expect to see them on your site and some will still be impressed by notable names on your list.

■ HOW YOU WORK WITH CLIENTS

Another critical question for prospective clients is “How will the consulting team interact with us on the project?” Devote a page on your site to show how you work with clients. This page does not define the tools, methodologies, and approaches you use—it describes how you work with clients on projects.

Many clients know they have problems, but they worry that hiring consultants will give them even greater headaches. They may have good reason to worry that a pack of disruptive consultants planted in the middle of already overcrowded offices will sap productivity and monopolize key employees' time.

Use case studies to illustrate that you know how to avoid disrupting clients' operations. Some consultants never leave their offices to visit clients, while others move right in with the client and remain there for months and even years.

Before they sign on to work with you, all potential clients want to know what the projects will cost and how long they will take. Most clients realize it is impossible to provide that information until a proposal has been completed. In the meantime, though, they will want to know the answers to other questions:

- What is the typical size of a project team?
- Will client staff serve on teams?
- If so, how much of their time will be involved?
- Will staff need training?
- How will you administer projects?
- What are your reporting and communication policies?
- How do you determine when the project has been completed?
- What tools and methods do you generally use?

This section of the site helps clients understand your firm's personality and culture. For many clients, these attributes are among the top criteria for selecting consultants.

■ WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

As mentioned, clients are not as interested in the pedigrees of your consultants as in their results. Even so, you have to include some personal information on your site about your key consultants and your practice. Tell visitors who you are, what you do, and describe your background and achievements. Detail how and why your practice was formed, how it grew, and list its accomplishments. Show how your clients have helped you succeed and include some of the hurdles you have overcome.

Make your story the personal, noncorporate, part of your Web site. Give visitors a sense of the people behind the practice. Use this page to stress the human element of your practice so that visitors can identify with real people who care, and do not feel as if they are dealing with a faceless corporation. If possible, include pictures of your staff, with short statements about their backgrounds, the clients they have served, the awards they have won, and some of their personal interests.

■ ALLIANCES AND AFFILIATIONS

Many consulting firms have powerful alliances with universities, research groups, and other consultancies that add depth to the consulting team and value for clients. Alliances with strong partners enhance the image of a practice, as people tend to judge us by the company we keep.

Particular alliances can also help firms fill in the gaps in the solutions they offer. If a firm needs additional expertise in designing new product packaging, an alliance with a prestigious professor who focuses on materials development can mean the difference between winning and losing a project. Consultants should seek affiliations that can help their clients and stress those affiliations on their Web sites.

If you have alliances with highly recognized individuals and organizations, post them on your Web site. Also include any memberships in industry or professional associations, but don't expect clients to be overly impressed by these credentials.

■ MEDIA CENTER

Your media center is the source for press releases and other information about your practice. Its purpose is to make it as simple as possible for members of the media to acquire newsworthy items about your firm. Since this page targets professionals, keep the information fresh or the media will leave your site and you'll lose potentially valuable publicity.

The information in your site's media center must be easy to access through e-mail and print. Your media kit should include, at a minimum:

- *Press releases.* Provide a list of all your firm's press releases, listing the most recent first. Create links and make them printer friendly so that visitors can download each press release. Give the name of the member of your firm who handles publicity and public relations, along with contact information.
- *Articles written about the firm.* List all articles written about your firm, the subject of those articles, and the publication that they appeared in. Include all articles that were published in the past several years. Provide links that allow visitors to download articles and easily print them.
- *Company history.* Write the company history in story form and detail the genesis and steps involved in its becoming successful. Don't make it a blatant commercial. Stick to the facts, but give it human interest by stressing the role that key personnel and clients played in building the firm.
- *Basic financial information.* Provide background on the size of the practice, number of consultants, clients, and revenue (if possible). Some firms are uncomfortable publishing financial information but if you keep it current and accurate, it gives clients a good idea of the breadth of your firm.
- *Biographies of key personnel.* Consultants' biographies should stress their accomplishments, their positions as experts, and details on their areas of expertise. It should also give their backgrounds, training, and experience as well as their social and community activities. All bios should be written in a personable tone.
- *Articles and appearances.* List all articles that your firm's members have published and the subject of each article. Provide printer-friendly links that allow visitors to download copies. If you speak frequently, include a list of your speaking engagements

for the past two years. Note if you were the keynote or featured speaker. If you speak less frequently, list your major appearances over the past five years.

► *Speaker information.* Give speaker information for each firm member who gives presentations. Briefly describe speaking topics, the duration of presentations, target audiences, and the results achieved. State that copies of speeches are downloadable, provide links to them, and make sure they are printer friendly. Provide, or offer to provide, audio or video recordings of all speeches and presentations.

► *Calendar of upcoming events.* Provide a calendar that shows the dates, times, and places of upcoming events that the firm or its members will sponsor or participate in. The calendar should list presentations, workshops, seminars, interviews, and appearances. Create downloadable links that allow visitors to obtain more information about each event.

► *Endorsements and testimonials.* If you decide to include endorsements, provide the best endorsements you have received from the most well-known and respected endorsers. Do not include more than two pages of endorsements.

► *Client list.* List your clients' names. You may choose to sort this list by industry or alphabetically.

► *Frequently asked questions.* Present frequently asked questions (FAQs) and their answers. Be creative; include questions that clients and the media ask and anticipate others they might ask. Include questions on issues facing the industry and on recent changes and developments that are affecting the industry. Keep your answers short. Use this section to show your knowledge, creativity, and problem-solving ability. Also write questions on the background of your firm, its size, areas of specialization, and objectives, even if it repeats material provided in other sections.

Keep in mind that the information and material you include in the media center is intended to reach potential clients. Make members of the media feel welcome on your site so they will understand what your practice is about and give you good press.

■ RESOURCE LIBRARY

Knowledge is the consultants' currency; it is their stock-in-trade and what clients pay hefty fees to obtain. Very few consulting firms hold

GUERRILLA INTELLIGENCE: YOUR INTELLECTUAL STOCKPILE

Build a store of highly relevant intellectual assets that can become part of your marketing activities. The top items form the content base of your Web site:

- Articles and compilations of articles
- Presentation and speech transcripts, slides, and videos
- Client case studies
- White papers and special reports
- Survey results
- Client and industry interviews
- Archives of newsletters, zines, and blogs
- Webinars
- Workbooks or Assessment Guides
- Perspective pieces on industry issues
- E-books
- Methodologies and tools
- Audiotapes of speeches or articles
- Book excerpts

many physical assets. After its consultants, a firm's most valuable property is its intellectual assets—its stockpile of collective wisdom, experience, tools, methods, and other intangibles. Your site's resource library is the repository of the assets you wish to share with clients, prospective clients, and the media.

The best resource libraries provide both consultant-developed material and access to other independent thinkers on the topics covered. So your library should also include lists of relevant reference books, academic experts, journal articles, industry and research site links, and other resources that will allow clients to round out their knowledge.

■ TERMS OF USE

We live in a litigious world. So, your site must have a page that describes the terms of use that visitors to the site must observe. On this page, focus on your privacy policy and state that you are not liable for how visitors use the information they obtain from the site. Review

GUERRILLA TACTIC: SHARE YOUR SECRETS

Some consultants resist sharing their intellectual assets over the Web for fear of losing their competitive edge. The world is awash in so much information that you will look stingy and paranoid if you don't give up at least some of your secrets to let clients see how you really work, what you know, and what you can do. If you're uncomfortable posting all your intellectual assets, by all means, hold some back. Check other sites' information-sharing practices to see how they handle the dilemma.

Clients know that people must implement changes, and without experienced consultants at the helm, costly, time-consuming disasters frequently occur. That is why they hire consultants to implement the ideas and approaches they believe will best solve their problems. Most clients are unlikely just to take your ideas and run. If they do, be there to bail them out when they get in over their heads.

several sites to understand the terms-of-use clause and then decide if you need legal counsel to help draft a statement that will protect your practice.

■ BUILDING YOUR WEB SITE

Trust is the key to whether prospective clients race past your site or stay on it. Most visitors want to see evidence that you have a trustworthy site, even if they haven't read its content.

A study by Princeton Survey Research Associates² indicated that only 29 percent of Internet users trust Web sites that sell products or services. Compare that with the 58 percent of survey respondents who trust newspaper and television news, and the 47 percent who trust the federal government. Since 80 percent of Web users believe it is "very important to be able to trust the information on a Web site," trust must be a major design component in every page you publish.

Seven guidelines will help make visitors comfortable with your site and your practice:

1. Clearly state your privacy policy.
2. Give access to visitors' e-mail addresses only to editors and others involved in creating and maintaining the site.

GUERRILLA TACTIC: SYNDICATE YOUR CONTENT

Draw potential clients to your Web site by syndicating the headlines of your zine, blogs, and other site content. All you need to do is add a small bit of computer code to your site and summarize your important content, and those headlines will be picked up by news syndication services called RSS (Really Simple Syndication). Web-based news aggregators sweep sites with RSS and deliver headlines to readers who have requested information on specific topics.

RSS is a spam-free, filter-free way to let interested readers know what is on your Web site. MarketingSherpa.com points out that the 250,000 people now using RSS are “. . . active information-seekers, not passive e-mail readers. And, their numbers will grow rapidly as RSS becomes more user-friendly and as more people get fed up with spam and irrelevant e-mail.”

Here are two sources for further details on RSS: NewsGator (www.newsgator.com) and Bloglines (www.bloglines.com). The technology and services for RSS are changing rapidly. To read up on the subject, you can type “RSS” into your Web browser and take it from there.

3. If advertising is on the site, prominently label it as such.
4. Describe any financial relationships you have with other firms, organizations, or vendors.
5. Provide sources for research and links to source documents, if possible.
6. List those responsible for the creation of site content.
7. Promptly correct errors in a prominent place on the site.

Don't expect to impress visitors if your site is little more than an online telephone book or a sales brochure. The clients you hope to attract and the peers you want to impress are savvy businesspeople, and they want solid information. Don't waste their time with marketing babble.

GUERRILLA TACTIC: CAN YOUR WEB SITE PASS THE FIVE-CLIENT TEST?

Before you release your site to the public, ask five of your clients to review it. Ask them to be brutally honest (well, maybe constructively critical) in their reviews and to answer these seven questions:

1. What is distinctive about the site?
2. Is the content valuable?
3. Does the site convey a clear understanding of what your consultancy does?
4. Would the site's content be helpful in addressing clients' issues?
5. Is it focused on clients' needs?
6. Would you bookmark the site?
7. Would it encourage you to call?

The results of the client reviews will tell you how to make your site an effective marketing tool. Repeat the test at regular intervals to be sure your site stays fresh and relevant.

Remember that guerrilla clients demand more. They want professional sites that give them solid information about who you are, what you do, how you think and, most importantly, how you can benefit them. Providing anything less on your Web site will eliminate you from their list of candidates for their consulting projects.