

Business REPORT

How do you measure up?

Most businesses have an Internet presence and these days we see it as an integral part of the marketing mix.

According to Internet Marketing specialists eC-Plus however, companies in the Midlands miss out on millions of pounds worth of business, because they fail to optimise their site as a lead generation tool.

EC-Plus Managing Director Ray Manton, who is vice chair of Dudley and District Business Club, was so concerned that club members were missing out on business opportunities he decided to develop a free Benchmarking tool that allows business owners and marketing executives to analyse how their own company's web site performs against industry standards. This has been so successful that it is now being made available FREE to all businesses via the eC-Plus website.

Benchmarking

Internet Design Consultant Matt Cook who is responsible for the Benchmarking system explained "Benchmarking involves sharing information, learning and adopting best practices to improve our own performance. There are numerous ways and methods to benchmark performance but, in its simplest form, it is a way of improving ourselves by learning from others".

In order to compare with a 'best method or practice', businesses first need to define what that is. With over seven years experience in this area, eC-Plus have built up tried and tested working practices and by developing high quality websites they have obtained data



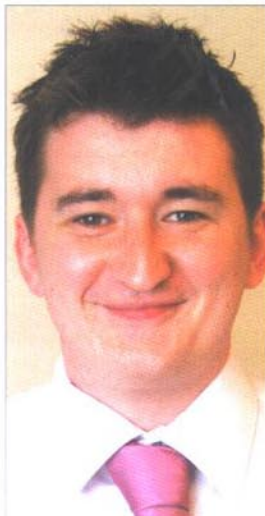
Ray Manton, managing director

from thousands of sites that has allowed them to understand the top industry standard.

"In a traditional benchmarking environment" says Matt "an organisation would analyse their competition, spending time collecting and recording information. At the end of this period they would analyse the data and decide how they can improve their own business by their findings. This normally involves a substantial amount of time on the company's part, as well as a cost incurred."

Benchmarking online

EC-Plus decided to make the process of benchmarking websites much easier and cost effective. Their online Website Benchmark Report will give businesses access to a large amount of expertise, comparing your website with Inter-



Matt Cook, Consultant

net standards, within minutes and FREE of charge!

The eC-Plus Website Benchmarking System although easy to use, is actually a complex automated online report generator system that will analyse a website within minutes and provide you with a clear view of the technical standards of your website.

The Benchmark Report covers such topics as:

- * Design standards
- * Search engine optimisation
- * Code validation
- * Search engine positions
- * Website Accessibility

"Search engines have become a vital part of the Internet visitor's experience. They help people to find the information they need within seconds of searching. It is for this

reason that search engine optimisation is important to your website. If your website cannot be found in a search engine by your specific keywords, then you are likely to be disappointed with the performance of the website" explains Matt

"Search engine optimisation is much more complex than just putting in META keywords and Descriptions. The Internet has evolved, and so have the search engines. Search engine crawlers now look through your page content to determine what your page is about and many completely ignore the traditional SEO methods. They may even blacklist your website if unethical techniques are used."

eC-Plus are continually updating their own methods of search engine optimisation to ensure they keep ahead of the ever-changing technology.

Improve performance

The eC-Plus Website Benchmark Report provides a fast, reliable method of establishing how accessible, structured and well designed a website is. It's a quick and easy process, through which, businesses can gain a clear understanding of the technical performance of their website. In clear, plain English, eC-Plus outline the good and bad points of the website, covering code validation, search engine optimisation, search engine positions, website accessibility, loading times and many more. They have designed the system with the average user in mind - aiming to provide a clear understanding of how well your website is likely to perform.

"If businesses need assistance in analysing the report or need help or advice on how to optimise their site we are always happy to discuss this with them" said Matt.

In order to benchmark your website Business Report readers should simply log on to www.ec-plus.net and follow the link to the benchmarking system. Alternatively you can contact Ray Manton or Matt Cook on 01562 861000



Internet Marketing

- Website Design and Development
- Search Engine Optimisation
- Website Benchmarking
- Secure e-commerce websites
- Hosting and email packages

Benchmark your Website

- Improve Website Performance
- Gain Competitive Advantage
- Increase your Sales & Profits