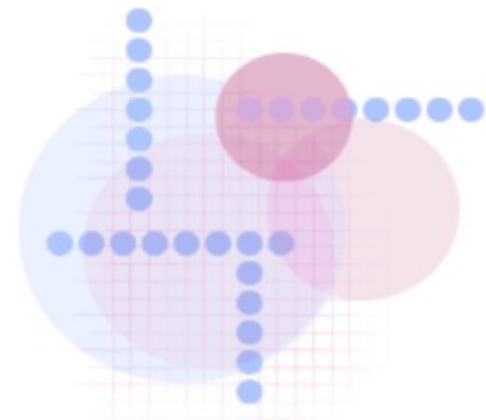


How to promote your childcare using the Internet.

By: Fred Kania



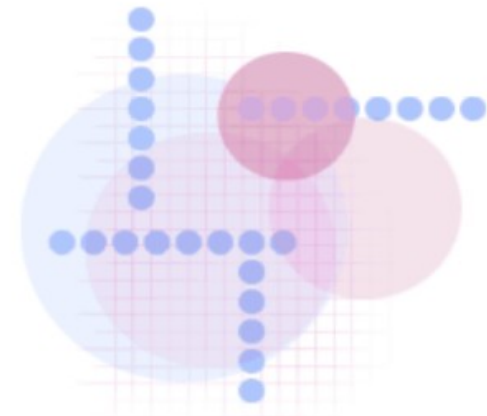
Internet Marketing

- The Internet is the widest channel of communication available to small businesses. It can help level the playing field for small business on a limited budget that seek to compete in large markets.
- No other communications medium enables you to operate a business from your home, while giving the appearance of a multi-million dollar business!



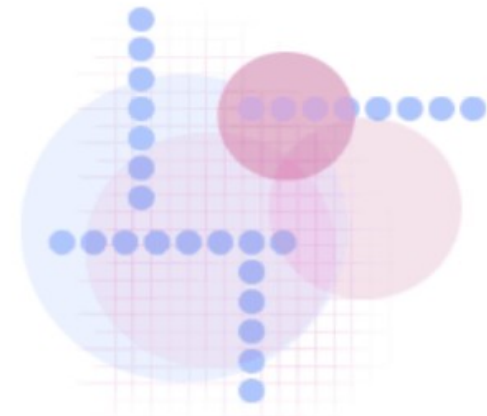
Internet Marketing

- Internet marketing allows the use of techniques such as interactive websites, email newsletters, online surveys and forms, blogs and discussion groups. All this is possible with immediate feedback from your client base and little out-of-pocket expense!
- Print marketing materials and advertising strategies can be expensive to produce and traditionally have a short shelf life.



Internet Marketing

- Internet marketing techniques such as websites, banner ads and email newsletters can be produced at a reasonable cost, can contain more timely information than print brochures and can be immediately and cost effectively updated as your business grows and changes.
- Finding success online is no different than finding it offline. Designing an appropriate online and offline marketing mix is the key!



Internet Marketing

- To succeed online you must develop a comprehensive plan that includes the following:
 - A solid business model
 - An effectively designed website
 - An online marketing strategy that suites your audience and fits your budget.



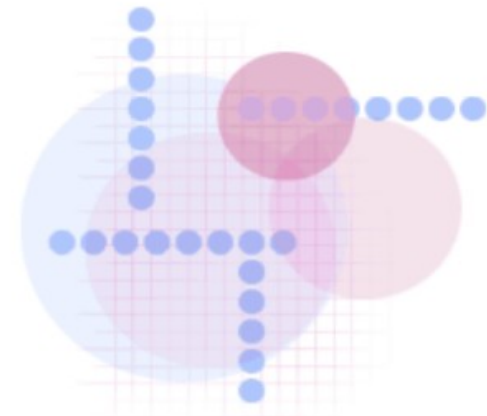
Aspects of Internet Marketing

- No matter how big or small your child day care, Internet marketing should make up part of your marketing mix! How large of a part will be determined by your particular needs and budget.
- The tools you use to develop your online presence and drive traffic to your website will also depend of your particular business model and your budget.



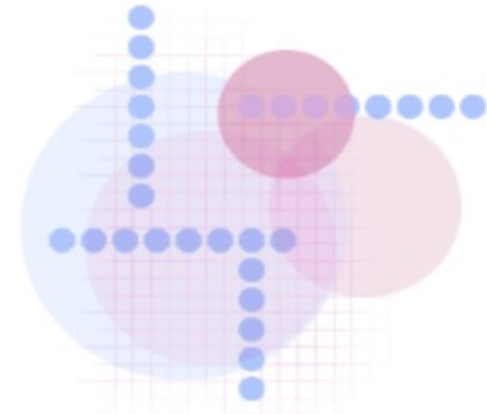
Aspects of Internet Marketing

- Internet marketing is constantly changing due to improvements in technology. Therefore, there are always new marketing tools available to small businesses!
- The basic online marketing strategies are:
 - Website development & Search Engine Optimization
 - Submitting your website to the search engines
 - Inbound Links
 - Online Advertising models.
 - Publishing on Third-Party Websites



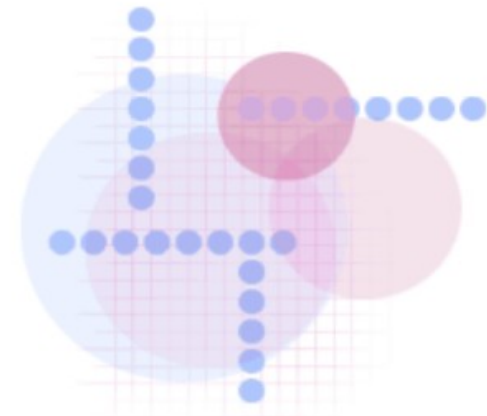
The Benefits of a Website

- **Popularity** -- The ever-growing number of businesses that have embraced the Internet as a powerful advertising venue speaks for itself.
- **Accessibility** – A website provides the means for you to publish information about your daycare center. The Internet makes it possible for anyone with a computer to find you!



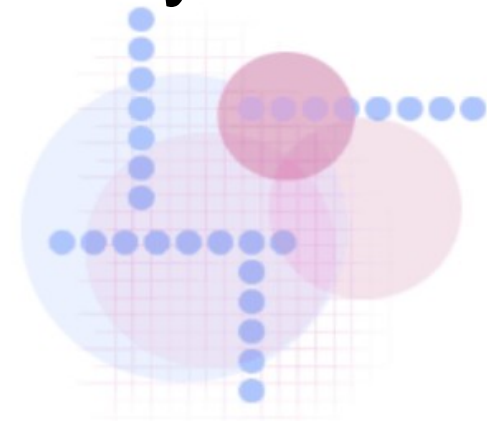
The Benefits of a Website

- **Reduced Publishing costs** – Conventional means of design, printing and distributing marketing materials is very expensive. A website greatly reduces your cost to promote your business.
- **Reduced Marketing costs** – Newspaper ads, billboards, radio spots are very expensive. You can reach the same people for pennies on the dollar. The web makes it possible!



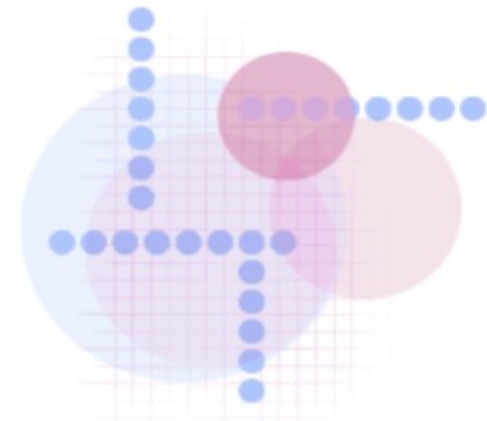
The Benefits of a Website

- **Expand your Marketplace** – Reach parents who would normally not be aware of your business. Even if your childcare center is off the beaten path, your website will be easy for everyone to find!
- **Reduced Communication costs** – Want to try a new advertising campaign? Just update your website and tell your customers. It is easy and inexpensive to try new ideas!



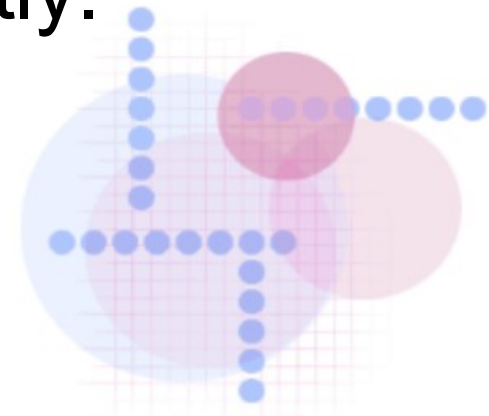
The Benefits of a Website

- **Reduced Communication costs** – A website does more than market your daycare. It provides pertinent and timely information. Practically any information can be converted to a website and distributed by email at far less cost and time than by fax, mail or courier.



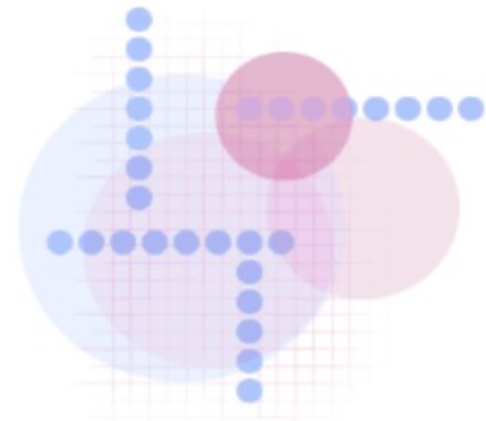
The Benefits of a Website

- **Reduce openings** – An online presence is a wise and inexpensive investment. You can find potential clients 24/7 using the web!
- **Reduce support costs** – Answering parent questions online saves money. An online feedback form is an easy way for parents to reach you.
- **Increase accuracy** – Your website can provide up-to-the minute support information instantly.



The Benefits of a Website

- **Enhance Your Image** – A website is a must have in today business world. A online presence shows prospective parents you are a serious and professional child day care provider. With very little time and money, a website is by far the best way to market, promote and communicate with prospective parents!



How to create a Website

- **Template Websites** – Template websites offer the novice a wonderful way to create a website. This is by the far the easiest way to create a website, especially if you are new to Internet technologies. With a template website your business is online in minutes! Template websites are also easy to update and maintain.



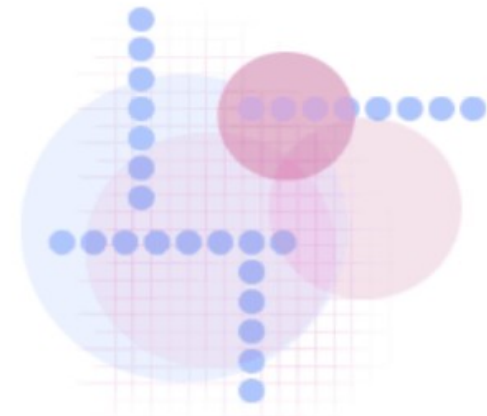
How to create a Website

- **Website Design Programs** – There are many helpful programs available for website creation. Programs like Microsoft Frontpage help create and publish a website without knowledge of the inner workings of a webpage. This option offers more versatility than a template website. However, as the versatility increases so does the difficulty level.



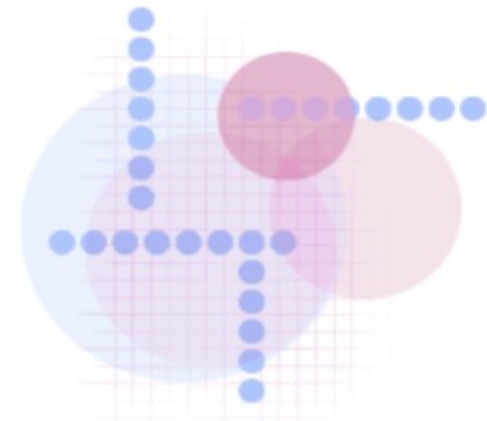
How to create a Website

- **HTML, ASP, PHP, Javascript** – The most versatile way and also the most difficult way to create a website to learn all the different programming languages. This is by far the most comprehensive and flexible method of website creation. However, learning HTML, a scripting language, SQL basics, etc., etc. is not a easy task and this path should only be taken if the benefits warrant it!



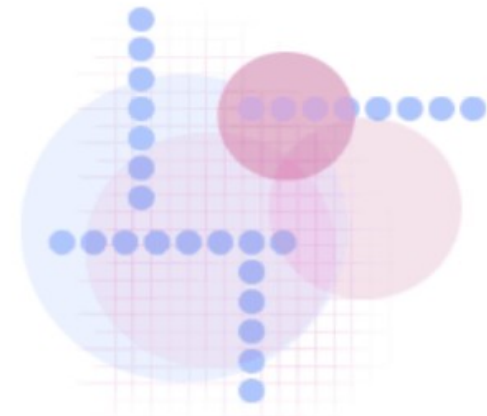
Website Development & Search Engine Optimization

- Designing and building your website is only one aspect of bringing your child day care online.
- With billions of websites on the internet, it is just as important that you ensure people can find your website!
- 98% of Internet users claim they use search engines regularly!



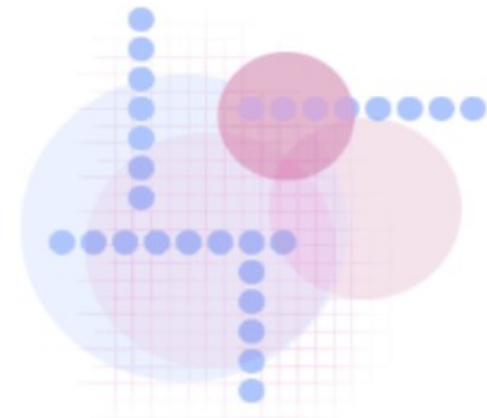
Website Development & Search Engine Optimization

- You should focus your initial web marketing efforts on search engine optimization.
- Search engines such as Google, Yahoo and MSN index billions of web pages and rank them according to complex algorithms that rank a webpage's accessibility, the page's relevance to keywords and the importance of the website by the number of links from other websites.



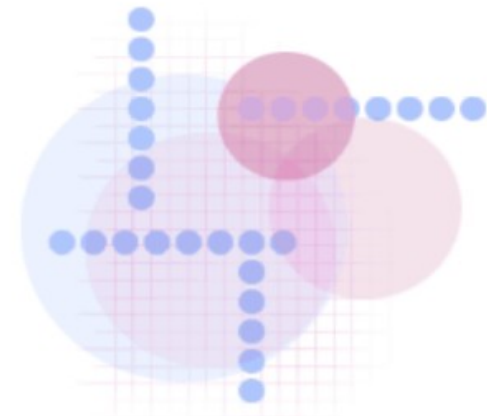
Website Development & Search Engine Optimization

- Search Engine optimization (SEO) refers to the work that needs to be done in order for the search engines to take notice of your website.
- Ideally, you want to strive for a top ten ranking, because studies have shown that most search engine users don't scroll past the first page of results!



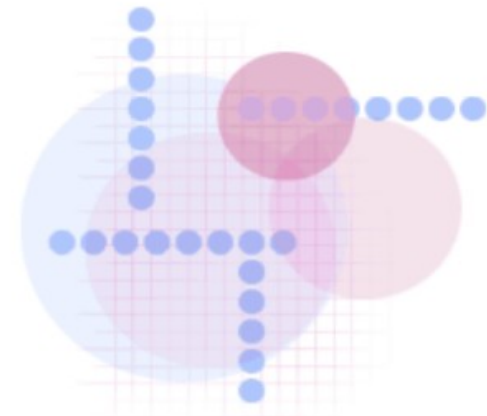
Website Development & Search Engine Optimization

- SEO is not an exact science, the algorithms that produce the search engine results are constantly changing. This is done to protect the search engines from websites that are considered SPAM.
- However, using sound search engine optimization techniques, you can obtain excellent results from your website!



Website Development & Search Engine Optimization

- Use only “search engine friendly” coding techniques. Avoid Flash based websites and the use of frames is no longer suggested.
- Keep in mind the keywords you would like parents searching for your website to use. For instance, if your child day care is called “Fred's Happy Time Child Day Care”, then “Happy Time Day Care” might be your keywords.



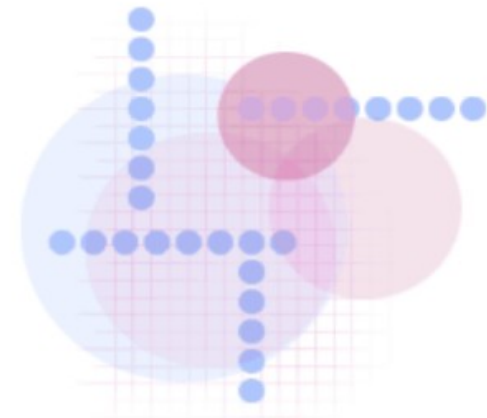
Website Development & Search Engine Optimization

- Incorporate keyword-rich content into your website's domain name, meta tags, title tags, alt tags, headings and overall content!
- Update the content on your website regularly!
- Submit your website to the search engines.
- Develop a linking network with other child day care's in order to grow quality inbound links!



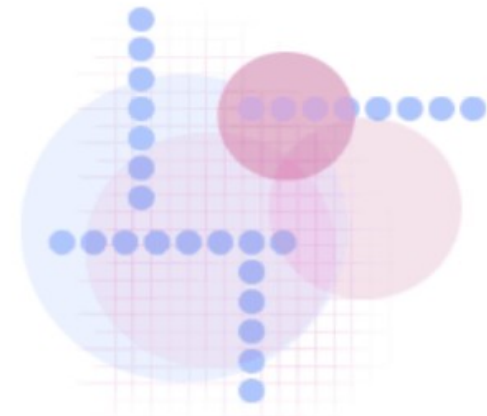
Submitting your Website to the Search Engines

- Some search engines will find your website all by themselves, while others require you to register, and others offer a combination of both.
- In general there are two types of search engines:
 - Crawler-based search engines
 - Human-powered directories



Submitting your Website to the Search Engines

- Crawler-based search engines
 - Google is the most popular example, it uses an automated indexing system to 'crawl' your website while indexing keywords and following links. The crawler will look for patterns or repetition in your content in order to determine your website's purpose. As long as you have at least one inbound link, it's not required for you to report your website to these style search engines, but some still allow it.



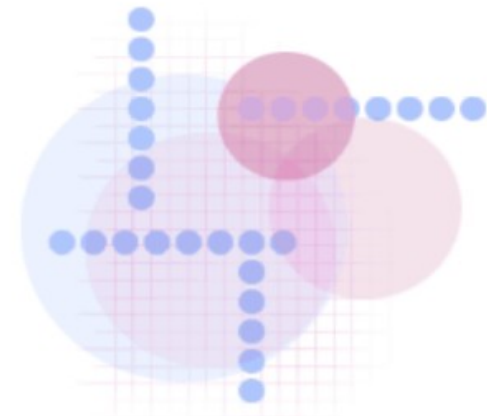
Submitting your Website to the Search Engines

- Human-powered directories
 - Yahoo is the best example of a human powered directory. You must submit your website URL and wait for the directory editors to assess and index your website. Sometimes this procedure is free while other times a fee is involved.



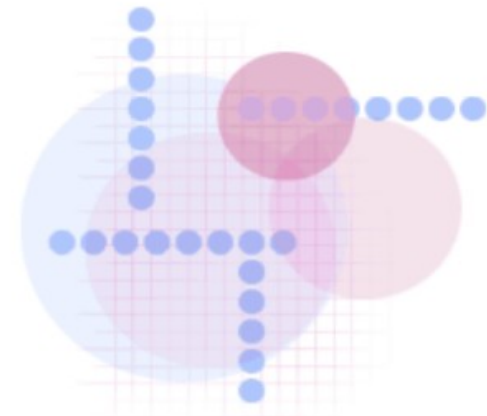
Submitting your Website to the Search Engines

- A list of the most popular search engines and directories you'll want to consider:
 - Google -- www.google.com
 - Yahoo -- www.yahoo.com
 - MSN -- www.msn.com
 - Teoma -- www.teoma.com
 - Overture -- www.overture.com
 - Open Directory -- dmoz.org
 - AltaVista -- www.altavista.com
 - Inktomi -- www.inktomi.com



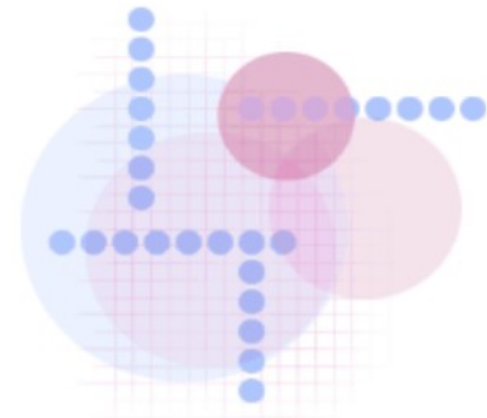
“Growing” Inbound Links

- It can not be emphasized enough, inbound links are very important to marketing your website!
- A good SEO strategy always includes building and developing good quality links.
- Text-based links connect your website to other relevant websites (even if your website is not listed in the search engines, you'll still see traffic from all the links you have on other websites!)



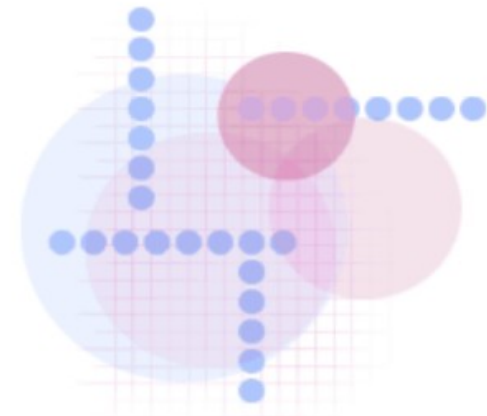
“Growing” Inbound Links

- To begin, consider linking with complementary businesses and child day care associations.
- It is as simple as sending out a personalized email requesting a link from another website. Keep in mind, usually the website will require a reciprocal link from you. Be prepared to offer a link on your own website in exchange for the link you hope to receive.



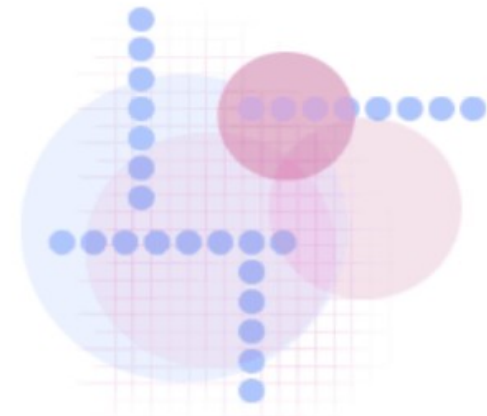
Online Advertising Models

- In addition to optimizing your website and increasing your site traffic through search engines, consider advertising on third-party websites and in search engines using a combination of banner ads and text links.
 - Graphical banner ads, pop-up ads and text based ads are designed to encourage users to click through to your website to learn more about your business.
 - Paid advertising in search engines offers marketers a guaranteed search engine listing placement on purchased key words.



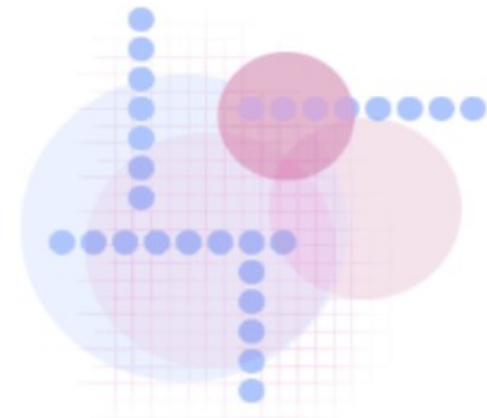
Publishing on Third-Party Websites

- An often overlooked, but cost effective method of online marketing is by publishing articles and editorials in third-party e-zines, e-newsletters and on other third-party websites.
- By providing articles to your targeted audience you can drive traffic to your website with no out-of-pocket expense! Just remember to include a short biography about your child day care and a link to your website at the bottom of each article you publish.



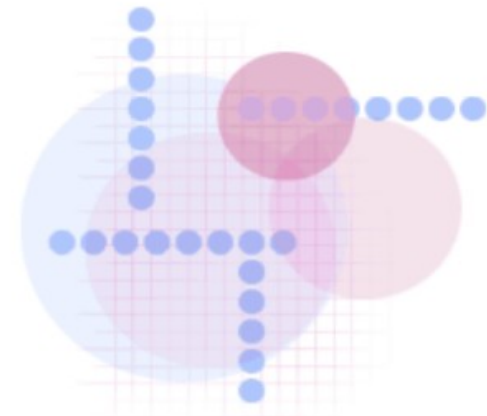
Permission Marketing Using Email

- Permission-based email marketing can be a low-cost and very effective component of your web marketing strategy. It can help to build a relationship between your target audience and drive traffic to your website and ultimately help you place children in your child day care.
- Email marketing consists of sales letters, personalized auto-responders and email newsletters.



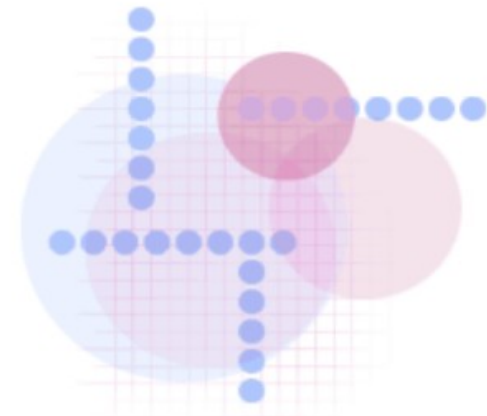
Permission Marketing Using Email

- If you have the budget and don't have the time, you can hire a freelancer or a firm to develop and publish your email messages for you.
- You can also purchase mailing lists that include email addresses with parents who have agreed to receive content about your industry.
- The advantage of email marketing is that you can choose a do-it-yourself option, where you do all the work and save hundreds, perhaps even thousands of dollars.



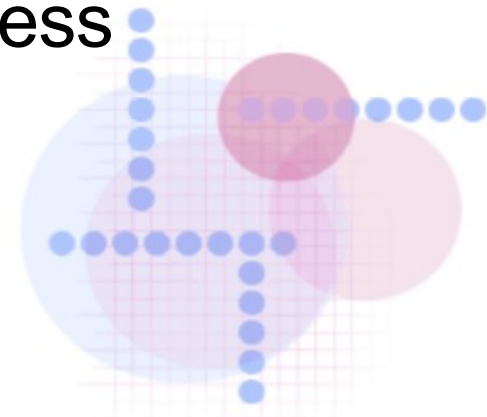
Self-Publishing Using Low-Cost Internet Tools

- With the number of self-publishing tools available today on the Internet, the costs of these tools are very low – from \$20 per month and up – and they are usually offered at a monthly or per 1000 email rate.
- The self publishing tools are hosted entirely online. Allowing you to stay and run your business while publishing information about your website with very little technical knowledge.



Self-Publishing Using Low-Cost Internet Tools

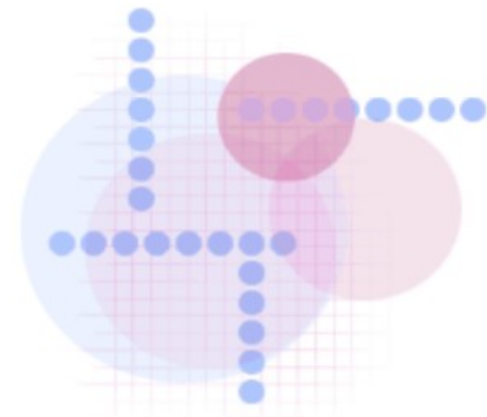
- At a minimum the self publishing tools available offer a database to store your email addresses, a selection of templates for your messages and the ability to import your own templates. Here are some popular self-publishing solutions:
 - Constant Contact -- www.constantcontact.com
 - MyMailOut.com -- www.mymailout.com
 - Topica -- www.topica.com
 - Microsoft -- www.microsoft.com/smallbusiness



The Importance of Offline

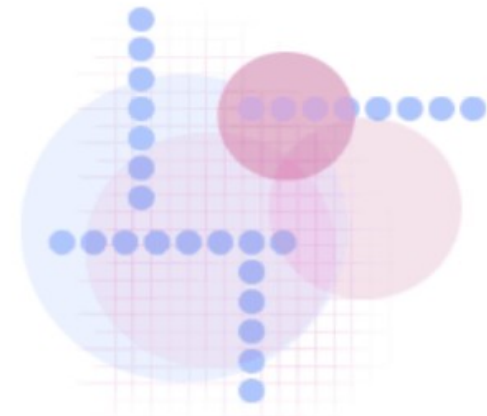
Marketing to Drive Traffic Online

- Never underestimate the value of using low-cost offline marketing techniques to encourage people to your website.
- Ensure your website is prominently listed on all your print media: business card, brochures, published articles, print advertisements, sandwich boards, your vehicle, and so on.
- Imaginative promotional techniques can be low-cost, yet drive traffic to your website!



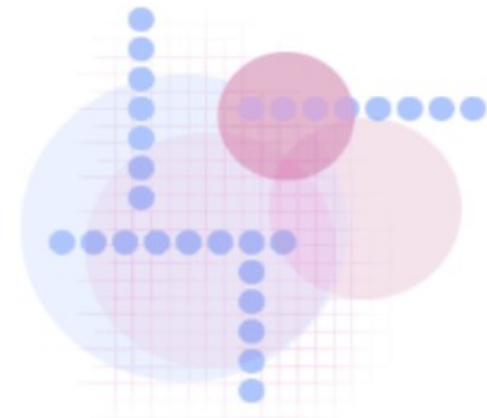
Getting Started: Developing a Plan

- Marketing your child day care on the Internet doesn't consist of cookie-cutter strategies that work for every child day care. For that reason, planning is an essential part to be successful.
- Careful planning and monitoring will enable you to design a strategy that meets your needs and budget, maps your progress and most importantly measures your return on investment.



The Importance of Measurement

- Do not go through all the effort of implementing an Internet marketing strategy without also implementing a system to track your progress and determine the worth of the system.
- By tracking each strategy, you'll be able to measure your return on investment and determine whether it is worthwhile or not.
- You will want to measure your progress weekly, monthly and yearly to determine whether you are achieving your objectives.



The Important of Measurement

- A list of popular website analytics and statistics packages to track your progress:
 - WebTrends -- www.webtrends.com
 - DeepMetric -- www.livestats.com
 - Web Position -- www.webpositiongold.com
 - Google Analytics -- www.google.com/analytics
 - WebSideStory -- www.websidestory.com



Internet Marketing Plan Checklist

- Your completed Internet marketing strategy should address the following:
 - What Internet marketing techniques you will use?
 - How you will implement each technique?
 - What kind of resources will you use?
 - How long will each technique take to implement?
 - What are your goals and objectives?
 - How will you solve any problems that might arise?
 - How will you evaluate your progress?

