

Build a Brand, Not Just a Website



the **strategic** word
Communicating the Future of Energy

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The times they're a changin'



- The standard for a good, effective website has changed
- Rapid transformation of the industry has led to a revolution in solar websites
- Your web presence reflects on the quality of your company

Start with the basics



- Your website's effectiveness depends on getting the fundamentals right
- Website's primary and most important function:
 - Communicate a clear picture of your company
 - Provide a user-friendly roadmap to engaging your company
- Many sites do not achieve this seemingly simple goal
- Do NOT add more functions until this all-important objective is achieved!



Avoid the all-too-common mistake
of jumping into writing and designing
the site too quickly

Strategize before you beautify



- Superior copy and design require well-packaged information to start from
- Repackage your knowledge to fit the needs and perceptions of the viewers
- The alchemy: integrating two points of view – yours and the viewer's

Engage in a strategic review



- Start by re-organizing what you already know
- Sources of information:
 - Existing website
 - Company literature
 - Internet research
 - Conversations with staff, possibly customers and suppliers
- Consider enlisting objective outside assistance

Examine the information



- What information is meaningful to the viewer?
- What is truly important?
- What has lost its usefulness?
- What needs updating or replacing?

Analyze the information



- Sort the information into viewer-centric categories
- Ask clarifying questions, resolve ambiguities
- Explore new insights and ideas
- Look for unifying patterns and organizing principles
- Discuss options for repackaging and presenting the information

Three essential strategic tasks



1. Determine your “unique selling proposition”
2. Segment your markets
3. Clarify what makes you trustworthy

1. Your unique selling proposition



- Clearly define “who we are”
- What is your founding company vision?
- What differentiates you from the competition?
- What is your competitive advantage?

2. Segment your markets



- Identify your different customer groups
- Delineate the categories of products and services you sell
- Goal: Make each customer group feel they are important to you

3. What makes you trustworthy?




- A well-established company?
- Electrical or contractor experience?
- Satisfied customers?
- Extensive solar training?
- NABCEP certified?

Now put the strategic review to work



Begin to create your website only
after the information has been packaged



The all-important home page



- Prompt the viewer's desire to learn more about your company
- Must capture viewer's interest within seconds
- If not, little chance the visitor will "turn the page"

It's a microcosm of the whole site...



Your home page needs to address each of these subjects in a succinct and compelling way:

- Who we are
- What we do
- Who we serve
- How we can help you
- Why you should do business with us
- Why you can trust us
- How you can reach us

... and a gateway to it



- Make clear, attractive links to deeper information on the key subjects
- The goal is to create clean, well-lit pathways that make it easy for visitors to readily find the information they want

HOME

GOING SOLAR

GRID-TIE SOLAR

OFF-GRID SOLAR

SOLAR HOT WATER

DO-IT-YOURSELF

SOLAR INCENTIVES

BUY LOCAL



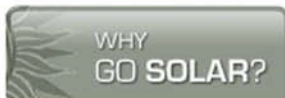
Go solar
with Vermont's
most trusted
solar provider

Make **your own solar electricity**, protect yourself against **utility rate hikes** – and get **tax breaks** for doing it!



Independent Power offers:

- › A-to-Z solar PV analysis, design & installation
- › Expert design & installation of solar hot water systems
- › 20 years experience - more than 400 systems
- › The highest rate of customer satisfaction in Vermont



grid-tie solar

- › Connect to the grid
- › Grid-tie solar gallery

off-grid solar

- › Remote solar power
- › Off-grid solar gallery

do-it-yourself

- › How we can help
- › Products & Brands

solar hot water

- › Hot water for less
- › Solar hot water gallery

Not sure where to **start?** [Click here](#)

“ We have worked with Independent Power for 12 years, have added to our array three times since the initial installation, and **we never even remotely considered contacting anyone else.**
Jerry Smith & Caroline Ballard
Hyde Park, VT



recent installations



Location: Bethlehem, NH
System: Hot water - flat plate collector



David Palumbo
Independent Power LLC

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David Palumbo



Independent Power LLC

Independent Power LLC supplies photovoltaic (PV) panels, inverters, batteries, power control panels, meters and other materials required to put together a complete off-grid power system along with expertise in design, installation and adapting the system to the individual site and requirements.

We are here to help our customers. We will help you properly size your solar electric system and help specify the equipment that will work best for you.

A Few Words About This Website

We would like this web site to become an extension of what we offer people when they come for one of our workshops. We'll put out good solid information about making and managing one's own electricity along with examples of several packaged systems that will show you what an IP system consists of and how much it costs. This will help us reach more people who could become potential customers of Independent Power and also help spread the word about the possibilities of being your own power company.

Don't forget to promote it!



- Put your URL on everything:
 - Business cards, ads, press releases
 - Vehicles, packages, signs
 - Letterhead, invoices
 - Email signatures
- Get listed in online business directories, solar information sites, everywhere you can
- Participate in forums and blogs – always include your URL

Additional tools and functions



To increase the value of your site over time:

- Search engine optimization (SEO)
- Information repository
- Specials and new products/service announcements
- Photo gallery of installations
- Solar education
- Simple and secure online forms
- E-newsletters
- Interactive communications
- Solar calculators and estimators
- Live tech support via chat or video chat
- Online training
- Online store