

ICT/Website Advice and Designers

Researching holidays is probably the area of the internet that gets most use. In the visitor survey Pembrokeshire County Council is currently conducting, about 16% of responses so far say they found out about Pembrokeshire from the internet. This compares to 9% from the Pembrokeshire guide, 9% from recommendations, 2% from Wales holiday guides and 1% from other guide books – most (61%) already know Pembrokeshire. The internet is therefore the biggest source of information for new visitors.

While there are still plenty of people who don't want to use computer technology and prefer to choose their accommodation using more traditional means, the use of the internet is likely to continue to increase. Visits to visitpembrokeshire.com have increased by 100% in the last year to 450,000 sessions & 10.8 million 'page' views.

If you don't have your own web site, you will be missing bookings and will be losing a lot more bookings in the future. The easiest way to get a web site is to get a contractor to do it for you. They can buy you a suitable domain name (web site address), set up a site for you and help you promote it as well. There are a number of local contractors to choose from. A selection includes:

Buzinet Solutions Tel 01437 457500 Website: www.buzinet.co.uk	Pembrokeshire Online Ltd Tel: 01348 837102 Website: www.pembrokeshireonline.net
Dotnet Works Ltd Tel. 01646 689220 Website: www.dotnetworks.co.uk	Evolverment Solutions Limited Tel: 01792 485510 Website: www.evolverment.net
Morgan Walsh Tel 01437 563650 Website www.morganwalsh.co.uk	Globeorange Tel: 01437 721125 Website: www.globeorange.com
Netring Design & Technology Tel: 01239 814545 Website: www.netring.co.uk	Kestrel Publishing Tel: 01437 563344 Website: www.kestrelpublishing.co.uk
Web Adept Ltd Tel: 01437 720033 Website: www.webadept.co.uk	NACAL Solutions Tel: 01646 695887 Website: www.nacal-solutions.co.uk
Pembs.net Tel: 01834 831400 Website: www.pembs.net	

This is not an exhaustive list, and inclusion of a company on this list does not imply endorsement by Pembrokeshire County Council. Please inform tourismteam@pembrokeshire.gov.uk if you are aware of any additions or changes and an updated list will be issued.

The most cost effective format will probably be to use an 'off the shelf' template with a fixed number of pages. If you find a web site you like the format of, the design contractors are very often listed at the bottom of the 'home page'. Talk to several contractors and get them to supply prices for both designing your site and ongoing hosting charges. Make sure that the domain name is registered in your name to cover you if things go wrong in the future. Also ask about statistics and feedback for when the web site is operational and about promoting the web site through search engines. A very useful feature is a CMS (Customer Management System) console. It allows you to update areas of your web site from your own PC. This can be particularly useful for special offers or price information.

The DIY option isn't as difficult as you might imagine. You need some web design software like Microsoft FrontPage, Microsoft publisher or Web Easy Pro. Retail price for these are over £80 so try www.amazon.co.uk or www.ebay.co.uk for second hand programmes. A basic digital camera will be needed to provide images for your web site. High resolution pictures take too long to load and need to have their size drastically reduced so some photo manipulation software like Adobe Photoshop Elements might be useful and might help you to get the best out of your photos. You might get this or something similar with your digital camera. All you need now is a web host. Type in 'web hosting' in any search engine and plenty of options are displayed including www.names.co.uk or www.supaserve.com with some very inexpensive options, the cheapest at

only £2.49 per month. They may also include a free web site domain (address) in the package. When choosing a domain name keep it short and relevant. The more memorable it is the better. The www.lycos.co.uk web site have good hosting options plus an e-learning package, click on the 'Get Started' tab on their home page.

One big advantage of your own site over one provided by a contractor is that you can adapt it, change it and update it as often as you want at no additional cost. However, Content Management Systems (CMS) are an increasingly common feature of contractor-designed sites, which allow you to update information as often as you like.

Add special offers, new features, new photographs and more content as you fancy. Put as much information on it as you can, it all helps prospective visitors visualise what they're getting. Try adding photo's and menus from local restaurants and pubs, price lists from activity providers, photos of nearby attractions, good nearby walks, beaches etc. A web site shouldn't be just an on line version of your leaflet. Take the opportunity to put in as much detail as you can.

Once you have your web site, don't just forget about it, you now have to promote it. A website that isn't promoted is as useful as a pile of leaflets on the shelf in the office. Promotion is also the more expensive part. The cheapest option is to submit the site to the major search engines; Yahoo, Alta Vista, Excite, Ask Jeeves, Lycos and Google. Another essential is to register all your details on www.visitpembrokeshire.com and www.visitwales.com. You can do this whether you have a web site or not but it will work better if people can go direct from one web site to another.

There are numerous web sites you can link from such as www.smoothhound.com or www.hidays-holiday-cottages.co.uk – but at a cost. Be careful to monitor which ones are generating bookings though. The more expensive options might turn out to be the better ones. As the internet is constantly changing & evolving, you need to use it regularly to see what's new. If you have any features that attract specific groups of visitors such as birdwatchers, there will be dozens of specialist web sites that you may be able to link from, particularly if you can offer them something e.g. local sightings.