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ICANN developed a policy for domain name disputes called the "Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Process" (the full policy can be found at <http://www.icann.org/udrp/udrp.htm>)

All registrars accredited by ICANN must follow the same dispute resolution policy. Under this policy, disagreements can be resolved through an administrative hearing. Some proponents of this policy believe that such disputes are resolved quickly and economically; however, others believe that because the cases are decided in many instances by non-judges or non-lawyers who have no trademark experience, the decisions are inconsistent, and as such, using the ICANN domain name resolution process is nothing more than a shot in the dark.

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## Ask Net Man

Sam Levy

**Q:** NET MAN, Now that we're into the selling season of the fourth quarter, should I "just" update the content on my brochure Web site, or do you think it's worth it to make the investment installing a shopping cart?

**A:** Updating content on any Web site is of prime importance, especially with search engines like Google currently re-indexing (known as spidering) Web site content several times a week rather than once a month! So, even if your Web site is "brochure" style, updated content especially in the form of added articles or archived newsletter issues, is something which you should continuously consider. Even better than just changing content is to also add new pages of content on a continual basis.

That being said, if you're in a retail business and considering making

the move to an online ordering system, you should consider at least these four basic questions about your product line in order to determine the Return on Investment (ROI) of installing a shopping cart:

1. Online consumers have a "comfort range" of prices in which online purchasing through a relatively unknown company (yes, yours) is felt to be least risky. This range varies by product but can easily accommodate items that individually cost in the range of twenty to thirty dollars. Does that describe you? Maybe you would prefer to sell higher-ticket items, but will these realistically sell online to customers who don't know you?
2. Commodity type purchases of known, standardized items like books, music and videos are the most common online, since customers know in advance exactly what they'll be getting and there is a mutual understanding of the deliverable. Does that describe your product? I'm sure you realize those types of items have the most competition on line. While the Internet can be a great method to get unique items out for sale to a much larger audience, the individual purchase price will affect the feelings of trust and familiarity perceived by the Web site visitor.
3. Do your customers live elsewhere, or travel and then call you to get your products shipped to them or to see what's come in lately? If so, then you're in an excellent, enviable position and definitely stand to gain from an online shopping system. If not, then have a clear idea of the advantage of purchasing on the Internet by both your existing and potential new customer base from their perspective.
4. Do you have an existing email or snail mailing list of out-of-town customers to whom you can send an announcement of your shopping cart with a reasonable expectation of returns? If so, then great – make sure that you start your email newsletter. Yes, even with ever

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## Pass the Hat

Sam Levy dreamed up a new tradition at the July Meeting, namely, "Pass the Hat".



He passed it to Gerrie Becker for one sin or another.



At the August Meeting Gerrie (above) passed it on to Marianne Granoff.



In September Marianne (above) foisted it off to Mike Kruchoski. Who's next?

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-stricter spam controls, monthly email newsletters are still very profitable whether you're aiming for sales, inquiries, contacts or just information dissemination.

Of course, there are exceptions to every rule, so if you don't answer yes to all of these, don't necessarily give up the idea of an online shopping system. What is most important with your Web site is to come at the shopping reality and experience from an outside, potential customer point-of-view, without preconceptions or delusions, and honestly evaluate your metrics and likelihood of online retail success.

An essential element of online shopping success is your marketing plan, just as we discussed at the open-to-the-public October NMIPA general meeting in Albuquerque (2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month, see [www.nmipa.org](http://www.nmipa.org) for upcoming meetings). This can include online marketing, search engine optimization, affiliate programs, pay-per-click ads and much more. Without visitors to your site, it's pretty hard to sell!

As mentioned last year in this column, and very much still applicable, I've assembled a list of questions to consider when bringing your eCommerce possibilities to your Web developer at [www.thetecave.com/checklist.html](http://www.thetecave.com/checklist.html). If you don't have Internet access, feel free to snail mail me at the address below and I can send a copy of this checklist to you.

*NMIPA Vice Chairman Sam Levy is a project manager at NET MAN, Inc., a Santa Fe NM full service Web site design, development, hosting, database and Internet integration consulting company. Please send your Internet questions or any comments to [asknetman@thetecave.com](mailto:asknetman@thetecave.com)*

## Web Site Education for Small Business



Bill Morrison is the Chairman of the NMIPA Education Committee. In that capacity, he gives seminars on doing business on the Web. He has developed an extensive **Power Point** presentation entitled "Managing you Web Site Development".

His next seminars will be at the UNM Valencia Campus in Los Lunas. For more information visit the Small Business Development Center Web site at [www.nmsbdc.org](http://www.nmsbdc.org).

The NMIPA is proud of the work Bill has done.

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