

Internet Biz 2010 Contest

Planned Use of the Internet - Final Plan

The Internet Biz 2010 contest is designed to encourage greater use of the Internet by NEK businesses. The Final Plan submitted by each business will be awarded 0 to 100 points by a panel of judges. The content of the **Proposed Internet Usage, Marketing and/or Training Plan**, and **Cost and Benefit Details** sections of the Final Plan will account for 90 of the points that can be awarded. The judges also can award up to 10 discretionary points for a plan. The Final Plan that is awarded the most points will receive the \$4,000 cash prize for the **Best Overall Plan**.

The three special awards of \$1,000 each for the planned Internet use which has the **Largest Impact** on a business, the **Most Innovative** use of the Internet by a business, and the plan that will encourage **Most Internet Usage within the NEK** will also be decided by the judges. If you believe your plan qualifies for one or more of these special awards make sure you highlight the features that the judges should consider.

Following are the sections that should be included in your Final Plan with some additional information you may want to consider.

Contact Information

Include the following:

- Name of existing or proposed business. *(If a name doesn't exist yet provide a potential name or a descriptive title such as "Selling widgets")*
- Town in which the business is or will be located or based
- Contact information:
 - Name of person submitting the plan
 - Email address
 - Mailing address
 - Phone number

Current or Proposed Business

Use this section to give the judges an overview of your business so they have a context in which to evaluate the three sections of your plan where points can be awarded. Provide a brief description of your current or proposed business, including your products and/or services, a profile of your current or anticipated customers, and any particular challenges that will be addressed by your proposed use of the Internet. If your proposed Internet use will affect only a portion of your business, make sure you highlight this part of your business.

Note: There will be no points awarded for this section. However, judges have 10 discretionary points they can award which could be influenced by the content of this section.

Proposed Internet Usage (50 Points) Judges can award up to 50 points for this section. See the Judging Criteria on the www.InternetBiz2010.com web site for what the judges will be considering.

*Describe how you will use the Internet in your business. Be as specific as you can. For example, if you plan to start selling products from your web site, don't just say "will add e-commerce to my web site." Provide more detail about your e-commerce strategy, such as how many products/categories you will have, whether you will accept payments online, any special features such as wish-lists or featured specials. The point is to show the judges not only **what** you want to do, but that you have thought through **how** you plan to do it.*

If your proposed new Internet use is a non-standard or custom application, include enough detail to convince the judges that this is not just a "pipe dream" but is technically feasible.

Include a timeline for your Internet project, including items such as planning, building or customizing, testing, training (if appropriate), and implementation. If your plan has multiple steps, such as an information-only web site first followed by online sales later, give a timeframe for each step. Your future uses of the Internet may not have definite plans at this stage, but it might be good for you to let the judges know that you have thought about additional Internet functions, and that these would integrate with what you are currently planning. For some of you, the planning phase of your project is complete, and that is fine.

If you identified challenges in the previous section, describe how this Internet use will help overcome these challenges. Also describe how the new Internet use will integrate with other activities in your business. Often a new Internet function will add ongoing tasks to your workload, such as maintaining an online inventory or writing a weekly e-newsletter. Make sure you convince the judges that these new tasks will continue to be performed, and are justified by other time savings or by enough new revenue to add hours to your workforce.

Although the financial Cost and Benefit Details will be described in a subsequent section, the judges should come away from this section with a sense that this change to your business (or this use of the Internet by a new business) will have positive effects on your business. One of the special awards is for the Internet use that will have the most positive effect on a business, so if your Internet use will have a big impact on your business, highlight this fact.

There are also special awards for the plan that encourages the most use of the Internet by other people in the NEK and for the most innovative plan. These characteristics of your plan may not be obvious to the judges unless you bring it to their attention.

Marketing and/or Training Plan (20 Points) Judges can award up to 20 points for this section. See the Judging Criteria on the www.InternetBiz2010.com web site for what the judges will be considering.

Any new tool is only valuable if it is used. Use this section to describe what actions you plan to take to ensure that your new Internet use will be effective and sustainable.

For example, if you are proposing a new e-commerce web site or a site to market your products and services, what will you do to make potential customers aware of your business? What will you do over time to ensure continuing awareness? If you are a proposing a new internal Internet application, how will you train others to use this applications and how will you incent them to use it?

Cost and Benefit Details (20 Points) Judges can award up to 20 points for this section. See the [Judging Criteria on the www.InternetBiz2010.com](http://www.InternetBiz2010.com) web site for what the judges will be considering.

Describe all the anticipated costs associated with implementing the proposed use of the Internet and the expected financial or other benefits. Include development costs, ongoing costs and any non-technical costs, such as additional storage space or inventory or training costs, that are directly related to this new use of the Internet. Benefits could include additional revenue from new sales and/or savings from more efficient operations or reducing current costs such as print advertising. You do not need to include expenses for your business that are not related to your Internet plans.

With most business changes, the costs are greater at the beginning of a project, and the revenues/benefits grow later. Present your costs and benefits in time sequence. Show the judges that this project will have a net benefit to your business in a reasonable amount of time.

Service Award Request

The funding for the services awards, not the cash prizes, requires that services fall under a broad category called “technical assistance”. There is no specific definition of technical assistance that applies directly to the Internet Biz 2010 contest. One example would be services from web site development professionals which generally would be considered technical assistance. An example of purchasing equipment would generally not be considered technical assistance.

You probably included all the services needed in your Cost and Benefit Details section. This section is for you to specify the service(s) you would like the judges to consider awarding to you. Include the impact of not having the services paid for by the contest. Also, you may want to include the minimum services needed in order for you to do anything. There are limited funds available to pay for services so carefully consider what you request. A request for a large amount of services that you state are absolutely required for you to start implementing your plan to use the Internet may result in having no services at all awarded due to limited funds available

*If you have already selected a service provider, provide the name of the individual or company. Keep in mind that if services prizes are awarded to you they will be paid directly to your service provider, not to you. **IMPORTANT: All invoices for service awards must be paid to the service provider by 6/30/2010.***

Other Information Judges can award up to 10 discretionary points so include any other information that you feel is important about your plan to use the Internet.

This section is not required, but is available to you if there is additional information that you feel is relevant. Remember that the contest is focused on Internet use by small businesses, so extra non-Internet related information is probably not useful.