

Water Goes Digital

It's no big surprise that customers today turn to the Internet first when looking for information on water treatment—with so much information available at our fingertips, and so many ways to access it, consumers like to be as informed as possible before making purchasing decisions.

The water treatment industry has truly begun to embrace the Web, with most dealerships now maintaining company websites and even social media accounts. But now that the industry is on the Web, how do dealerships make sure customers find their websites in the deluge of (potentially misleading) available information on water quality?

Shannon Good, partner with the Good Marketing Group and author of "Your Online Calling Card" (page 20), likens a company website to a business card—it should be memorable, relevant and representative of the image you want your customers to perceive. But unlike a business card, websites today need to include more than just contact information. The idea that "We just need a presence and a phone number online," is no longer enough in the race to be relevant on the Web.

Good offers many pieces of advice in her article, two of the most important of which are to speak directly to your target audience about the value they will receive from your product or service, and to invest adequate time and money into your online presence.

Bennett & Cole Water Solutions of New



Milford, Conn., WQP's October Dealer of the Month, has embraced the idea of making its website more than a presence and a phone number. Rather, owners James Bennett and Jeff Colasante aim to make the website a resource that provides customers with information about not only the dealership, but also water quality issues and solutions.

To help potential customers find the website, Bennett & Cole utilizes search engine optimization. Colasante noted, however, that word of mouth—usually a dealership's most effective marketing method—also ties into the company's Web strategy. "By far the most referrals come from our current customers, who send their friends and coworkers to our website, and the website does the rest," he explained.

Crafting an online presence may take time and money, but these are resources well spent. Taking the time to craft your company's Web strategy, and positioning yourself as a resource of water quality information, whether through articles, blog posts or social media presence, will help customers and potential customers find you—and keep them coming back to you whenever they have a water quality issue or concern.

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