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TO WEB OR NOT TO WEB

Michael Pallamary offers his answer to this technology-age question.

by **Michael J. Pallamary, PLS**

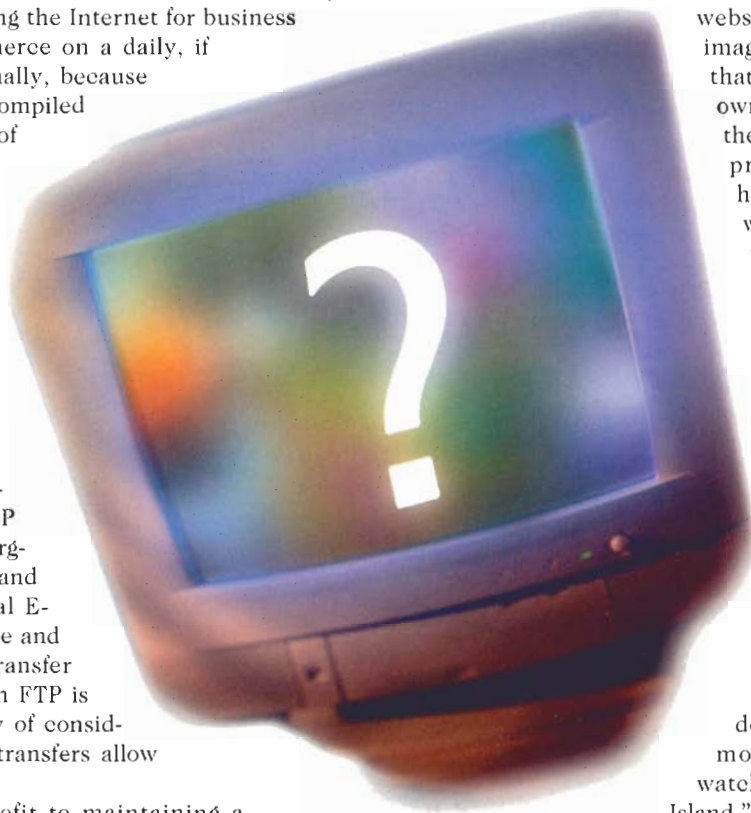
For me, the decision to establish a presence on the Internet was not a difficult one to make. Although I have been an active 'net enthusiast for many years, I waited until last summer before I took this important step forward. As an impetus for this decision, I have observed that over the last 18 months, my clients and I have been using the Internet for business communication and commerce on a daily, if not hourly, basis. Additionally, because virtually all of our data is compiled in a digital format, the use of a digital communication tool appeared to be a natural evolution to modern business practices.

Among the many benefits associated with living in the 'net, one must consider the merits of maintaining a sizeable volume of offsite memory to store and transfer large files. By using FTP or File Transfer Protocol, larger files can be sent quickly and safely. Unlike conventional E-mail, which is limited in size and stability, the capacity to transfer and store large files through FTP is a significant benefit worthy of consideration. Additionally, FTP transfers allow for better security handling.

Another wonderful benefit to maintaining a website is the economics and ease of making large volumes of boilerplate material available to my clients. A prime example can be found in the historic dissemination of ALTA/ACSM mapping standards or FEMA flood certificate forms for my clients. With a website, I have the luxury of directing my clients to my web page, where they can acquaint themselves with these standards. And, if they want, they can also download a copy of these standards.

It is perhaps of interest to note that my foray into HTML programming was the result of purchasing a wonderfully effective book entitled "Create Your First Web Page in a Weekend," written by Steve Callahan and published by Prima Publishing. After skimming through the book, I was pleased to have constructed a rough page in about three hours' time, and within 14 hours, I had a viable working website with all the requisite images and text. I would add that the decision to code my own page was influenced by the fact that even if I hired a programmer, I would still have had to supply him/her with the site-specific narrative information. By inserting a few simple HTML codes, I was able to convert my elementary discourse into a web page. And, because I used a simple text editor (Microsoft Notepad), I gained valuable insight into the theory of HTML. Now that I have learned how to "put a page up," I have decided to maintain it myself. As becomes readily evident, developing a website is far more entertaining than watching reruns of "Gilligan's Island." Already I can see that the

next step will be to develop more links to other sites. If you're out and about, come visit us at www.precisionsurvey.com



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