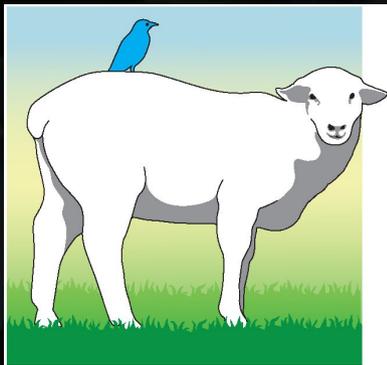


Developing Agri-Nature Entrepreneurship: Internet and social media



Mariposa Agri-Nature Association

Jon Wurl

Agrinature and technology??

We all want to slow down and “get back to the country”, but the truth is there is no escaping technology.

In particular, if you want to run a business of any size, you need to be found. A sign on the road is great, but it relies on people randomly driving past. An internet presence can help you be found, and be your virtual “sign on the street”.

Obtaining a domain

- Pick a domain name that describes you, what you do, and where you are, if possible – jonwurlsfoothilleggs.com
- Find a “registrar”: GoDaddy, NameCheap, Google domains, iPage
- Usually \$12-\$20 a year for registry
- Recommend buying privacy
- The registration process will tell you availability

Hosting

- Even if you don't want to have an active web site yet, get your domain or it may get bought by someone else
- Once you have the domain, it does nothing until a site is created
- Web service companies will do both for you – there are pluses and minuses however
- You can always change your mind later – once you own the domain, if you don't like one company (either the registrar or the hosting service) it can be transferred

Hosting 2

- Yahoo or Google – easy to use, hard to customize – extra \$\$ to use your domain
- Wix, Weebly – drag and drop, but otherwise similar to WordPress wrt templates – \$5 to \$25 per month
- WordPress – free aside from web hosting – good balance between customizable and ease of use
- Drupal, others

Hosting 3

Whatever option you use, you will ultimately be somewhat limited by your own energy to learn the tricks. You may want to partner up with a web designer. You can, for example, have the designer create the site with WordPress, but then you can do routine updates yourself.

There are always little tricks!



Social media – Facebook, primarily

Facebook “pages” are a good alternative to a web site. Easy to manage, however the capabilities are somewhat limited. A couple of successful examples here in town.

Not everyone uses (or wants to use) Facebook.

Have your friends “like”. Post things often. Buy advertising.

Other social media

- Twitter: can be used to create awareness, but it is just broadcasted text messages
- Instagram: similar to Facebook (same company, actually)
- Yelp: they do accept a variety of business types and sizes
- Etsy: great for artists, typically not helpful to agricultural businesses

Email lists

- Easiest option
- (Example in Mariposa County)
- An email with your domain name looks very professional – not hard, but you need a service (Fastmail, G Suite) which is about \$5 a month
- I will mention security in the last slide

How do people find you

- Google and other search engines
- External publicity (business card, brochure) with your web site
- Get on various directories
- For so-called “search engine optimization” use Google's recommendations – don't fall for the SEO optimization plans, they are mostly a scam

Security in general

- HTTPS for your web site – note that Google more or less “requires” this now
- Use strong passwords in general
- Use two-factor authorization if available
- Your most important password is your email – because most account recovery uses that – an email with your domain, using a service like Fastmail or G Suite, gives you the best control and security



All of this is evolving rapidly

Send me an email if you have any questions. I try to keep up with all trends, from top to bottom and inside out. On the other hand I may not know, but I can probably figure out the answer fairly readily. (44 years computer experience.)

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