

The Absolute Beginner's Guide To Starting a Web Site

By Milana Leshinsky



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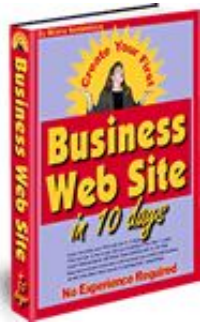
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Why put your business on the Web



- Your business will be open 24 hours a day. This means you won't have to stay open on Thanksgiving or Christmas day. If you live on the East Coast, people from California will still be able to shop in your store after you close. Any time someone wants to know your hours, location, directions, or any other details about your company, they can get it without disturbing you.
- Low staffing costs. When you have a web site, you can offer your products and services without hiring any extra employees. You won't have to spend any resources on compensating or insuring your new staff members and still be able to maintain the same level of sales and customer service.
- Gain thousands more new customers. Because anyone in the world can see your web site, you will gain customers from other states and countries while you are putting in the same amount of effort and money.
- Create an image of a well established company. Internet is a great medium through which you can create any image of yourself you want. It is all in your hands: design a professional web site, add helpful content, and your company will immediately take a step up in the image it represents. No matter how small your business is, with the right tools and a great desire you can make it look like a corporation on the Web!
- Save on postage and printing costs. Think of how many cards you mail out to let customers know about your sale. All of that can be eliminated by putting the sale information on your web site and inviting your customers to visit it. You can collect your customers' e-mail addresses and keep in touch with them about special events in your store via e-mail.
- Unlimited advertisement. If you ever advertised in a local newspaper, you know the costs. You are being charged per line, per inch, and per color. On the Web, there is no limit to how much you can put. You can add pictures, articles, newsletters, rates, product images and so much more! With just one web site, you can have almost unlimited advertisement for the same low monthly cost (under \$25 a month!)
- Improve communications. If you have employees or suppliers, your web site is the best way to communicate between you and them. Changes take effect as soon as you

post them on the Web, and everyone can see updated information without having to wait for a new database of products, and without contacting you directly.

- Impeccable customer service. This is a dream of any entrepreneur: "buy my product and leave me alone". By this I mean that business owners do not like to spend time explaining to customers how to use the product, how to install it, troubleshoot it, clean it, move it, turn it, and whatever else can be done to a purchased item. A web site will become your best friend in meeting the needs of your customers. It will answer all their questions. Simply create a page of "Frequently Asked Questions" and include its address on every receipt. This way, before they come to you for help, they will come to your web site for answers.
- Online presence - in step with your competitors. You must think of Internet as a gigantic Yellow Pages book. More and more people use the Web to shop for information, services and products. If you are not there - your competitors are! Can you imagine not being in Yellow Pages and try to reach local market? Unless you spend a lot of money on newspaper ads and other local promotions - no one will know your business exists. The same thing with the Internet. If people can't find your company on the Web, you might as well not exist.
- Get those cranky customers, too. Many people do not like to shop in the stores, malls and any other noisy places (I am first!). They are afraid of long walks, pressure from sales people, sneezing customers and bumping shopping carts. Once they discovered online shopping - they will never go back to the stores unless absolutely necessary. By putting your products online, you satisfy the needs of such customers and therefore succeed in one more niche.
- Showcase your work. Whether you are a real estate agent, construction business owner or a beauty salon specialist - you can put your work on display when you have a web site. Anytime a potential client wants to see your past work and projects, simply refer him or her to your site. No need to scan and mail pictures, or bring your client to a finished building project.
- Promotional Costs are very low. When I interviewed the manager of NY State Nissan dealership, he shared with me the costs of running an online ad compared to a newspaper or any other printed advertisement. He said, "We can run a whole month of advertisements online for the same amount of money we pay for one newspaper ad!" That's right, on an online promotion you can spend \$97 a month, while paying 10 times that much for a one-time large ad in a magazine!

- Beat your competition to the top. Competition online is huge today! There are over 3,000,000 sites on the Web and this number is growing. Still, I see at least 5 businesses a month who are not online and getting a web site is not in their near future plans. Why am I telling you this? Because if THEY don't get a web site - YOU have a better chance at succeeding. Insurance, home improvement, gift shops and other companies are among those I see dragging their feet in putting their businesses online. This means if you do it now, before EVERY company is online, you will be among the pioneers!

What equipment you need



If you downloaded this book from your own computer, than you already have all you need. If not, then here is what you need to be equipped with to make your own web site:

- Computer - Windows or Macintosh system
- Modem - for connecting to the Internet (at least 56K speed preferred)
- Internet Service Provider - a company that gives you access to the Internet

What skills you need



All you need to know is how to use your computer - Windows or Macintosh. You should also have used the Internet at least 3 times in the past. If you don't have basic computer knowledge, I recommend that you visit <http://www.Amazon.com> or your local bookstore and purchase one of these books:



- "How to use your Mac", by Gene Steinberg (2000)
- "How to use the Internet", by Rogers Cadenhead (2000)
- "How to use computers", by Lisa Biow (1998)
- "How computers work: Millennium Edition", by Ron White (1999)
- "Complete Idiot's Guide to Computer Basics", by Joe Kraynak (2000)

It would be very helpful if you have used a word processing program like MS Word, WordPerfect or WordPad before. Any web editor will have similar interface, buttons and menus.

3 simple tools for creating your Web Site

You will need to have several tools (computer programs) to design an attractive web site and successfully promote it without "losing your wallet". I created this little chart for you to see how each tool will be used:

Program	Description
<p data-bbox="337 814 711 886">To design your web page you will need a web editor</p> 	<p data-bbox="743 814 1235 957">A web page can be designed in two ways: in your text editor where you type your HTML code, or in a "what-you-see-is-what-you-get" web editor.</p> <p data-bbox="743 1010 1252 1115">If you have never seen HTML before, it would be a good idea to start with a simple web page editor such as Netscape Composer.</p> <p data-bbox="743 1125 1256 1188">It comes free with Netscape Communicator and can be downloaded from the Netscape web site.</p> <p data-bbox="743 1241 1260 1461">Many people learn better if they see how it is done. Keeping that in mind, I created a special tutorial in my book that contains 17 video clips of how I make a web page and put it online. It is like having me sit right next to you and guiding you through your first web page design!</p> <p data-bbox="743 1514 1256 1650">I know how some people hate downloading, that is why when I wrote my "Create Your First Business Web Site in 10 days!" I also included Netscape on the CD.</p>

<p>To put it online you need an FTP program</p> 	<p>FTP stands for File Transfer Protocol. Simply put, after you design your web site, you need to send it to the Web and your FTP program will do just that for you.</p> <p>I started with WS_FTP as my FTP program and continue using it today. It is very simple to do - just a matter of double-clicking a filename to transfer it to the Web server. As soon as your files are transferred to the Web server, anyone in the world can access your web site.</p> <p>WS_FTP can be downloaded for a free 30-day evaluation at www.FTPplanet.com. If you decide to keep it, the cost is about \$30.00. This trial is also included on CD-ROM.</p>
<p>To view it you need a Web browser.</p> 	<p>Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator are the most popular Web browsers. As the name implies, you use it to browse the Internet. As a web designer, you will need your browser to see how others will see your web site.</p> <p>Both browsers are free for download. If you decide to use Netscape Composer as your web page editor, Navigator also comes with Netscape Communicator (along with Composer, so you have the whole package!).</p> <p>Netscape Communicator, unfortunately, takes quite a while to download, but if you order "Create Your First Business Web Site in 10 days!" on a CD, I will include it free.</p>

Domain name basics

A domain name is the part of your Internet address that comes after "www". For example, in www.helpingfoot.com the domain name is helpingfoot.com. You DON'T have to have a domain name to have a web site, in which case you will be using someone else's domain. Here are examples of web site addresses that don't have their own domain names:

- www.aol.com/12345/~barbersupplies
- www.msn.com/biz/electronics
- <http://teddybearscompany.homestead.com>

These addresses are hard to remember, hard to spell, and difficult to say on one breath. That is why for a business I recommend getting your own domain name. It will look more professional and will create a lot more credibility for your company. To get your own domain name, you may use one of the domain registrars online.



The one I use is BuyDomains.com. They charge only \$16 a year per domain name (unlike Network Solutions' \$35), allow you to make changes within 5 days (in case you misspell it - this is the only company to my knowledge that offers this flexibility!), and give you great suggestions for your domain name. Just type in the desired domain and you will be given hundreds of variations to choose from.

In "Create Your First Business Site in 10 days!" I go step by step through choosing and registering your own domain name. BuyDomains can also host your web site, but let me explain hosting first.

Hosting your web site



After you register your domain name, you need some place to "host" it. In other words, you need to find a computer to store all your web site files. Can you store them on your own computer? Sure... but only you and your dog will be able to see your web site :-)

That is why you need a hosting company to host your web site and make it visible to anyone in the world. Sometimes your Internet Access Provider will offer free web space to host your site as a part of your existing account. You have to call your ISP and ask if they offer web site hosting. If they do, ask them how to set it up.

Now, please, don't confuse your hosting company with your ISP. Your ISP is the company that provides you with Internet Access. They give you a number to dial, a user name and a password to connect to the Web and start surfing.

A hosting company, on the other hand, physically stores your web site, regardless of who your ISP is. In fact, you don't even need Internet access to own a web site. (You DO need it to create it yourself.) These two are totally separate from each other.

However, your ISP can be your hosting company at the same time if they offer such services. Many of them do, so before you start looking around, ask your Internet access provider if they host web sites. If their prices are reasonable, go for it!

If not, find a hosting company that charges reasonable prices AND provides live technical support. Nothing will help you solve a problem as a live conversation with a representative. You will find me referring to BuyDomains over and over again, because they are EXCELLENT in customer support and if you are a beginner, you will be grateful to yourself for choosing them!

What to put on your web site

Depending on your goals, your web site can contain anything from portfolio to jokes. Here is a list of pages that you might want to create for your web site:



- Home page
- Products and Services
- Pricing Information
- About our company
- About our staff
- Company News
- How to Contact Us
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Portfolio
- Testimonials from happy customers

- Current promotions
- Schedule of events

To find and gather information for your web site, you need to pull out your...

- business brochures
- newsletters
- business cards
- flyers
- newspaper and magazine ads
- schedule
- pricing information

The point is, make your site interesting and useful to **YOUR CUSTOMERS**, not yourself. Don't waste your time on gadgets that only you will enjoy. Your site has to make you money by satisfying existing customers and attracting new ones. To make your site a complete magnet for your visitors, you could use one or more free Web tools described below.

How to make your site interactive

Statistics show that when a visitor has something to do on your web site, he stays longer and shops bigger. Make sure you, too, have something for your visitors to do on your site,



though offering a lot of quality information can also serve as a great visitor magnet and will generate more repeat visits. Here is a list of interactive tools you can add to your web site completely **FREE** and without any programming skills:

- Guestbook
- Poll
- Forum (message board)
- Chat room
- Password-protection
- Greeting cards

- Tell-a-friend about this site
- Feedback form
- Counter
- Live customer service
- Daily joke or daily cartoon
- Daily news headlines
- Site Search Engine
- Mailing List
- Automated Frequently Asked Questions

The list can go on and on, depending on what will attract YOUR type of visitors. All of these tools can be picked up at Bravenet.com web site completely free! To make it easy for my readers, I show step by step how to set up your own forum, mailing list and a feedback form in my "Create Your First Business Web Site in 10 days!" I know, I know... I already mentioned my book 3 times. But, hey, I've got to make a living! :-)

Below you can see a list of other web sites that offer free interactive tools for your web site (just because I love Bravenet, doesn't mean you have to ;-)

- <http://www.homepagetools.com>
- <http://www.mycomputer.com>
- <http://www.webpage-tools.com>
- <http://www.network54.com>
- <http://www.freeguestbooks.com>
- http://www.thefreesite.com/Webmaster_Freebies

Free graphics for your web site



If you have time to design your own graphics and have the software to use, that's great! PaintShop Pro (free trial included on my CD) and Adobe PhotoShop are ones of the most popular graphic programs. However, if you were not blessed with an artist's hand (I wasn't!), you will appreciate thousands of free graphics created by professionals. Here are the web sites where you can get free images and use on your web site completely free:

- www.graphicsByDezign.com - templates, clipart, backgrounds
- www.arttoday.com - clipart and photography
- www.pambytes.com - templates, clipart, backgrounds
- www.clip-art.com - huge database of various clipart and web graphics
- www.addesigner.com - design your own animated banner. The best tool of this kind I have found!
- http://home.netscape.com/assist/net_sites/bg/backgrounds.html - backgrounds for your pages
- <http://www.free-backgrounds.com> - backgrounds for your pages, including some with professional looking borders
- <http://www.windyweb.com/design/gallery.htm> - a wonderful collection of web graphics and clipart. Very easy to use, too.
- <http://www.pixelfoundry.com/bgs.html> - find some light textured backgrounds here
- <http://backgrounds.hypermart.net> - very colorful, bright and wild backgrounds
- <http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/Gallery/6467> - 100 mostly light textured backgrounds
- <http://www.bigbeautifulbackgrounds.com/page1.htm> - abstract, cosmos-like backgrounds
- <http://www.buttonland.com> - all kinds of buttons to use on your web site
- <http://www.topicons.com/indexenglish.htm> - professional collection of icons (small pictures) categorized by subject
- <http://www.angelfire.com/ut/Thunderhead> - very professional buttons, I might use some for my own site :-)

To save an image you like, simply right-click on it and choose "Save Picture As". Then use it on your web site to make it more user-appealing.

How to sell on your web site



If you are already able to accept credit cards from your walk-in customers, the costs of adding a store front to your web site are \$0. All you need in this case is a good and reliable

shopping cart (same as a store front). I have tried several for my customers and I especially liked these:

- <http://www.bravenet.com>
- <http://www.freetailer.com>
- <http://www.freemerchant.com>

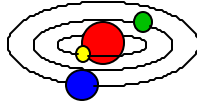
If you are only starting out and don't have any way of accepting credit cards at this time, you have two options. You can contact your local bank and tell them you would like to open a merchant account. There are several fees involved in it anywhere between \$100 and \$500, just like in registering your business name or purchasing a business license. If you decide to go with this option, you will still need to purchase expensive software to process your credit card payments.

Your other option is to find a company online that will give you a merchant account, a store front and will process credit card payments for you. This is my way to go! And the best way for you if you are just starting doing business online and don't want to invest a lot of your hard-earned dollars. Here are the companies that many people are using (including myself) to accept payments online:

- <http://authorize.net>
- <http://www.ibill.com>
- <http://www.verza.com>
- <http://www.clickbank.com>
- <http://www.propay.com>
- <http://www.clickbank.com>
- <http://www.ccnw.com>

Whether you are selling multiple items (a shopping cart can be easily set up in this case), or one item or a service, the above list of companies is a good place to start.

Where to go from here



If you decided you want to start your own web site, you need a good guide to take you through this process. Coming to America with a music background and learning how to use computers was one of the scariest experience in my life. After all, I had to learn a skill that could guarantee me a good job in years to come. And to be completely honest with you, I wish a book like the one I wrote was available to me then, so I could actually see how things are done in real time.

My web site states: "If you can type, you can make a web page!" and that is absolutely true. Making a web site is very simple, but only if you are WILLING TO DO IT.

If you think that the first page I designed was extremely simple - YOU ARE RIGHT. IT WAS! But if you think that your business page should not be simple, and has to use some fancy technology and tricks - YOU ARE VERY WRONG!

The best selling pages are those that

- are very easy to use and navigate
- do not confuse their visitors by adding hi-tech tools that crash their computers
- offer useful and current information to come back to

So, unless you are trying to demonstrate to your visitors how good you are at designing web sites, you should focus on how informational and easy to use your site is. And Netscape Composer is doing just that for you. It helps you create a simple and straight forward web site. No confusion whatsoever. It is a simple web page editor that allows you to insert text and pictures as if you were creating any document.

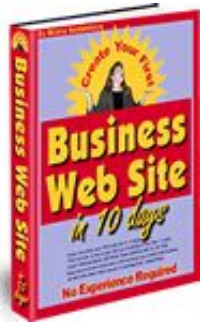
You may view Table of Contents of "Create Your First Business Web Site in 10 days!" or download 1st chapter completely FREE!

[FREE TRIAL LESSON IN](#)
["CREATE YOUR FIRST BUSINESS WEB SITE IN 10 DAYS!"](#)

"Announcing: Special Video Training System Makes It Amazingly Easy For You To...

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- A Website You Can Immediately Start Using To Sell Tons Of Your Products And Services Directly Over The Internet
 - A Website That Makes Visitors Feel More Inclined To Buy From You By Portraying A Professional And Credible Image Of Your Business
 - And You Can Do It Without Any Of The Hassle, Stress, Frustration, Or BIG Cash Investment Normally Associated With Creating A Website...And Have It Completely Finished And Ready To Go In 10 Days Or Less
- Plus, If You Hurry, You Get To Tweak And Improve Your Site For Maximum Sales Pulling Power (After It's Finished) Based On The Expert One-on-One Advice Of A Professional Web Designer.



Get Your First Lesson Completely Free!

http://www.firstbusinesswebsite.com/free_lesson.html

Appendix 1 - Web Dictionary

Term	Definition
Browser	A computer program that allows you to view web pages - offline or online. Netscape and Internet Explorer are the most popular Internet browsers.
Buttons	A small outlined area on a web page that you can click to make something happen. Buttons are often used to submit information, process a form, or any other interactive tool.
Chat Room	Internet-based program that allows people to communicate live. You can add your own chat room to your web site using Bravenet.com free services.
Community	To create a community on a web site means to allow people express their opinions and share their problems through tools such as forum, chat room, newsletter, discussion lists etc.
Counter	Also known as "hit counter", it stands for the number of objects requested by visitors. Most common objects "counted" are web pages and images on it. A hit counter does not count the number of people coming to your web site. Unique visitor counter does.
Default	If you do not specify a setting for some object, it automatically assigns a setting or a value to it. For example, if you don't specify the width of a table on your web page, it will be automatically assigned "100%". Or if you don't specify the size of a border around your image, it will automatically put a border of size 1.
Directory	A special kind of a folder that contains files and other folders on a computer system. You can organize your web site into several directories, for example, by creating a special folder to place all your images in and putting all your text documents in another.
Domain Name	A part of a web site address. For example, in http://www.helpingfoot.com , the domain name is helpingfoot.com.
Domain Transfer	Arranging for a new host to point to your domain name. You can also ask your new hosting company to actually host your web site by transferring all your files to their web servers.
Download	To download means to copy a file - image, computer program, movie - from remote computer to your computer. When you purchased this book, you had to download it first to be able to read it.
Download Time	The time it takes to download a program, a web page or any other computer file. Download time of your web page should be under 10 seconds, otherwise your visitors will leave without seeing it.

E-commerce	An ability of a web site to accept and process orders. For helpful information on e-commerce, please, visit http://webopedia.internet.com/TERM/e/electronic_commerce.html .
E-mail Address	Electronic address that allows people to communicate through the network of computer systems.
Execute	Perform an action or "run" a program. Executable programs can be clicked on to start performing whatever action they were programmed to do.
Extension	The end of a filename. Usually it is the last 3 or 4 letters of a filename that indicate what type of file it is. For example, setup.exe tells you that it is an executable file, index.html tells you that it is an Internet page and can be viewed from a browser.
Form	A document that needs to be filled out. Forms are used on web sites to allow visitors submit information, feedback or questions. You can get your own form at http://www.helpingfoot.com/mailform.html
Forum	A special message board that allows web site visitors to post their questions, answers and suggestions. You can set up your own forum through Bravenet.com.
Frames	Frames split a browser's window in several parts. They are often used to have one section of a web site visible at all times, even when you scroll. Beginners should not try to create frames on their web sites, because they are very tricky and can confuse you in no time.
FTP	Stands for File Transfer Protocol. You will use it to send your files to the web server. WS_FTP LE is the tool I use for this book.
Home Page	The first web page of a web site.
Host	A computer that can be accessed by a user from a different location. A web server is a host where you will store your web site files.
HTML	Short for HyperText Markup Language, it is a language used to create documents for the Web. It uses tags to define property of text, images, and documents.
HTML Source	See Source Code.
Image	Any graphic used on your web site - picture, clipart, logo, etc.
Image Editor	A computer program that allows you to create and modify images. An example of image editor is PaintShop Pro and Adobe Photoshop.
Index.html	This should be the name of your main web site file. If you name it anything else, instead of your web page, you will see a list of all files in your web directory.
Install	To install a program means to make it function on your computer and perform tasks which it was programmed to perform. Installation usually requires executing a program.

Interactive Tools	Features on your web site that allow visitors enter information, play a game, answer a question, share an opinion or do something that is more than just browsing it.
Internet Address	See URL.
Internet Explorer	The most popular Internet browser.
Internet Service Provider	A company that provides access to Internet. It gives you a user name, a password and a phone number to dial. If you have a modem in your computer system, you will then be able to access the Internet.
ISP	See Internet Service Provider
Launch	Same as "start".
Link	Text or graphic that can be clicked on to get to another Web document. Also known as hyperlink.
Mailing List	A list of e-mail addresses that you can collect by putting a special form on your web site. When you send a message to your mailing list, everyone receives it by the click of a "send" button.
Merchant Account	You need to have a merchant account to be able to accept payments from your customers. Many online companies offer you free merchant accounts today. Clickbank.com and iBill.com are some of them. However they do require a transaction fee when an order is placed.
Modem	A piece of equipment inside your computer (or attached to it) that allows you to dial a phone number and access Internet.
Name Servers	A program that translates names from one form into another. For example, the Internet relies on Domain Name Servers (DNS) that translate domain names into IP addresses.
Navigation	A carefully thought out menu system that allows people to find documents on your web site.
Netscape Communicator	A program package that contains Composer (for designing a web page), a Navigator (for viewing web pages) and other Internet tools.
Netscape Composer	A Web Editor we will use to create a web page.
Password Protection	Ability of a web site to restrict access only to those visitors who know the password. It is used for private sites, member-only sites and for security reasons. Password protection tool is available from Bravenet.com free of charge.
Pop-up Window	A window that suddenly appears on your screen. It is usually smaller than other open windows and wants your immediate attention. Most of the pop-up windows today, though, are used to get your attention to an advertisement.

Real-time Credit Card Processing	A system that allows immediate processing of your online customers' credit cards.
Reload	To reload a web page means to update it to reflect changes. You need to reload (or refresh) a web page after you make changes to it and upload to your web server.
Search Engines	A program on the Internet that searches documents to find a word or a phrase you specify. Examples of Search Engines are AltaVista and WebCrawler.
Secure Server	A web server that encrypts information and transactions to protect them from someone else seeing them and abusing or taking advantage of such information.
Shopping Cart	A web page that allows visitors make online purchases through searching or browsing, and submitting payment through a secure system. The difference between a shopping cart and other e-commerce systems is that a customer can purchase more than one items from your store in the same transaction.
Site Map	Table of contents of a web site. You can use it if you have over 10 pages, to make it easy for people to see what your site offers.
Site Search	A special web tool that your visitors can use to find information or a product on your web site. Atomz.com offers such tool free of charge.
Source Code	HTML code behind any web page.
Store Front	See Shopping Cart.
Text Editor	Any computer program that allows you to create, modify and save a text document. You need a text editor for working with HTML code behind your web pages.
Traffic	Number of people coming to a web site. The more traffic, the better. You can find out how much traffic your web site gets by viewing and analyzing the log files on your web server.
Upload	To upload means to transfer files from one computer to another. You will upload the files you created for your web site, to your web server. Until you upload all the files, your web site will not be accessible from the Web.
URL	Address of a web site. URL usually starts with "http://www." Example of a URL is "http://www.helpingfoot.com".
Web Hosting Company	A company that provides a physical location for storing web sites. Many web hosting companies extend their services to free web tools and utilities.
Web Page	Any document you see on the Internet, that contains text, images and links to other web pages.

Web Page Editor	A computer program that allows you to create web pages visually. You can add text, pictures, links, tables and other objects to your web page by the click of a button. No HTML skills is necessary. An example of a such a web editor is Netscape Composer.
Web Server	A remote computer that allows people to store web sites. A web hosting company gives you its address, user name and a password to access it at any time. You need to access a web server to upload your site's files to the Web.
Web Site	A collection of web pages that belongs to one company, organization, or person.
Web Tools	See Interactive Tools.

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Introduction

10 DAYS? NO KIDDING!



- Milana welcomes you!
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Appendix 1

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