Background

I am a business owner with a fun little hobby (raising and showing beagles) that I wanted to share on a website. Initially I had a friend build my first beagle website. She was a young kid that had built herself and a few other beagle fancier friends a website. Whenever I needed pages updated, I would send her the photos and information, and sometimes she would update my site. It was frustrating because being HTML and website illiterate, I was dependent on her to update my site. When she moved to Florida, I was on my own. I learned to use FrontPage so I could make simple changes. But then one day, one of my biggest fears came true. I got a message that FrontPage was no longer supported and I could not edit my website.

I had no idea where to start. I didn't understand what a domain site or name was, or what HTML was. I signed up for a class called, *Editing Your Website* by Dorene Matney at Sierra College. In this class I learned that this website work is way too complicated for me. Even the simplest terms, for example "HTML" and "domain", were "Greek" to me. I decided to either hire someone privately to help me or give up on having a website.

I asked Dorene if she would work privately. She agreed.

Working with Dorene was the right choice. I feel working with a private instructor cuts the learning time down 100 fold. Dorene finds out what your goals are and gives you choices on how she can help you achieve your goal. Working one on one with Dorene, I could ask some of the simplest questions and come to an "Ah ha!" understanding at the end. Dorene is an excellent instructor – she listens, and helps you learn efficiently at the level you are ready for.

I made the choice to build my website from scratch, so that instead of editing a site that was in poor form, I could start with "correct" pages and be able to edit using a program Dorene suggested for me that was user friendly: Expression Web.

Dorene built my first pages from the ideas that were in my head. Communication was so easy. She would upload a sample page to me, via email, I would give her my feedback and questions on an email. Once the pages were built, Dorene came for our private lessons to teach me how to edit and be in control of my site. She taught me how to use Expression Web software to edit my site.

Any time I had great ideas to add features to my site or if I had any questions, I would email Dorene and she would give me the answer immediately. With every question I shot her, each answer provided new learning that I could use to help me edit my website.

Results

Currently, Auburn Beagles is a top contender for the most traffic and hits of similar beagle sites on the Web. How do I know this? My competitors know that I get the majority of inquiries, so they ask me for

referrals. Those who have hit counters say that the majority of their referrals are directly from my site. Also, one of the biggest compliments and the most common comments I get from my site is, "The reason I chose you is because from looking at your website, we can tell that you have high standards and raise quality beagles, and we want to get a beagle from a breeder like you." I have heard the comment many times, "your site is so easy to navigate through and your beagles are so beautiful." Some of the folks say, "We know all of your beagles' names and are very familiar with you. We have read every page on your site!"

Summary

Every penny and every minute that I spent to have Dorene Matney build and educate me on how to edit my site was worth it. Your website is like a résumé, it represents who you are to the World Wide Web. Whenever I get those comments on how great my website is, I am proud that, [Website consulting by Dorene Matney](#) is permanently attached to my site.

Julie Cheng
Auburn Beagles
www.auburnbeagles.com