

Services can also be sold along the Internet channel.

**Publishing Online Brochures:** If your primary business is delivering an offline service, you may want to publish an online brochure. This sort of Web site can deliver practical information about your service and enable you to develop your image and build trust and customer loyalty.

Your online brochure Web site will attract customers to your business, but it will not directly create a profit unless you syndicate your content, sell advertising space, or earn revenues from an affiliate relationship. If you have a special expertise that has broad appeal, you may be able to generate revenue from your knowledge or research by syndicating your content to other Web sites. Check out iSyndicate for an example of how this works.

Your Web site itself can also be a source of income if you sell advertising space for banner ads, sell and manage advertising space, join an affiliate (or associate) program, or create your own affiliate program.

**Automating an Offline Service:** Many things that can be done offline can be done faster and more cost-efficiently on the Web. Banks, for example, can offer the ability to check account balances online, and manufacturers may offer inventory information and detailed product specifications even though they may not sell via the Web.

[Mimeo.com](http://Mimeo.com) is an example of a site that automates printing services. Customers can send their office documents to Mimeo by way of online order forms to get bound color reports made out of them. This saves customers a trip to the copy shop. Likewise, [HomeGrocer.com](http://HomeGrocer.com) automates the grocery shopping experience by allowing customers to shop over the Web and schedule delivery of groceries to their homes.

If you decide to automate an offline service, be sure you have extensive knowledge of the offline business equivalent. For example, operating an online printing service requires all the same printing and technical know-how as running an offline printing service. Decide what you'll feature in your service catalog and how you'll handle online payments and process online orders. Then decide how products will be distributed, shipped, and delivered. Online businesses

need some customer service expertise too. As with any business, there will be confusing shipping issues, questions about products, and problems with payments or returns. Make sure that you oversee customer service processes in order to give your customers the best support possible.

Building a Web site that automates an offline service will cost you the fees for Web hosting, the price of e-commerce software, the fees for payment processing service, etc. Distribution, shipping, and delivery mechanisms cost money too.

Your automated-service Web site makes you money because you can charge customers for the service you provide to them.