



Richard taught himself how to design his website and has seen his IT efforts pay off handsomely

The secret lies in keeping your site updated regularly

Licensee Richard Pope's website has averaged 80 visits a day recently – impressive considering he taught himself web design from scratch and launched the website with absolutely no help in February 2007.

His pub, the Bull's Head in Repton, South Derbyshire, needed a marketing boost when it reopened in May 2007. This resulted in the website. Ahead of the date it featured plans to reassure worried locals that it was not going to be transformed into a live music venue or worse.

And today's visitors to www.thebullsheadrepton.co.uk will find carefully categorised information on everything from the menu to the refurbishment.

Richard bought himself some instructional CDs on how to use website software Adobe Dreamweaver. With a self-created website he was free to design it exactly as he wanted, without the bother of having to employ an agency and give it a complicated brief.

It also means he can update it regularly, some-

thing which he says is paramount. As a matter of routine he posts photos of the Bull's Head's events on the site the following day, and the activities schedule is regularly updated.

"That's where most pub websites fail," Richard says. "If the site gets out of date, users lose interest, and why shouldn't they?"

It's also important, he says, to have a theme and a web design that's consistent with the business – in Richard's case, "modelled on the early London gastropubs, with rustic and trendy chalkboard-style writing".

Richard goes to great lengths to promote the site and boost visitor numbers. The domain name can be found everywhere from the Bull's Head's flyers to staff uniforms, and it was in foot-high writing on a banner attached to the pub when it was little more than a building site in early 2007.

And what does Richard consider the main skills needed to create a good pub website? "Time and patience," he says.