HOW TO PLAN AND LAUNCH A NEW WEBSITE

KARTHIK BALACHANDER
JULIANNA HORVAT
August 27, 2020
WHO WE ARE

- First .CA domain registrar
- 20-year history working with Canadian entrepreneurs & small business
- 600+ domains, web hosting + website builders, website security, domain brokering & more
- 100% Canadian
- WBE & CAMSC certified
- “Your ally on the web”
Setting Your Website Up for Success:
Required research, securing your business identity, defining your brand

Nailing the Foundations:
Determining the components you need for a successful website

Scope of Work:
Should you DIY or outsource your website build? Key considerations for both approaches

Pre-Launch Checklist:
Things to remember before launch + security tips

PLANNING + LAUNCHING YOUR WEBSITE: WHAT WE’RE GOING TO COVER
Small & Micro Businesses

- 48% built their own website
- 47% hired someone to build their website
- 65% created their website within 6 months of opening

2020 STATS: HALF OF CANADIAN SMALL + MICRO BUSINESSES HAVE A WEBSITE
WHY YOU NEED A WEBSITE & NO, SOCIAL MEDIA IS NOT ENOUGH

- Social media doesn’t protect your brand
- Ownership of your own narrative, content and visitors
- Access to a wider, more diverse audience
- Increases credibility

84% of US online consumers think a website makes a business more credible than companies who only have social media profiles. - Verisign 2018 Online Consumer Survey

- Foundation for growth + intel (search authority, analytics, lead collection …)
SETTING YOURSELF UP FOR SUCCESS: RESEARCH & INSPIRATION
# Essential Early Stage Website Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the purpose of my site?</td>
<td>What action do I want my visitors to take upon visiting the site?</td>
<td>Who am I trying to reach?</td>
<td>Who are my competitors and what are they up to online?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Am I providing a service, a product or information?</td>
<td><strong>Examples of goals</strong>: lead generation, building awareness, sales conversions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>What are the demographics of my audience?</td>
<td>What analytics can you access? What do they tell you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Understand your buyers! If possible, create buyer personas to target them better.</td>
<td>Content, keywords, links, social, search rank, reputation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LOCK DOWN YOUR ONLINE IDENTITY
DOMAIN NAMES + SOCIAL ACCOUNTS + EMAIL

- Brainstorm names, ideally with others, until you have a handful of ideas
- Research what’s available & in which extensions (domain search, marketplace, backorders, name suggestion tools)
- Prioritize brevity, clarity, keywords & brandability
- Avoid these common domain mistakes
- Get the best domain you can afford from a reputable registrar + secure name-aligned social accounts if the exact match is taken
- Only use a matching, domain-based email address for communications
SETTING YOURSELF UP FOR SUCCESS: DEFINING YOUR BRAND

Brand Strategy
What makes your business unique & how you want to be perceived
- Promise
- Purpose
- Problems being solved
- Performance

Brand Identity
How you position & communicate your brand to your audience
- Voice
- Visuals
- Content
- User Experience
FIND INSPIRATION FOR YOUR VISUAL BRANDING

This is the way the story goes...
NAILING THE FOUNDATIONS: PLANNING & STRATEGY
NAILING THE FOUNDATIONS: CORE WEBSITE COMPONENTS

- Function dictates form
- Think like your audience to build good UX
- List all the pages you WANT
- Filter it to all the pages you NEED
- Focus on: Menu, CTA, contact details, mobile-readiness, analytics
- Consider update frequency & ownership to decide on CMS
NAILING THE FOUNDATIONS: WHICH COMPONENTS DO YOU REALLY NEED?
WELL, I BUILT MY CHATBOT

I'LL JUST WAIT FOR SOME SUBSCRIBERS

BRACE YOURSELVES

IM WRITING A CHATBOT

OH, YOU HAVE A CHATBOT

YOU MUST HAVE A BIG TECH TEAM

START SMALL, ANALYZE, ITERATE
NAILING THE FOUNDATIONS: MARKETING BUILDING BLOCKS

**Basics:**
- Google Search Console & My Business submissions
- Write relevant, unique, fresh content (blog) with local keywords
- Update all collateral with your URL
- Social media accounts, links, branded email

**Optional:**
- Email marketing forms, drip campaigns
- CRM integration e.g. Hubspot
- PPC and Social Ads (conversion pixels)
BUILDING YOUR WEBSITE: DIY OR PROFESSIONAL?
SHOULD YOU USE A WEBSITE BUILDER?
## DIY Website Builders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>PROS</strong></th>
<th><strong>CONS</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*Affordable up-front</td>
<td>Can wind up costing more over time (TCO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lots of website builder options to choose from</td>
<td>Choice can be overwhelming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hosted, may also include domain + email</td>
<td>Hosting quality &amp; security may vary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fast to launch</td>
<td>Learning curve / Takes time to get things right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Designed for non-technical users</td>
<td>Limited customizability, no access to code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full creative control</td>
<td>DIY-ers lack design skills &amp; knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Industry/genre specific templates, designs &amp; images</td>
<td>Sites across the same genre often look similar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Built-in SEO + marketing tools</td>
<td>Tools can be basic and limited in scope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Maintain by yourself</td>
<td>Need to upgrade plan / need to change platforms / exportability</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DIY CONSIDERATIONS: BEFORE YOU BUILD

- Who will design + maintain the website?
- If it’s you, how much time + energy can you afford to invest? What is your time worth?
- What will it cost over time?
- Remember, content is still king!

Some other guiding considerations:
- What kind of website do you need?
- How fast do you need your website built?
- What is the longevity of the website?
- Will you want some customizations?

COST ESTIMATE:
CAD $75 - $600/year
Depending on your chosen platform, plan, features & traffic volume. Read pricing fine print.

OPTIONAL EXTRAS:
App integrations - $0-$20+
Premade brand kit - $20-$500
Logo maker – $49-$99
Logo design – $250 - $1500
Professional design - $60 - $1500
Content writing - $30+/hour
CHOOSING A WEBSITE BUILDER

What is your priority?

Recommended resource: Website Builder Expert's
“What You Need to Build a Website – The Ultimate Checklist”

CHECKLIST

- Confirm what's included (domain, email, hosting, HTTPS)
- Make sure it's mobile responsive
- Does it have the features you need now & moving forward—subscriber lists, online bookings, pop-ups, coupons, membership login, etc.
- What security features are included?
- Try out a free trial
- Evaluate ease of use + level of tech savviness required
- Assess quality of resources & customer support
- Check out independent reviews
DIY WITH WORDPRESS

- CMS, not a website builder
- Open source + extensible, but requires more technical skill
- Can be DIY, DIWM, DIFM
- Start as DIY: WordPress Website Builder with BoldGrid
- Drag and Drop editor, 200+ themes
- Editor example
- Switch to professional design later, or something in-between
- Help is easy to source (WordPress Support Plans, Upwork, etc.)
SHOULD YOU HIRE A WEBSITE DESIGNER?
**DOING THE WORK: PROFESSIONAL DESIGN OUTSOURCING CONSIDERATIONS**

**COSTS**

$1000 to $60000 to build (typically $3000-$6000)

$500-$20000 / yr. to maintain

**MANAGEMENT**

- **Budget**: based on must-have features and scope
- **Identify vendors**: Word of mouth / search, screen by past work, reviews, strength of proposal, processes
- **Build**: Requirements, content creation, iterations, milestones, pre-launch testing
- **Launch**: Marketing launch, search engine submissions, PR, Social media,
- **Maintenance**: Content accuracy (copyright year), active blogs, careers pages, SEO activity
FINAL CONSIDERATIONS: PRELAUNCH CHECKLIST

✓ SSL security
✓ Matching email
✓ Review content – formatting, CTAs & links
✓ Review page titles and meta descriptions for SEO
✓ Test Google Analytics reports
✓ Set up Google Alerts & domain monitoring to protect your brand
✓ Set up SEO monitoring (free or paid)
✓ Install website Favicon
✓ Speed & responsiveness tests
✓ Make a website backup
✓ Submit to sitemap + set up G search console + request indexing
SECURITY HYGIENE FOR YOUR WEBSITE

✓ Turn on multi-factor authentication for your Webnames account and services

✓ Add an SSL certificate to your website

✓ Use a password manager (LastPass, NordPass etc. and avoid password reuse)

✓ Make strong, unique passwords for:
  ✓ Webnames account
  ✓ Website host/admin portal (like Wordpress)
  ✓ Email services
  ✓ Social media accounts
QUESTIONS?
Visit webnames.ca/litesite-for-women-biz to claim your free .CA domain + 1-page website, and read our blog Why a Single-Page Website Might Be All You Need – And How to Build a Great One over at WEC!
## New Website Planning + Building Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Design Inspiration</th>
<th>Analytics, SEO</th>
<th>Marketing Tips &amp; courses</th>
<th>Marketing, Research &amp; Social Tools</th>
<th>Graphics, Images &amp; Branding</th>
<th>Misc.</th>
<th>Domains, Email, Hosting, SSL &amp; Websites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One Page Love</td>
<td>Google Analytics</td>
<td>Webnames Blog</td>
<td>Mailchimp</td>
<td>Canva + Canva Brand Kit</td>
<td>Upwork</td>
<td>Webnames.ca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awwwards</td>
<td>Google Search Console</td>
<td>Hubspot Inbound Marketing course</td>
<td>Hubspot Free CRM</td>
<td>Coolers colour schemes</td>
<td>Fiverr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSS Nectar</td>
<td>Google Keyword Planner Tool</td>
<td>Hubspot SEO Training course</td>
<td>Username.social</td>
<td>The Noun Project + Flat Icon</td>
<td>Grammarly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>siteInspire</td>
<td>Moz SEO</td>
<td>Copyblogger Copywriting 101</td>
<td>Buffer</td>
<td>Pexels + Pixabay + Unsplash</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product Pages</td>
<td>Pingdom</td>
<td>Unbounce Landing Page Course</td>
<td>Similar Web – competitor research</td>
<td>Creative Market + Etsy</td>
<td></td>
<td>DIY 1-page website builder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Great Discontent</td>
<td>Hotjar</td>
<td>Canva Graphic Design Basics</td>
<td>Built With – competitor tech research</td>
<td>Crello</td>
<td></td>
<td>WordPress Website Builder</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>