

WEBSITE PLANNING MADE SIMPLE

I came across a great quote the other day that really struck a chord with me and it can apply to many people who are starting a new business or beginning the process of planning a website.

"The more important a call or action is to our soul's evolution, the more resistance we will feel toward pursuing it." – Steven Pressfield

It struck a chord with me because like many of us, I tend to drag my heels, procrastinate or become overwhelmed when I have a new project or idea I want to start working on.

Initially the ideas are flooding in and I get excited, but soon when it's time to start getting down to the nitty gritty it suddenly feels a whole lot less fun. It's usually about this point that I get distracted and the project derails.

For a new business, maybe you can see the dream of what you want to achieve, the end goal – but knowing how to get there is a completely different story. You're just starting out so you don't have the budget to outsource everything and it suddenly starts feeling harder to get where you want to be.

In my experience, many people struggle with the process of planning their websites, and marketing in particular is often overlooked. There is an urgency to get online quickly, to get started and be noticed, but then things get confusing and you have to decide whether to make the website yourself or pay someone to do it for you.

Creating your website plan is the first step to building a successful website. This guide will give you a really good overview of what is required and give you the confidence to know what you want from your website and the goals you want to achieve.

There is no right or wrong way to make your plan. And remember that any sort of action in the right direction is better than no action at all.

SO LET'S GET GOING!

1: WHO ARE YOUR IDEAL CUSTOMERS?

The best way to start planning a new website (and business) is to begin by getting to grips with who your ideal customers are, as the rest of your planning is going to revolve around their wants, needs and desires.

Get a notepad and pen and start jotting down some ideas about your ideal customers and just have fun with it. You can always change this down the track.

What is their name? What gender are they? How old are they? Where do they live? Do they have kids? How much do they earn? What are their interests? What media do they consume most? (social, newspapers, tv, radio)...



What things do your target customers most need help with? What are their biggest pain points? What would be the dream solution to all their problems? How can your business help them to meet their desires and goals in life?

A lot of new businesses make the mistake of trying to appeal to everybody, or fearing that if they focus their attention on just a few types of customers they will repel everyone else, however this isn't the case.

Think about the times you have used a business or service that you knew wasn't specifically trying to attract your attention but you still shopped there anyway.

You can still serve other customers outside your target market, but it just makes sense to focus your main content and marketing dollars on your ideal customers who you have tailored your services around.

CREATE A VISION BOARD FOR YOUR IDEAL CUSTOMERS

If you are a visual person you might find it beneficial to create a vision board for your ideal customers. Cut out pictures from magazines or the internet that relate to your customers style, interests, possessions etc.

CAN YOU NARROW YOUR TARGET MARKET FURTHER?

If you mainly want to attract women, can you narrow your focus to mums, or women in business or creative? What is your niche?



If you already have a business, think about who your most loyal and regular customers are. Do they have anything in common? Could these be your ideal customers? What makes the most sense to your unique skills, services and offerings?

MORE THAN ONE IDEAL CUSTOMER?

For some businesses you might have more than one type of Ideal Customer in which case go through the same process and come up with a profile for each of them.

For example an events hire company might cater for weddings as well as live music events. In this case they might decide to have a landing page on the homepage of their website that acts as a front door to two different versions of the same website that tailors to the two types of customers.

2: SET SOME GOALS

Now you have an idea of your ideal customer, it's time to set some goals of what you want the website to achieve for your business.

This doesn't have to be a complicated process, but your goals will affect the design and flow of your website so it's important to think about it during the planning stage.

The basic premise is, when someone finds your site, what do you most want them to do? What step will be the most beneficial for growing your business, collecting leads and converting to paying customers?

Here are some ideas of some goals you can set. If you want more than one goal, then put them in order of priority, and feel free to add your own ideas too.



- **Sign up for your mailing list** (with an opt-in offer designed to turn the prospect into a customer & collect their contact details). This is something that all website owners should have as a priority.
- **Educate about your services / why they should choose your business**
- **Call your business**
- **Purchase an item**
- **Book a consultation**
- **Share your content**
- **Improve customer experience** in your business & services (eg. Make it easier to book online, chat, connect, get answers to questions)

Now you have a good idea of your target customers and have set some goals for the website, it's now time to start planning the structure and content of your website.

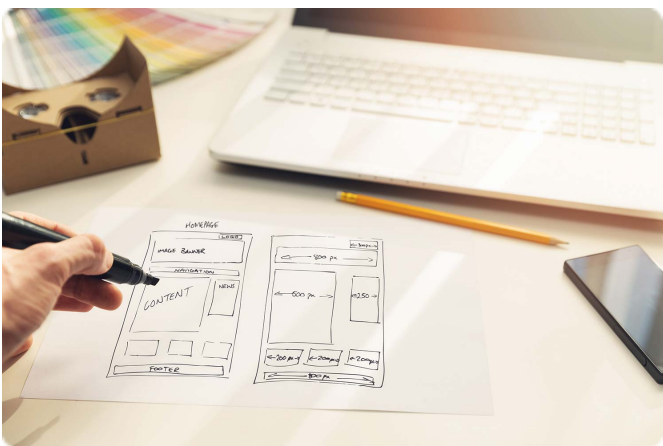
3: PLAN WEBSITE STRUCTURE / MENU

Make a list of all the pages you want to have on your website

eg. Home - About - Services - News (or blog) - Contact.

You can have as many relevant pages as you need for your unique business requirements however sometimes less is more. It's better to start simply if you are feeling overwhelmed and add more pages later.

You might be able to list all your services on one page, or ideally if you have more than one key service, it might be better to give each one it's own page as this will be better for search engine optimisation.



When coming up with your page ideas it's best to try and think like a customer and display the information that is most likely to encourage them to use your services.

Refrain from obscure page names that are not immediately clear to a new visitor what the page is about. Now is not the time for creativity. Keep it simple and relevant to your offering.

If you are really not sure, have a look at other websites with a similar offering and services to you and see if you can get some inspiration.

The simpler you can make your navigation, the easier it will be for your potential customers (and the search engines) to find the information they are looking for.

4: CONTENT WRITING

Sometimes the hardest part of planning your website is writing the content. It's easy to suffer from writers block especially when you are trying to write about yourself and your business.

The easiest way to start this is to grab a notepad and pen and have a new page for each one of your website pages.

Now just write bullet-points of the most relevant information that you want to include on that page. Don't try and do anything special with your writing at this point. It's just a case of getting the main facts down on paper so you have something to work with.

When it comes to padding out the content into structured text you now have two options. You can either give you notes to a copywriter to pad out for you, or you can give it a try yourself. You may find it a lot easier to write the content now you have a clear plan of the main information you want to include.

Again, the best way forward is to imagine you are a customer, and work out how you can word your key benefits to be a solution to your potential customers problems.

Keep paragraphs short and easy to skim read. Use bullet-points, headings and images to break up text.

Avoid technical jargon and instead word your benefits into statements that help paint a picture in the minds of your customers of what they will gain if they use your services.

Build trust in your business

Collect testimonials, case studies and qualifications. Add value to your customer's experience of your business by providing them with useful and relevant content, perhaps through a blog or a regular e-newsletter.

Become that trusted person that they can rely on, who has specialist information that is the answer to all their problems.

5: PHOTOGRAPHY / IMAGES

Quality not quantity when it comes to photography & image sourcing.

It's better to have a few really good professional images for your website than hundreds of bad ones and you should consider this as part of your marketing plan.

You might need a couple of good images of yourself working or examples of your work. Ask some local photographers for their prices.



STOCK IMAGES

For generic images your web designer can help you source some high quality stock images that average around \$15 per photo, but I wouldn't advise you to use stock images throughout your website.

- **ISTOCKPHOTO.COM** - Premium stock images
Istock Photo is a good source of premium stock images and allows you to purchase images individually, rather than needing to buy credits that you might not use up.
- **UNSPLASH.COM** - Free stock images
Unsplash is a popular source of free stock images, but beware - once you've been on there and had a good look around, you'll start noticing the same images being used all over the internet. I think Unsplash images can be a good option for a blog post, however I think it is always better to use your own content where possible.

6: MARKETING

How are your potential customers going to find your website?

Make a list of anything you are already doing that might help drive customers to your website.

Pick some new ideas from the list below and create a plan of action for your website marketing effort.



- **Opt-in forms** on social media & website to collect information
- **Search Engine Optimisation**
- **Google My Business Listing** (mostly for local marketing)
- **Listings on business directories**
- **Guest blogging** on another website with links back to yours
- **Engage prospects** with high quality website content, shared to your social media with links back to the website
- **Engage your current customers** through direct mail or newsletter
- **Social Media / Groups / Advertising**
- **Networking events / seminars**
- **Print advertisement / direct mail**
- **Pinterest** - think of Pinterest as a visual google and optimise your posts to draw people to your website
- **Google Adwords / Facebook Ads**
(get training first on how to target the right people or expect to waste money)
- **Talk to your current customers or potential customers.** What's working for them, what isn't? What are they looking for? What problems do they need solving?

7: ONGOING CONTENT PLAN

Not all customers will be ready to buy today, but when they are ready, you want to ensure you are fresh in their minds.

The best way to achieve that is to be consistent with the content you put out to your audience, for instance via your blog, e-newsletter & social.

Choose a frequency you feel you can keep up with and stick to it. Some people might post twice a week, some once per week, some once a fortnight, but it's important to only do what you can manage.

And you don't need to sign up for every social media account under the sun, unless you truly intend to put work into each of them. Most of the time it's better to pick one or two and focus all your attention on delivery high quality content. Less is more.

SOME IDEAS FOR MANAGING THE DELIVERY OF CONTENT

- **CONTENT PLAN**

Once per quarter spend a few hours planning out all your content for the next few months. You don't have to write the content in full, just make the plan of what you want to write about, do some keyword research to test out post title ideas and add it all to a calendar. It's much easier to write new content when you already have a plan of action.

- **SCHEDULING**

There are lots of different scheduling apps you can use to schedule your blog & social media posts which you could utilise on a weekly or monthly basis. For an e-newsletter you can also create auto-responders and automatically send a new customer a series of emails over a set period of time after they have signed up.

- **OUTSOURCING**

Once you have a good content plan, you can always outsource some of the copywriting to free up some of your time. It's important to make sure the copywriter fits your businesses style and the content is high quality and relevant.

GET STARTED

Hopefully now you have the beginnings of an awesome new website plan that you can give straight to a web designer or use for yourself if you want to go down the DIY route.

It's important to remember that a website on it's own will not solve all your business problems. To be successful in business requires a lot of hard work and dedication to achieve your goals.

A website if used correctly can be an excellent way to gain new clients or customers, get more sales and leads and increase trust in your business. It's a valuable tool, but like all tools, it must be picked up and used in order to be useful. A power drill won't drill a hole by itself and a beautifully designed website won't guarantee that you instantly get you more sales or leads.

That will take consistent work on your part to take control of your online presence and ongoing marketing effort. This can be a slow process when you are just starting out and learning the ropes, but there is always help and assistance to help you along the way.

WHAT NEXT?

Many people who contact me require a lot more guidance in the process of building a new website than I had previously allowed time for, and with this in mind I am now offering a more thorough and dedicated service that includes a lot more guidance and support in planning, online marketing and ongoing training and support.

If this sounds like something you may be interested then [click here to view my website services & pricing.](#)



Best Regards,
Lucy Jordanoff

Specialising in Wordpress Websites
& Graphic Design

Contact:

0487 304 821

info@lucyjordanoff.com

lucyjordanoff.com