

HOW TO BUILD A PROFITABLE WEBSITE



Growth Partners

There is an abundance of web tools designed to make the process of building a basic website relatively simple and pain-free. But building a profitable website requires a specialised skill set and technical know-how that takes advantage of an in-depth understanding of internet technology. Without these assets, it can potentially mean the difference between wasting your time or finding your next cash cow. In this eBook, we will guide you through the skills needed to build a strong, profitable, and impactful website by identifying the key components you need to consider so that the return on investment of your time and money will make the entire process worth your while.

The keys to build a profitable website are straightforward. Align your website's purpose and content, hone Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) to improve your website's ranking, and ensure speed and compatibility across devices. Collecting and analysing data from traffic and crafting user experience to meet your end goals are also essential components.

**KEY POINTS TO
CONSIDER WHEN
BUILDING A WEBSITE**



Do you know the purpose of your website?

Knowing the purpose of your website may seem obvious but many miss this crucial step. Before you do anything, you need to understand the one purpose of your site. This will form the basis of everything you do. The purpose of your website is often dependent on your business model.

Is it designed to:

1. Sell products?
2. Book appointments?
3. Generate leads?

Direct selling

Do you sell direct to consumers? If so, can you sell and market your product solely on the internet or do you need additional interaction to refine the sales process, customise orders, or close the deal? If you are selling a specific product to consumers online, your purpose would be to provide all of the relevant product information a consumer needs and a simple and direct process for them to provide their details and purchase the product or service.

Booking appointments

Say your product or service requires more customisation than you can elicit through drop-down menus and checkboxes; then your purpose might lean more towards booking appointments so a sales consultant can appropriately follow up and cultivate the necessary relationship with that customer.

Generating leads

On the other hand, if you have a product or service that you can't justly represent in an online format, you might want your website to generate interest in what you're selling in order to identify leads. All of these are viable options and it will depend on your own goals for your web presence, as well as the time and money you're willing to spend to achieve those goals.



Do you understand how search traffic will find you?

Once you have determined your website's purpose, your next step is to understand your target market and how they will find you. What traffic sources you focus on and what does that journey look like for a visitor from start to finish?

There are 3 main types of traffic sources to your website:

1. Direct - the user types your URL directly into their browser;
2. Referral - the user clicks on a link to your website from another site, and;
3. Search - the user types keywords into a search engine which brings up your website.

Understanding how your customers find you is sometimes just as valuable as the interactions they have with your website's content. Knowing what prospective customers in your field of interest are searching for in search engines, what other sites they are browsing or how they reached your website all tell you something about your customers and your marketing effectiveness. You can monitor the number of visitors from each traffic source, but it is equally important to analyze the number of goal completions from each source to determine the most effective traffic sources for your market. Remember your website's purpose? Once you get people to your website, what is it you want them to accomplish? Breaking this data down by source improves your insights and helps direct your marketing and investment - e.g. remarketing activity converts better when using consideration type terms and product differentiators within your messaging.





How do I drive traffic to my website?

When it comes to driving traffic to your website, you really want to focus on quality as opposed to quantity. Driving the right kind of traffic will help you reach your goals, whether that's sales, consultations, or engagement. There isn't one surefire way to drive quality traffic to your website, but a few tools to get you started include On Page SEO, Off Page SEO, Blogging, Social Media and Email Marketing.

These tools may be a bit intimidating, but let's discuss them one-by-one. When we say On Page SEO, that refers to all of the data on your website, whether visible content or the underlying metadata including keywords, image alt text, or tags. This also includes some things you may not have considered such as accessibility, compatibility, and loading speed. These are usually the things you have direct control over. Search engines comb the web collecting this data and, along with Off Page SEO, determine your website's ranking. So then what exactly is Off Page SEO? Off Page SEO refers to the things you don't have direct control over. It includes links to your website or pages from other websites, known as backlinks. Off Page SEO is essentially a popularity contest among a subject of interest. It is also affected by your social media presence and interactions with web users. Blogging, Social Media Marketing, and Email Marketing all will contribute to your Off Page SEO and the more prolific you are in utilising them, the better your rankings will be.

Is every aspect of your website aligned with search data?

You might think we're joking about this but in fact, every header, every section of the navigation menu, every URL and every piece of content must align to your search data. It is not up to you to decide what people will find interesting and what people are searching for. You must use tools or services to align your website to search data to get the results you want.

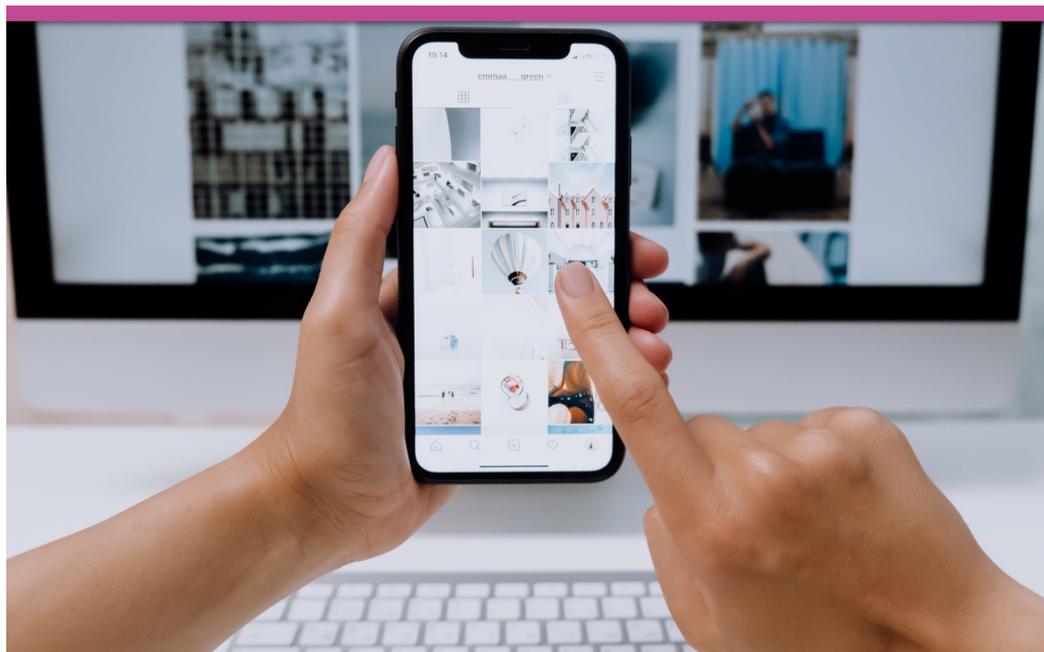
This goes back to how people found your website. If your content is not tailor-made to keywords and topics people are searching for, you risk having a lower ranking on search results for high volume terms than someone who has gone the extra step. But this also means knowing what search terms drive traffic for your desired purpose. Remember, every content choice you make is not there to be aesthetically pleasing; a website's content must serve the purpose of the website, sharing relevant and engaging content improves search rankings and user experience.

How important is SEO?

Optimising SEO so that your website is high up on search engine result pages (SERP), also known as better ranking, is crucial to being seen. Are you making the most of it? As noted above, the most important readers of your website content are not always people, they are algorithms. These algorithms are designed to crawl the internet for words, links, images, and user behavior metrics including time spent on page, bounce rate, and much more.



This really is critical because 75% of users don't click past the first page. Remember, search engine algorithms are continuously updated, so it's important to keep on top of the latest news and update your SEO accordingly. If you don't have the time or ability to invest in this, it is worth calling in expert advice from those who know the field to give you the best chance of success.



Is your website mobile-optimised?

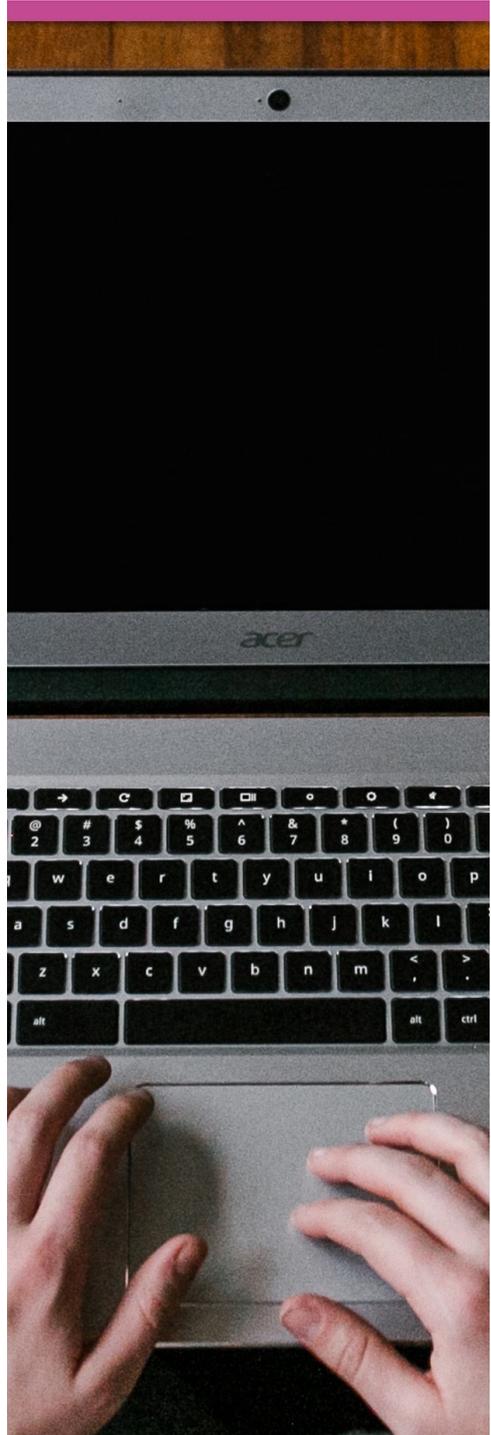
Over half of web traffic is now mobile which means that if your website is not mobile-responsive, half of your traffic is not getting the optimal experience when checking you out. Mobile optimisation is used as an SEO ranking factor and lack of it can affect your visibility in Google searches. With mobile optimisation your website will adjust content, images, layout, and organization to suit whatever device it's being accessed from. In order to improve the usability of your website and ensure your visitors won't navigate away, it is absolutely essential to optimise your site for mobile. Any of the following factors will degrade your website's usability experience, or UX, if it:

- takes too long to load on mobile devices. 47% of users expect the webpage to load in 2 seconds or less and pages that load in 2.4 seconds have a much higher conversion rate (completed action, e.g. a sale) than pages that loaded slower.
- does not align properly on a screen oriented either portrait or landscape
- has links or content that do not adjust in size for smaller screens

Not only this, search engines will punish you in the search rankings for delivering a sub-par experience to users. The consequence of both of these is less traffic and fewer conversions.

Does it have a fast loading time?

Users have miniscule attention spans, so when clicking on a website you only have a short amount of time to catch their attention and impress. Research has demonstrated that you have roughly 8 seconds to hook your customers, less time than a goldfish's attention span, so the more time they spend waiting for your website to load, you're wasting valuable time to attract, engage, and ultimately convert! There is a lot of competition for users' attention on the internet, so your website's loading speed is crucial for making an impactful first impression and starting them on the path to your website's purpose, whether that be brand awareness, lead generation, or online sales. Conducting competitor analysis will help you determine how you fare against your competitors, this tool can help you deliver the best possible experience for your customer leading them to favour you over others. Avoiding front-heavy content such as high definition imagery or excessive 3rd party tags and JavaScript on a landing page will improve your website's loading time and ultimately serve to prolong your customer session. Otherwise, you risk leaving a bad taste in their mouth and diverting them to your competitor whose page loaded quickly and without any hiccups. Not only is it frustrating and unprofessional, search engines also punish your rankings, much like when it is not mobile-optimised.

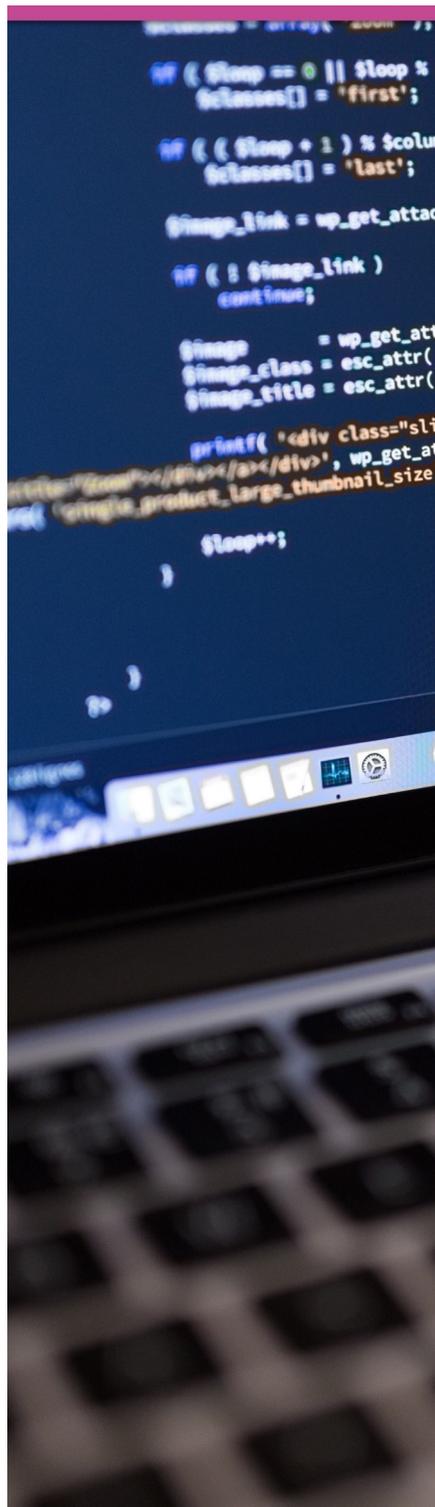


Do you understand what content will resonate with your desired audience?

A brand's ability to interact with their customers is one of the most powerful tools available, especially through social media, vlogging, and blogging. All of these tools can help you delineate aspects of your target audience including age, gender, socioeconomic status, profession, location, and much more. While potentially valuable information, the key is utilizing this data to create engaging content, start dialogues, and ultimately convert to sales. Many businesses will brainstorm ideas around what content will engage their audience. Much like the previous point, content should be dictated by the market, not by our guesses as marketers. Tools such as the Digital Enablement Program Report that we use at Growth Partners builds you a content roadmap based on science.

Do you have an automated system to capture lead data?

As noted above, identifying your customers and parsing out their data can be extremely valuable to you as a business. The idea is to effectively narrow your marketing efforts so they speak to the demographics you intend to reach, while also tracking their interactions with you from initial contact, to engagement, follow-up, conversion, and repeat sales if possible. The more a customer interacts with your website, the more information they provide you and the better able you are to serve their needs. You need a system that will capture lead data and move people down your funnel. Our GPX Leadflo Technology improves the quality and quantity of leads your website generates.





Are you leveraging social media to increase search traffic and conversions?

Think about your digital platforms like a spider's web. It works more effectively when all parts are linked up and connected properly. Social media is an incredibly powerful tool for businesses to leverage, but if your website and social channels are not flowing into each other effectively, then you are leaving thousands of dollars on the table.

Social media is a three-way street. It enables interactions directly with customers on a user-friendly, widely-used platform, but it doesn't end there. Your social media content should be genuine and real and not always lead by sales. Once you have your followers attention you can intermittently link directly back to your product pages; remember the point is conversion, but it's equally important to create posts that resonate and provide value to your followers. Likewise, your product pages should link to examples of their use in social media. People look to social media to see the real-world representations of your product or service. Share your best and most relevant content to your social media channels but remember to mix it up. Share videos, photos, infographics, links to data-driven pieces, and repost your users' content of them utilising your product or services. Make sure to vary the length and format of your content to appeal to a variety of different readers. Use short, concise and captivating intros interspersed with long-form content for maximum impact. Keeping interesting, consistent and regular engagement with your followers allows social media platforms to increase the amount of times a post is seen.



Do you have the key information required to make a decision?

Before you consider whether you have resources like time, money and the skillset to build a new website, you also need to have the key information. Have you collected data on leads and customers? Have you identified your market differentiators? Have you invested in marketing or brand awareness? Data is the currency of the digital age and the more you have, the more you can invest to achieve your business and website goals. Our Digital Enablement Program gives you the tools you need to make informed decisions to turn your website into a valuable business asset.

Does your website have an attractive design?

Good web design reflects your brand and values. It will be the first thing users notice about you, so it's vitally important for first impressions. Equally important, your brand identity online is built up of fonts, colours, images and style, and these need to be chosen carefully and used consistently across the site. The reason branding is important is because humans favour familiarity. Easy to recognise images and easy to pronounce words create positive emotional reactions in customers. By using distinct styles for your brand and continuously using these styles you are able to gain trust from your customers once they start to recognise your brand. The human brain will familiarise your brand and logo and if they see it they'll think of you. According to Daniel Kahneman, author of the book *Thinking Fast and Slow*, "repetition induces cognitive ease and a comforting feeling of familiarity."

Nonetheless, there is a good reason we discuss this last. In our view, most people build websites backwards. They focus on the design first and largely ignore the science that will make the site an asset for your business. Yes, design and user experience are important but not at the sacrifice of high quality leads for your business. Remember, people aren't the only ones reading your website and you need to build a website to meet your business needs that caters to all audiences, human or otherwise.

RELATED QUESTIONS



What can I add to my website to make it better?

Targeted SEO, accurate and descriptive metadata, image alt text, links to social media, calls to action, adding fresh and frequent content driven by a content strategy to be noticed by search engines, and direct contact or purchase buttons and links will make your website better.

How can I improve my business results?

Goal-oriented web design, improved user experience, and lead generation and follow-up all improve business results.

How does my business use the internet to make money?

Developing an easy to use, well-designed website with links and options to purchase your products or services directly online or with user forms for lead generation are effective ways for your business to use the internet to make money.

How do I make a good business website?

Identify why you want a business website, what it will be used for, who you want to engage, what information you want to provide, how much time and money you have to invest, and how you will use the information generated from the website. Make design and content decisions based on your answers to these questions.

What is the best solution to build a profitable website?

Although there are many tools available to build simple websites, an in-depth understanding of web technology and marketing is key to a professional, successful, and profitable website. If you've ever tried to paint a picture, you quickly realize that while anyone can apply paint to a canvas, it takes either innate talent or a honed set of skills to be a good artist. There is no single best solution to build a profitable website, but if you honestly evaluate your capabilities and budget to determine what you can and can't do, you can't go wrong.



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