CREATING A WEBSITE
DECEMBER 16, 2021
OVERVIEW

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INTRODUCTION TO WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT
Why Build a Website?

A company website is often the best place to centralize your business online, providing a great location for prospective customers to find your:

- Location and contact information
- Product details
- eCommerce purchasing options
- Values and value proposition
- Company and product news
- Other business information

Although company websites have become overshadowed recently by other marketing tools, like social media, they are still essential for a cohesive online presence.
Getting Started

Even for small businesses, company websites have become mandatory at a time in which most consumers rely on the internet first and foremost to research a product or find a service.

The following slides will walk you through the 12 steps required to develop a website and provide you with additional resources for your development journey.

With website development software becoming more and more robust and user-friendly, there has never been a better time to get started!
Step 1: Determine Your Website Goals

Before beginning development, you should first determine your website’s purpose by answering the following:

- Do you intend to only provide your business’s location and hours, or do you intend for your website to centralize all your digital content, platforms, and media?
- Will your website walk customers through your products and services in detail or refer them elsewhere for that information?
- Will your website include an eCommerce platform, or will it direct customers elsewhere to purchase your product?
Step 2: Select Your Domain Name

Choosing a good domain name is the first and best step toward establishing a strong online presence.

A good domain name is descriptive, easy to remember, and search-engine friendly.

Before purchasing your domain name, ensure it is:

- Short, thus easy to spell and remember
- Not already taken, copy-written, or similar to existing domain names
- Reasonably priced
- Contains either your company’s name or keywords/geo-location information
  - Examples include either SmithInc.com or TexasCoffee.com
Knowledge Check

Select the correct answer.

A good domain name:

A. Is short and easy to remember
B. Is reasonably priced
C. Contains either your company’s name or keywords/geo-location information
D. All the above
Knowledge Check

Select the correct answer.
A good domain name:
A. Is short and easy to remember
B. Is reasonably priced
C. Contains either your company’s name or keywords/geo-location information
D. All the above

A good domain name is short and easy to remember, is reasonably priced, and contains either your company’s name or keywords/geo-location information.
DEVELOPING YOUR WEBSITE
Step 3: Purchase Your Domain Name

After you’ve chosen an effective domain name, purchase it through a domain registrar. Popular registrars include:

- Domain.com
- GoDaddy
- NameCheap
- Squarespace
- GoogleDomains

Domain registrars differ in the services provided and pricing plans they operate under, so be sure to thoroughly research a registrar before choosing it.
Step 4: Chose a Website Host

Choosing a good website host will determine the features, support options, and stability of your future website.

When choosing a website host, consider the following:

- Should your platform include an integrated eCommerce solution?
- Do you want a shared or dedicated server?
  - A shared server will be cheaper but less stable and secure
- Does this company have phone or chat technical support to help you solve issues?
- What kind of security does the host provide?
Step 5: Design and Develop Your Pages

Before starting development, take some time to consider the following to ensure your website is cohesive, effective, and professional:

- **What are the goals** of your website (determined earlier in this process)?
- **Develop a clear description of your business** to be presented on your home screen
- **Place calls to action**, like “contact us,” “about us,” “buy this product” buttons where appropriate to keep the site engaging
- **Don’t use common stock images** as they are easy to identify and can indicate low-quality to potential customers
While your website will be unique to your product, service, and company goals, all good company websites include the following pages:

- **A homepage** that introduces potential customers to your products or services and features the information most vital to your customers (e.g., location and hour information for a restaurant)

- **A contact page** with phone numbers, email addresses, and other address information customers can use to communicate with you

- **An about page** containing a description and history of your business, as well as some of the names and faces of important employees

- **Information menus** in the header and footer for easy navigation

- **A Site Map** to improve your Search Engine Optimization (SEO)
Step 6: Choose an ECommerce Platform

If you intend to sell products directly from your site, you must choose and implement an eCommerce solution, like:

- Square
- WooCommerce
- Shopify
- Business Squarespace

Some web hosts offer integrated eCommerce solutions, so be sure to facture the price of a separate eCommerce solution into the equation when researching web hosts.
Step 7: Choose a Content Management System

You should also integrate a **Content Management System (CMS)**, which will provide tools for creating and managing the content on your site.

**Ensure you choose a system that is best for your level of experience.** Popular solutions include:

- Squarespace
- WordPress
- Joomla!
- Drupal
Step 8: Create a Website User Interface

The following are best practices for ensuring your website is attractive, easy to navigate, and professional looking:

- Keep your site stylistically consistent
- Select easy to read fonts and font colors
- Research your competition and target audience to better tailor your website to their interests
- Ensure the navigation panel is easy to find on every page

6. Create an interesting, memorable, and engaging website user interface

Make sure your small business website interface leaves a positive impression that drives results. You can do so by implementing the...
Step 9: Optimize Your Website for Search Engines

SEO is the complex but free process for improving your website’s search engine visibility.

By adjusting your site to fit the following criteria, your site will appear much sooner in a search engine’s results:

- Optimizing website code
- Researching and integrating keywords
- Ensuring your site is mobile friendly
- Linking your site internally to increase the number of pages a visitor clicks on
- Linking your site via your social media
Knowledge Check

Select the correct answer.
Which of the following is NOT an SEO improvement?

A. Consolidating all your site’s info to one webpage
B. Researching and integrating keywords
C. Linking your site internally
D. Ensuring your site is mobile friendly
Knowledge Check

Select the correct answer.
Which of the following is NOT an SEO improvement?

A. Consolidating all your site’s info to one webpage
B. Researching and integrating keywords
C. Linking your site internally
D. Ensuring your site is mobile friendly

You do not want to minimize the number of webpages your site has because increasing the amount of time people spend on your site increases its SEO.
RUNNING YOUR WEBSITE
Step 10: Create and Publish High-Quality Content

Frequently publishing quality content improves your SEO and, thus, site traffic. Creating and publishing a consistent stream of material, including the following, will grow your site and attract new customers:

- Infographics
- Articles
- Videos
- Testimonials

Like everything else on the site, it's important that these materials fit the tone and style of your site.

Before advertising your site, ensure it works on major browsers and mobile platforms. Doing so will increase the accessibility of the site.
Step 11: Install Webmaster Tools

By Installing Bing Webmaster tools, Google Search Console, and Google Analytics, you can track the following information on your site to learn:

- The number of visitors your site received daily, weekly, and monthly
- How many times each page was viewed
- Keywords that brought customers to your website
- The average time spent on your site per customer
- The site’s “bounce rate,” or the percentage of visitors who viewed only one page and left after
- Other metrics to improve your site and its SEO
Step 12: Maintain Your Website

Once your site is established, all that’s left to do is establish and follow a maintenance plan. Regular maintenance will improve your site’s SEO, security, and trustworthiness. Good maintenance typically includes:

- Keeping all software updated
- Running security scans to root out malware and ensure the site is secure
- Continually improving SEO
- Regularly uploading fresh content
- Allowing visitors to provide feedback on your site’s usability and features
- Using Webmaster Tools and traffic data to improve your site’s functionality and SEO
Knowledge Check

Select the correct answer.

Regularly publishing fresh content to your website will:

A. Improve your SEO
B. Attract new customers
C. Both A and B
D. Improve your site’s security
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A. Improve your SEO  
B. Attract new customers  
C. Both A and B  
D. Improve your site’s security

Frequently publishing quality content improves your SEO and, thus, site traffic. Creating and publishing a consistent stream of material will grow your site and attract new customers.
RESOURCES
Introduction to Website Development — Resources

Review the following links on your own time to learn more about the subjects presented in this training:

• IONOS – Online Marketing Basics: What you should know
• Disruptive – Internet Marketing 101: Everything beginners need to know
• Optinmonster.com – 10 Best Website builders for small business compared (pros and cons)
• Business News Daily – Building a Business Website: A Small Business Guide
• Forbs.com – 10 Key Steps to Building a Great Small Business Website
Developing Your Website — Resources

Review the following links on your own time to learn more about the subjects presented in this training:

- Forbs.com – 10 Key Steps to Building a Great Small Business Website
- Forbs.com – The Best 10 Domain Name Registrars of 2021
- Forbs.com – Best E-Commerce Platforms of October 2021
- Disruptive Advertising – Internet Marketing 101
- QuickSprout – The beginner’s guide to online marketing
- QuickSprout – Everything SEO Related
Running Your Website — Resources

Review the following links on your own time to learn more about the subjects presented in this training:

- Forbs.com — 10 Key Steps to Building a Great Small Business Website
- Search Engine Journal — How to Create High-Quality Content
- Benchmark One.com — How to Perform Website Maintenance: A Small Business Guide