



THE WEBSITE TUTOR

How to Make a Website

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HOW TO MAKE A WEBSITE

It's no secret that [more than three billion people](#) across the world have access to the internet. From mobile devices to desktops, it seems like everyone these days is plugged in — and if your business isn't claiming space on the web, then you're missing out on oodles of potential customers. No matter your niche or where you're located, it's essential to start a website for your business. With a website, you can sell products or services online, establish yourself as a thought leader in your industry, generate new leads for your business, reach and connect with customers, and give your brand the visibility it deserves.

Are you onboard yet? Good, because having a website is important, but building one that suits your needs and is functional for potential visitors is the end goal.

Start website in 5 steps

We'll cover everything you need to know to build a highly effective website — from getting started by establishing achievable goals, to creating a content-rich website that both visitors and search engines will love.

We'll take a look at what you need to know to sell online. We'll introduce tools that will help you achieve your website goals. And we'll divvy out tips and best practices to make your website work at maximum capacity.

1. Plan your website.
2. Design your site — DIY or DIFM?
3. Create amazing content.
4. Sell on your website.
5. Get found with SEO.

Now that you want to start a website, we want to help you succeed.

1. Plan your website

Before you can dive into the nitty-gritty of website creation, you need to map out a plan for success. Even if you already have an established brick-and-mortar store, taking that identity to the web requires a bit of foresight.

Establish concrete goals

If you're looking to break into the online scene, you'll first need to define your purpose. It's not enough to say, "I want to sell online," or "I want a website." Rather, ask yourself, "What do I want my website to accomplish for my business?" Perhaps it's revenue or monthly visitors. Regardless of the metric you choose, make sure it aligns with your overall brand.

Define your audience

As appealing as it sounds to cater to the three billion users online, it's not reasonable. Those three billion users are unique individuals with tastes that vary wildly, so you're better off targeting people who closely align with your business's niche in the marketplace. It's important to get granular with your online presence so you can better connect with potential consumers.

Complete the following fields to get a better picture of who your target audience is:

- Age and gender: (i.e., Women over the age of 20)
- Interests and hobbies: (i.e., Skateboarders)
- General location: (i.e., Northeastern states)
- Personality and attitude: (i.e., Humorous)
- Occupation and income: (i.e., College student, less than \$40,000 a year)

This combination of [demographic](#) and [psychographic](#) information will help you narrow down your audience, even giving you the opportunity to tailor content and potential products to make acting — buying, sharing, subscribing — easier for consumers.

Pick a domain name

Picking a domain name isn't to be taken lightly. Whether you're starting a brand-new business or already have an established company, one thing stands true for both — your domain name should represent your brand. And since there are [more than one billion websites](#) currently on the internet, that means finding the perfect domain name might be a tad difficult.

10 tips for choosing the perfect domain

1. **Make it easy to type.** You don't want your visitors ending up somewhere else because you added a silent "T" to your name.
2. **Keep it short.** Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious is better left to Mary Poppins.
3. **Use keywords.** If you can, incorporate the product or service you offer.
4. **Target your area.** Consider using your geo-location to your advantage.
5. **Avoid numbers and hyphens.** These keys aren't typed as frequently as the alphabet — don't make people work to find you.
6. **Be memorable.** Standing out from the crowd is good thing.
7. **Research it.** Don't grab the first name you think sounds catchy — test among your friends and family first.
8. **Use an appropriate domain extension.** Don't get stuck in the .com mindset.
9. **Protect and build your brand.** Consider registering multiple variations to safeguard your brand.
10. **Act fast.** New domains are registered every day — don't wait too long, or yours might get snatched.

2. Design your site — DIY or DIFM?

So by now, you totally understand that building a website for your business is important and you've nailed down the planning fundamentals. But what do you do next? The good news is, you have options. You can either start a website yourself (DIY) or hire a godaddy affiliate developer (www.thewebsitetutor.com) to do it for you (DIFM). But before we weigh the pros and cons of those avenues, let's first talk about the foundation of your website — your hosting

Consider your hosting option.

Imagine your website as a house. Your domain is the street address, and the plot of land beneath your structure is your hosting plan.

Before purchasing a hosting plan, here are a few things to consider:

Reliability. Even if your site is optimized for speed, your host's uptime could affect your site's load time and accessibility. Pay close attention to the guarantees each company offers.

Support. What happens when your site goes down at 2 a.m.? Will you be able to reach your hosting provider, or will you have to wait until the following day to find a solution? That valuable time off the internet could potentially hurt your business. Look for a provider with 24/7 support.

Storage. Storage is largely dependent on the type of site you're going to build. Are you a photographer in need of displaying your

online portfolio? If so, those images are going to use a lot of space. While some places offer "unlimited" storage, be sure to read the fine print.

Bandwidth. Bandwidth and storage go hand-in-hand. The larger website you have, the more data you're going to transfer to visitors upon arrival, and the more bandwidth you'll need.

Scalability. We all want tons of traffic, right? Right. Make sure your hosting company can handle your expected amount of visitors. The last thing you want is an influx of traffic only to have your site crash.

Security. Getting hacked is no joke. Malware and viruses can seriously damage your online reputation. Look for hosting plans that either incorporate some level of security or companies that offer website security as an add-on.

Back-ups. Unexpected problems happen all the time. If something goes wrong with your site, you can use backup to restore it. Check to see if your hosting provider offers website backup (GoDaddy does) or a way to add them to your plan.

Build your site: DIY

If you consider yourself non-technical and you don't have the funds to hire a professional, then a [website builder](#) is the best option. Consider a tool like [GoDaddy's GoCentral Website Builder](#). Add pictures, customize pages, integrate with Facebook, add email marketing and more — all with an easy-to-use swipe-to-style interface. You can even build your site on your mobile device in under an hour. Plus, GoCentral automatically optimizes your site for search engines to improve your ranking.

Our recommendation: Website builders are great for entrepreneurs and small business owners looking to establish an online presence quickly. They're easy to use, require little to no technical knowledge, and are a great way to start a website.

Build your site: DIFM

If you would rather spend your efforts focusing on what you do best — running your business — and have a budget for website design, hiring a godaddy affiliate web designer might be the way to go. Just like you are the only person who can run your business, professional web designers possess a unique set of skills and talents they use to run theirs. But like any business decision, it's important to do your research first. Don't be afraid to properly vet options ahead of time.

When it comes to choosing a web designer or a design company, here are a few questions to consider:

- Who have they worked with?
- Where are they located?
- How much will the website cost?
- Will they update your site regularly?
How much will that cost? Will you have access to make the updates yourself?

- What other services do they handle (i.e., content writing, design)?
- Are they handled in-house or are they outsourced?
- Do they understand your business niche?
- Can they help your business beyond web design (i.e., social media, SEO, etc.)?
- Will your site be mobile-friendly and responsive?

The key is to always maintain a clear line of communication, no matter who you work with.

3. Create amazing content

Whether you want website visitors to sign up for a newsletter, purchase a product, share on social media or anything in between, you need to present content that compels them to act. Well-crafted words, paired with eye-catching images, can make all the difference. That's how you make your story shine online.

Your business story

Even if you don't fancy yourself a skilled writer, you can craft amazing content that speaks to your business and your brand.

That content can be as simple as:

- Sharing how you started your business.
- A photo or video of you / your team in action.
- The methods behind building your products.
- Interesting descriptions of your services.
- An anecdote that demonstrates how your products or services are benefiting customers.

The choice is yours. To start, all you need is content for five core pages (you can always expand later)

Five core pages

Home. This is your landing page, and it needs to wow visitors from the get go. Craft content that invites visitors to explore further and encourages them to act.

About Us. There's no better place to tell your business story than on your About Us page. Explain how you got started to show your visitors the people behind the brand.

Products/services. The bread and butter of why you're starting a website. Remember that images, as well as content, paint a story. Make sure any product photos you use stand out.

Testimonials. It's important for visitors to see that your product and brand can be trusted. Use testimonials to share the customer perspective of your business.

Contact Us. Give your visitors a way to contact you. Show them that you can be reached, answer questions promptly, and inspire trust by being more than a brand.

Layout. Do your eyes glaze over when you see a big block of text? Mine do. The layout of your content is just as important as the words themselves. Use images, white space, lists and headings to spread out your information in a way that is pleasing to the eye.

Have fun! This is the most important step — have fun with your words! Don't be afraid to test out different methods and go with the one that works best for your customers (and you).

Pro tip: When you're done with your web content, get an outside pair of eyes on your words (preferably someone with editing experience). Even with a humorous site, you want to be professional, so don't let grammatical or mechanical errors hold you back.

Using images on your website

Part of a standout content strategy includes incorporating captivating images. In fact, "[BuzzSumo](#) found that articles with an image once every 75 to 100 words received double the social media shares as articles with fewer images." So if you want your readers engaged, start including images. Here are a few things to remember when it comes to selecting photos for your website:

Don't use images illegally. You can't just run to Google and copy the first photo you see. Stick to places like [Pixabay](#) or [Unsplash](#) for stock photos if you don't have the means to take your own. Provide attribution as needed.

Use high-quality images. Beautiful images can inspire action. Don't turn customers away with shaky photos. Pick or take photos that relate to your brand and resonate with your audience.

Optimize your images. Keep reading through this guide to learn more about image optimization. For starters, make sure they're sized appropriately, compressed so they don't affect load time, and are named with relevant keywords.

Write your own web content

Now onto the really fun stuff — writing your own web content. Don't fret! No one knows your business better than you. You know your story, you have a unique voice, and you can inspire trust in customers, regardless of your previous writing skills. Crafting content doesn't have to be difficult, and we've got a few tips to steer you in the right direction.

Audience. If you haven't done so already, nail down your audience. Understanding the type of visitors you intend to engage with is key to creating relevant content. Prioritize your content to match with their unique needs, and make sure your content not only explains what you do, but why you're the better option than your competitors.

Voice. Once you've determined your audience, you can tailor your voice to match both your brand and your customers. You wouldn't run a law website and use humorous language to describe divorce proceedings, and likewise if you're selling fun kids T-shirts, you wouldn't use stiff text to describe your products. Be true to your brand, and the rest will naturally fall into place.

4. Sell on your website

Whether you already have an established brick-and-mortar store or you're jumping right into the eCommerce scene with a new business, selling products or services online is a great way to attract new customers. You don't have to rely on foot traffic to sell your wares, and there are plenty of options for getting customers through your virtual door.

Your customer base just expanded to cover the globe. And while you might not target every person on the internet (you'll definitely want to keep your industry niche in mind), you'll need to include certain elements on your eCommerce site to attract and retain customers.

Compelling product images and descriptions
Your wares are the bread and butter of your online store. It's not enough to simply post a picture and a price — all of your product images should be high-quality photos with an accompanying description that explains features and benefits.

When it comes to taking product photos, here are some tips to keep in mind:

- Use the sun or natural lighting if possible.
- Shoot from different angles to showcase your products.

- Consider using some accessories (tripods, flashes, etc.) to get the best shot.

You don't need to drop tons of money on photography gear. If you've got a smartphone, you can take great-looking images right from your mobile device. Just keep background, lighting and your audience in mind.

When crafting product descriptions, audience and tone are key. Listing features is a must, but it's also important to sell the experience of owning your wares.

Payment methods

Depending on the type of site you have, your payment processing method will differ. We'll cover options for both a site builder and WordPress here shortly, but here are a few key overarching things to keep in mind:

- Offer multiple payment options.
- Make the purchase path clear and easy to navigate.
- Ensure customers can apply coupons and discounts.

Customers who struggle to navigate through the checkout process often abandon their carts. Make sure your layout is streamlined, and give them plenty of options (credit cards, debit cards, PayPal, etc.) for purchasing. Pro tip: [Use an SSL](#) to secure your online store. Protect your customers' information to help build the trust that will encourage future purchases from your eCommerce site.

Shipping

Want to further reduce cart abandonment?

Make sure your shipping setup is solid, and if you can, offer free shipping. [According to the Walker Sands Future of Retail report](#) nine

out of 10 people (in a survey of 1,400)

indicated that free shipping was the No. 1

incentive for shopping online. That's an astonishing percentage of shoppers you could capitalize on simply by wrapping shipping into the cost of your goods.

If free shipping isn't in the cards, you can always opt for a flat-rate or weight-based price.

Pro tip: [GoDaddy's Online Store](#) features popular shipping methods built right into the tool, plus you can easily add your individual shipping preferences — from free shipping to real-time carrier-calculated.

5. Get found with SEO

Now that you've got a website, you'll need to work on gaining visibility in the highly competitive cyberspace marketplace.

There's where search engines like Google and Bing come into play. It's not enough to simply establish an online presence — you'll need to apply the basic principles of search engine optimization (SEO) to your website to get found online.

The good news? You're already a big step ahead by creating relevant web content — the kind of content that will appeal to people who are searching the web for your kind of products and services. Stay on top of your content game, and you'll be well on your way to a website that attracts visitors. Now, onto SEO.

How SEO works

SEO is all about establishing yourself as an authoritative resource on the web. In order to

do that, you need to understand the basics so you can better target your audience and increase your search ranking. At a high level, the basic elements of SEO you should understand and apply are:

Page content. We've touched on this already, but good content reigns supreme on the web. If you can answer the questions your audience is asking, you'll rank higher in search results.

Keywords. Choosing appropriate keywords can make all the difference. Select phrases that pertain to your business. We'll discuss this more in-depth shortly.

Link building. From backlinks to internal links, it's important to link to appropriate related content to provide relevant and useful information to your visitors.

Image optimization. There's a lot to cover when it comes to using images for SEO, so keep reading to learn more (hint: you want your ALT text to match your designated keyword).

Meta tags. These tags contain pertinent information to help search engines describe your site in search results. Read on for a more detailed explanation.

Site navigation. The easier it is for search engines to navigate your site, the higher your ranking will be. Make sure all links are up-to-date and navigation is simple.

Site map. Just like it sounds, is a map or directory of all the pages on your website. It's used to guide search engines through your site.