HOW TO BUILD AN ONLINE PRESENCE AND NAVIGATE DIGITAL MARKETING

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INTRODUCTION

In this digital day and age, having your own online presence is key to growing your business.

Not only will you be able to promote your services on a global platform, but you'll also impress visitors with a professional-looking website that is uniquely yours.

If all this sounds like a daunting prospect, don't worry – we're here to help.

That's why we've compiled the following booklet, which will outline the following topics that will help you to maximise your online potential:

- How to create a website
- What to include on your website
- Online tools for content creation
- Useful digital marketing tools

WHY USE 123 REG?

With over 20 years' experience, we're the UK's #1 domain provider.

We believe that getting online has been made to be more complicated than it needs to be. We seek to remedy this by simplifying the entire process so that anyone can take their brand, side hustle or idea online, regardless of their technical skill level. That way, our customers can focus on what they know best: their business.

So, whether you need domain names, websites, hosting solutions, professional email addresses, marketing tools or more, we have everything you need to get started and grow your brand further.

You won't need any training manuals or technical expertise either, as we've designed our products so that anyone can pick them up and start using them straight away. What's more, our expert Support teams are here to help with any queries you may have via telephone, email and live chat.

Having helped thousands of companies get online, we've registered more than 3 million domains and won countless awards for our services, including 'Best Domain Name Registration' by Start Your Business Magazine and 'Best Web Host' by TechRadar.

HOW TO CREATE A WEBSITE

With 123 Reg, you don't need any coding or design skills to set up your own stunning website. All you need are two important items:

Domain Names

Securing your ideal domain is the first important step you'll need to take on your online journey since this is what customers will most commonly associate with your brand.

Your domain should be a short, simple statement (i.e. less than 15 characters) that reflects your business's name. Similarly, your domain should be easy to remember and pronounce so that customers can quickly recall and share your web address with others. As such, you should avoid including numbers, multiple hyphens or special characters where possible, as these could confuse users and cause them to enter the wrong address.

You should also consider registering multiple extensions to protect your identity and prevent anyone from mimicking your business.

While .co.uk and .com domains are the most popular options, there are also a large variety of unique extensions available such as .online, .me, .store and more!

Website Builder

Creating your own website doesn't need to be a time-consuming challenge, as our Website Builder tool makes the whole process incredibly easy.

Start by choosing from one of our professional templates as your base. From there, you can edit the text, images, colour scheme and layout to suit your brand's style, and even add new elements such as maps, videos and contact forms using our built-in drag-and-drop tools.

It's also worth reviewing your competitors' websites to see what works and what doesn't from a design perspective. Be sure to take their layout, navigation, use of colour and typography into account.

Once you're happy with your website's design, click 'Publish' and you're done! Don't worry if you need to add more content later, as you can update and republish your website at any time.

Since all our plans come with a free domain name, email address, SSL certificate and web hosting included, our all-in-one Website Builder package allows you to create your own online presence quickly and easily.

You can also upgrade your website as your business grows to include multi-language options, ecommerce functionality and much, much more.

WHAT TO INCLUDE ON YOUR WEBSITE

Making a great first impression is critical to pique your visitors' interest.

To give you an idea, it takes about 0.05 seconds for a visitor to form an opinion about your website that determines whether they'll stay or leave. To make the most of your site, here are a few elements that you'll need to consider:

'Above the fold' area

This refers to content that is immediately visible when a visitor loads your page. In many ways, this should be one of the best parts of your site, as a great 'above the fold' area will encourage visitors to scroll down the page to find out more information.

Pay particular attention to your navigation bar by ensuring that it features your contact details, important webpages as well as any potential offers.

Home

Since this is usually the first page that your visitors will see, your Homepage must provide a clear and concise overview of your business that explains who you are and what you do.

Much like with the 'above-the-fold' section detailed earlier, your business's unique selling point should be one of the first elements that your visitors see, without them having to take any further action.

Professional images

Always use clear, good-quality images throughout your website, as small, blurry or pixelated images may present your business as unprofessional. Be sure to keep your images between 300KB – 1MB in size though. Otherwise, they'll start affecting your page loading speeds which, in turn, may deter your visitors.

If you're struggling to find suitable pictures, you can always source high-quality, copyright-free images from stock photography websites such as Unsplash.

WHAT TO INCLUDE ON YOUR WEBSITE

Testimonials

Highlight your business's legitimacy by showcasing positive testimonials about your products and services, along with links to credible review sites such as Foursquare, Trustpilot or Yelp.

Call-to-action buttons

Encourage users to perform a specific action by including clear 'call-to-action' buttons such as 'Read more', 'Buy now' or 'Contact us'. The colour and font for these buttons should also match your business's branding.

Meta elements

By including meta tags on all your web pages, such as a Title and Description, you'll help boost your website's ranking on search engines like Google and Bing.

Ideally, these should be short statements that summarise the content of each page and inspire curiosity for your visitors. For example, if you offer fitness services, you could state the following: 'Lose weight and stay in shape with our selection of boot camp and fitness classes.'

Contact

Last, but certainly not least, is your Contact page, which should be as simple as possible so that any potential customers know exactly how to get in touch. In addition to listing your contact details, such as your phone number and email address, why not also include a brief contact form that allows visitors to go into more detail about their enquiry. You could also list some of the 'Frequently Asked Questions' that you typically receive to help speed up response times.

If your business has multiple locations, be sure to list the details for each branch.
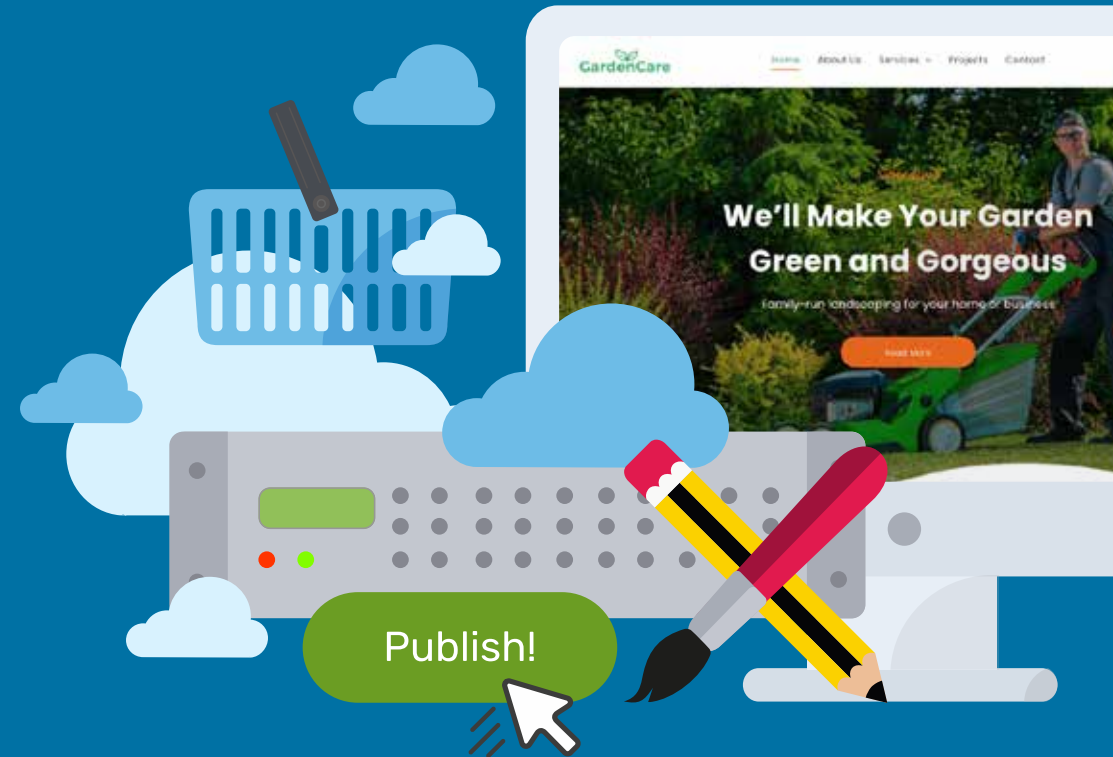
CONTENT CREATION TOOLS

Now that your website is up and running, you'll need to keep it populated with fresh and insightful content that will help boost your online profile.

Here are some effective and freely available ways of achieving this:

Blog

While managing your own blog may seem like a tedious distraction, it is in fact an excellent way of growing your brand awareness for several reasons.

By publishing original content on a regular basis, you'll improve your website's ranking on Google and encourage customers to keep returning to your site, helping you to foster your own online community.

What's more, the dynamic nature of blogs means that you can showcase a range of different articles. This could include light-hearted stories that add character to your brand, detailed articles that showcase your expertise within your field as well as important announcements that highlight any upcoming events or developments.

Our Website Builder tool includes blogging tools as standard, which can be easily integrated into and managed alongside your main site.

Interactive content

Quizzes, polls and competitions are always a great way of drumming up engagement for your business. Not only do they add a personal element to your brand, but they also help you build a strong connection with your followers.

Social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram provide an excellent opportunity for this type of content since visitors can easily comment on or share your posts with others. Be sure to respond to any comments, whether positive or negative, in a tactful, professional manner that's in keeping with your brand personality.

CONTENT
CREATION TOOLS

Professional designs

You don't need to be a graphic designer to create stunning promotional materials for your business.

By using free tools such as Canva, you can easily create professional-looking designs and documents that resonate with your audience without any prior experience. You can also resize your designs so that they meet the requirements of social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter.

Videos

Employing videos across your site can be a fantastic way of promoting your business as they allow your visitors to immediately understand who you are, what you offer and how they can use your products or services.

If you're not familiar with video editing software, then Vimeo Create is a great starting place. This tool offers a selection of custom templates to choose from that can be easily customised, along with a stock library that will help you to create a video within 10 minutes.

Live videos are also an inexpensive means of sharing content about your business or any relevant topics, which can be achieved through streaming services such as Facebook Live and YouTube Live.

Since viewers can ask you questions on the spot, it's a great way for you to create an interactive atmosphere and show how well you engage with your audience.

DIGITAL MARKETING TOOLS

On top of your own website, you can further expand your digital presence by taking advantage of the following tools:

Google My Business

This free service allows you to create and verify your business on Google Maps for local customers to discover.

As part of your listing, you'll be able to publish photos, contact details, opening hours as well as promotional offers relating to your brand. What's more, you can see how exactly people are interacting with your profile and adapt your strategy accordingly by utilising their built-in analytics tool.

Social Media

Although you might be tempted to set up a profile for your brand on every social media platform available, it's worth understanding the nature and user demographics for each one first. That way, you can determine which one offers the best value for your business and decide where to spend most of your time and resources.

Platforms such as Twitter and Facebook are generally a good place to start, as posts can include text, images, GIFs, videos and polls, allowing you to create some incredibly creative ideas. By adding a Shop to your Facebook business page, you'll even have another platform from which to sell your products.

LinkedIn, meanwhile, offers more of a professional environment that values elaborate, well-written content over humorous posts, while Instagram and TikTok are primarily visual platforms that are popular with younger audiences.

Once you've determined which channels you'll be using, you can then use paid advertising to further promote your services. In particular, Facebook and Twitter offer the ability to set up tailored campaigns that segment users based on their age, gender, interests and location, ensuring that your content is promoted and shared with your ideal demographic.

# DIGITAL MARKETING TOOLS

Social Media Management

With so many social networking sites available, it can be difficult to stay on top of them all. That's where platforms such as Hootsuite, Buffer and Zoho Social come in, which allow you to manage all your social media activity from one handy place.

By using these tools, you can create, plan and schedule content, track its effectiveness in real-time as well as view and respond to any comments in just a few clicks, saving you time and effort throughout your marketing campaigns.

Email Marketing

Directly engage with your customers by sending promotional emails straight to their inboxes. In particular, you could share a seasonal email to your entire userbase that includes a special discount, or a re-engagement email to inactive customers that encourages them to continue using your services.

Some of the best tools for this include Campaign Monitor, FreshMail and Mailchimp since they all come with drag-and-drop tools that allow you to effortlessly build and customise your own campaigns.
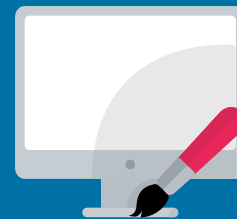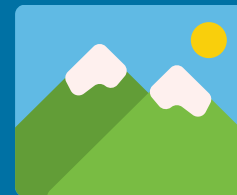
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is Website Builder?

It is our all-in-one design package that allows you to create and manage a stunning website that will work across every type of device, including desktop computers, tablets and mobiles.

Do I need to have any technical knowledge?

No, you won't need any HTML, CSS or other coding skills whatsoever. All our Website Builder plans are designed to be picked up and used by anyone, regardless of their technical skill level.

Can I use my own images and text?

Certainly! Although we will automatically generate some images and text for you, you'll be able to edit these details and upload your own content at any time using our built-in drag-and-drop tools.

Do I need to buy a separate hosting package?

No, because all our Website Builder plans come with everything you need to build and host your site. You'll even receive a free domain name and email address as standard (excludes Website Builder Starter).

What is Website Builder Starter?

Our Starter plan differs from our typical Website Builder packages in that it will create a professional-looking, 1-page website for you within a few minutes.

All you need to do is complete our brief form by providing some basic details about your business, such as your industry sector, address, telephone number, logo, email address as well as a basic description of your services. From there, we'll generate your 1-page website based on this information.

How do I order Website Builder Starter?

Start by searching for and adding a domain name to your basket using the search function on our website. As you continue through the checkout process, our Website Builder Starter product will be automatically added to your basket.

How long does it take to set up my Starter plan?

Only a few minutes! Simply fill out our form and your 1-page website will be up and running in the time it takes for you to make a cup of tea.

What if I need more pages?

You'll need to upgrade to our Website Builder Standard, Pro or Online Shop package, all of which come with an unlimited number of pages as well as a free email address as standard.

You can upgrade your existing plan at any time from your 123 Reg Control Panel or by contacting our Support team on 0345 450 2310.

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THANKS FOR READING OUR EBOOK!

Get up to 64% off our
Website Builder package
today: www.123-reg.co.uk

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