



Why have a website?

That may be a strange question for us to ask! After all, we would like to design and build a site for you. But the question is very important. You need to be absolutely sure of the purpose of your web site - before you get involved with any designer.

Web sites can have many purposes. Some sites are designed to actively secure further business by offering on-line trading. Others are purely a method of enabling potential clients to see what a company can offer. The aim is to keep existing clients informed of new products or services and to give potential clients or customers sufficient information in order for them to contact your company.

Many sites exist to promote a particular cause or campaign. The sites are full of information and content to attract and retain visitors. Perhaps you feel that you should have a web site for your business because everyone else seems to have one? But what if you are a small company, like a plumber or electrician, and most of your business is done locally? To be honest, it may not be cost effective marketing to have a web site. You might get more for your money by investing in a larger advert in Yellow Pages.

On the other hand if you combine a web site with your existing marketing activities eg. Include your website details on all of your stationary an advertising. You have the opportunity to convey a vastly greater amount of information about your business.

The purpose of the site:

But, whatever your reason for wanting a web site, your first decision is to decide the purpose of the site. You can do this by thinking of answers to these five questions:

- What is the goal of your web site?
- What do you want it to achieve?
- Who will be your potential audience?
- Why will they visit your web site instead of another?
- What do you hope visitors will be able to achieve on your site and why would they want to return?

Whoever you hire to design and build your web site, those should be the first questions you are asked. So, be prepared with your answers!

The Content:

Once you are satisfied with your answers to these questions, you need to think about the content for your site. Whatever content you have, it will need to support the purposes and goals of the site and be of direct and important use to the site's audience.



Small business marketing concepts

A few thoughts on why you should have a website

Many companies just reproduce their existing marketing materials into a web site ...dull, dull, dull. I have even seen sites where the front page of the latest marketing brochure has been turned into a graphic image, added to a web page with a few contact details and that is the web site!

On the web, content is king. There are now over one billion web pages out there. People look at and may read the best bits from a site, then move on. Net users nowadays are probably the most demanding consumers of any sort of media. They have little loyalty to any one particular site and even less patience with poorly designed sites. Also do make sure that any web content is well written with no spelling mistakes!

Navigation:

One of the most important elements of a web site is how users navigate around the site. If you are thinking and planning a site, or thinking of asking someone to build one for you, remember to make sure that the navigation is right.

People have become accustomed to certain web site conventions. They feel at home on a site because these conventions are usually (but not always) followed. For example, the navigation down the left-hand side or across the top of the page, the logo in the top left hand corner. These conventions help people as they move from one site to another.

Many sites have amazing home pages with flashy animations, clear menus and navigation, loads of graphics and punchy text. Great! But you can't assume that all your site visitors will arrive at your front door! A search engine result could turn up any page from your site and this will be where people enter. So do make sure that visitors to any page can quickly orientate themselves to where they are within your site with clear navigation and an easy route back to your home page.

Be prepared:

A web site is not built and finished in the way that a car is built and finished. Web sites are dynamic creations that change and evolve over time. You need to add pages to them with new and exciting articles, free offers, special offers for your customers and clients. You need to give people a reason to return to your site, again and again. So be prepared to keep nurturing your new site!

If you would like to know more about organising your website please give us a call on 07 54979 661