



Online New Zealand

Why Does a Business Need a Website?

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Is this article applicable to you?

No, if you already have a great website for your business and it is getting good results for you.

Yes, if you own a business and are looking to improve your image; customer service; and business results.

Did You Know?

Over 60% of New Zealand businesses have a website. Can you afford to give away that competitive advantage?

While you can easily spend over \$3,000 on a website, it can cost less than \$1,000 to have a tidy, functional website built.

The internet has transformed the way people buy goods and service. As a result, it has forced business owners to re-think how they promote themselves in the marketplace. The unique features of the worldwide web offer businesses a range of marketing options that never existed before. Many business owners have discovered how to use the internet to bring in new customers and improve customer service. Others have yet to make this discovery and feel that the returns from having a website does not justify the capital investment.

This article is to help business owners to make a more informed decision by explaining how a website could improve their business.

Business Credibility

There is only one answer these days to the question: "Do you have a website?" and that answer is YES. Any business operating in the 21st century needs a website to be credible. If you have to answer "no" to this question, the recipient may be thinking that you are not serious about your business. It's almost tantamount to:

- ▶ not having a cell-phone
- ▶ not having an e-mail address
- ▶ not having a business card
- ▶ not having a fax machine

How would you feel if a business owner lacked these items? It would hardly inspire confidence would it?

Meet Your Customers Expectations

The public now expects a business to have a website. People expect to be able to find out more information about your business online. They expect to be able to access this information from the comfort of their own homes (or from their work), free of any hassle or cost, any time of the day or night.

We live in an instant age now. People want information without delay. If you make your customers and prospects wait until you're open next before they can call you, they'll flag it away and look elsewhere.



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Keep Up With Your Competitors

You need a website to simply to match the service currently offered by your competitors. If you browse through the Yellow Pages right now, I expect that 70% of your main competitors already have websites. Can you really afford to give that advantage away to them? I'm sure they are very pleased that you haven't invested in a website until now.

Unlimited Online Information

Smart business owners use their websites to provide valuable marketing information to their target market. This information can be accessed by their customers for free; any time of the day or night; from the comfort of their own homes. And there is no limit to the amount of information you can provide. Imagine the benefit of being able to share the following information with your customers and prospects:

- ▶ your services
- ▶ your address and contact details
- ▶ directions about how to find your business
- ▶ reasons why they should use your services, as opposed to anywhere else
- ▶ your current special offers

The list is endless.

Visual Impact

A website is an ideal way to accentuate any visual images or photographs relating to your business eg. your interior décor; your stunning views; your delicious-looking dishes; or your friendly and good-looking staff.

And if you want to really add impact, you can even upload a video to your website (which costs the viewer nothing to download)!

No other medium can match the flexibility of the internet.

Immediate Updates

They say that information is out-of-date as soon as it is printed. And if you've a mistake with any of the information in your printed material (such as prices, dates and phone numbers), the consequences can be disastrous, embarrassing and costly. But if you have provided this information online, it can be changed immediately with little or no cost.



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This unique feature is also useful to notify the public about short-term promotions. Some businesses (including Air New Zealand and many hotels and motels) advertise last-minute specials in the hope of generating a smaller return as opposed to no return at all. Could you possibly offer something unique at a discounted rate?

Advertise Your Clients and Suppliers

If you wish to support your loyal business clients and supporters, you can advertise their businesses on your website – including a direct link to their websites. If your website attracts a large number of visitors, you can even charge for this advertising.

Advertise for New Staff

If you're on the look-out for new staff, you can dedicate a page for "Jobs". A job-seeker will be more impressed if their future employer has an attractive, professional-looking website.

Online Shop

If you have a website, you can offer items for sale. This allows people from anywhere in the country (or the world!) to buy from you 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

So what can you offer for sale online? You may be in a position to sell any of the following:

- ▶ Your products
- ▶ gift vouchers
- ▶ merchandise eg. cork screws; cheeseboards, coasters or
- ▶ wine glasses with your logo on them
- ▶ food products eg. cheese; jams; condiments; secret-recipe sauces or spices exclusive to your restaurant
- ▶ surplus furniture, crockery, utensils
- ▶ takeaway meals
- ▶ wine
- ▶ cook books published exclusively by your restaurant
- ▶ memorabilia signed by celebrity diners
- ▶ pre-paid catering packages
- ▶ local art, prints or photography
- ▶ local souvenirs with your logo on them

Is there an opportunity to buy stock in bulk and re-package and sell it in smaller quantities?

Do you have something that viewers want?

Perhaps you have a software programme or a book of tips and ideas to help run a more efficient restaurant. Or maybe you can



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source good quality equipment or ingredients and discounted prices.

An online shop gives you the chance to create a “business within your business”. To a large extent, it can produce a reasonably passive income if you do it right. Depending on what you’re selling, it might only take a few sales to recover the set-up cost of an online shop.

Note: we can set-up an online shop from scratch for only \$895 plus GST. Hosting and promotion are then your only ongoing costs.

Links

If you have a website, you can direct people to it from the following sources:

- ▶ your business card
- ▶ your letterhead
- ▶ your e-mail messages
- ▶ your Yellow Pages advertisement
- ▶ your flyers and brochures
- ▶ your footpath sign
- ▶ your vehicle signage
- ▶ your telephone message
- ▶ virtually any other marketing you do

If you decide to advertise for staff through advertising websites (including TradeMe jobs), you can invite interested candidates to visit your website for more information about the opportunity and about your business.

Often my clients ask whether they should renew their Yellow Pages advertisement. Personally, I consider it is a necessary evil for any restaurant owner in that you simply can’t afford not to be in it. But a good cost-saving measure I recommend to my clients is to reduce the size of the ad but to include a reference to their new website. And rather than just mentioning your

“Check out our special deals at www.tasterrestaurant.co.nz”

“Print out a \$10 discount coupon at www.tasterrestaurant.co.nz”

“Read our free recipes at www.tasterrestaurant.co.nz”

Specialty Services

Do you offer specialty services? If not, why not consider it? This could be for large or small options. It could be “pick-up only” or you could offer a “deliver and instal” option. This service alone could repay the entire cost of your website.



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It would only take one or two bookings to repay the entire cost of your website.

Customer Newsletters

If you send out newsletters to your customers, you would be able to upload copies of them on your website. This feature allows customers and visitors to your website to read past issues of your newsletters. Such a “online library” looks very professional and will impress prospective customers. You can then invite people to subscribe for future publications.

VIP Club

Have you established a VIP Club to provide an extra-special standard of service for your very customers? If not I strongly recommend that you do so. You can then describe all the benefits of membership on your website, and invite customers to apply.

As you can see, there are ample reasons to warrant the investment in a business website. It isn't a question of why you should have a website but more a question of why you haven't invested in a website before! Now is your chance.

I trust this information has been valuable. If you would like to discuss any aspect of the topic covered in more detail, please give us a call.



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Who do you choose to build and market your Website?

Low-cost choices

You could get your seven year-old nephew to build it for you?
You could try and build one yourself with your limited knowledge?
These options may appear cost effective, but it is unlikely that your website would be found among the 600 million other websites that are online now.

You could use a free online website builder and build your site using an online template?
Not the best option as the website company will charge you a premium for hosting because that is how they make their money. In addition your website would not usually be easily found as “optimisation for search engines” is an exact science and requires a vast understanding and a good website is built around these parameters.

You could use a web designer that works just part time and can probably do quite a “good deal” for you?
Modern web design has become so complex now even for the seasoned professionals that it takes many hours of study just to keep up with new trends and search engine algorithms.

You could try marketing your website yourself by submitting it to 5,000+ search engines?
Whilst this idea sounds great, sadly you are just opening yourself up to spam emails by the thousands, most of them trying to sell you something.

Why Choose Online NZ

Online New Zealand are your #1 best choice to design and/or promote your new website for the following reasons:

- We listen to our clients and produce a final product that exceeds their expectations .
- We promote all of our client’s websites with several available options in our national promotional website, www.olnz.co.nz ... which gain higher search engine results than they may have got in other systems as it creates thousands of internal and external links, thus benefitting our clients by the search engines considering the links are from a great source and therefor directing traffic to our client’s websites because of this strong association. **There is no other company in New Zealand that provides this service nationally for their clients.**
- We are able to tailor plans to suit a client requiring additional promotion by implementing our Page#1 Guaranteed search engine results using top of the line SEO (search engine optimisation), without using “black-hat techniques” to fool search engines and eventually get the website “punished” or banned.
- Because marketing, design and promotion is all we do, that is why we do it better.