



The Natural Law of the Internet

**What the web can do for you
and what you need to do for the web.**

A worksheet to help guide your website project.
By Hot Pyjama Productions.

The internet has given businesses the opportunity to target and communicate with markets that traditionally were difficult to reach. The internet has had a major impact on leveling the business playing field, with SMEs now having access to the same tools, the same information and now the same markets as the big players, regardless of distance.

Whether considering a website for the first time, or reviewing your current website requirements, use the checklist below to focus your thinking and help in your decision making process.

1. Do you need a website?

Despite what you might think or what some website developers will lead you to believe, not every business or organization will benefit from having a website, or see a sufficient return that outweighs their investment.

Below are some of the reasons why a business or organisation might consider developing an online presence. If you select any of these, then move on to step 2. If not, you may still have other compelling reasons to proceed with a site - be sure to record those in the space provided below. Either way, consider carefully your reasons to ensure the project is going to be the best use of your resources.

Which of any of the following best represent your reasons for considering a website?

- Our markets are difficult or costly to communicate with because of physical distance and/or time zones.
- It is obligatory these days for a business to have a website.
- We need to be 'open for business' 24 x 7 so customers can research product offerings, make a purchase, obtain technical information and support, or initiate contact.
- Our products or services constantly change and we need to keep our clients, customers and/or suppliers informed of these changes.
- We want to automate and increase the speed of order placement, receipt, processing and tracking.
- We need to share or exchange technical or personal information and documentation with customers, staff or suppliers in other locations.
- Our customer base and/or supply chain utilise the internet as a research, communication, procurement and/or general business tool.
- We need to collect and analyse more information about our customers and supplier relationships.
- Our products and/or services can be delivered via the internet.
- We want to reduce the environmental impact of our marketing delivery methods.
- Our target visitors actively use the web as a research and/or communication tool.

Other:

2. Setting the goals and objectives for your project.

These will be useful for measuring the success of your project.

What do you want your website to achieve?

- To be online in time to meet a specific deadline, such as the launch of a marketing or PR campaign, product launch, conference or industry show.
- To generate a certain number of qualified leads.
- To generate a certain number of on-line sales.
- To gather information on prospects with the aim of marketing products/services specific to their demographics.
- To gather prospect's contact details so as to engage them in on-going contact with the business or organisation.
- Deliver product, company and technical information more efficiently and cost effectively than other methods.
- Reduce the cost and time involved in the customers' pre-purchase decision-making process (i.e. reduce the amount of time sales staff spend on assisting customers to make a purchase.)

Other: (ensure they are SMART)

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Relevant
Timely

3. Your business/organisation and your products or services

A/ What is your organisation structure?

B/ Describe the culture of your organisation.

C/ What is your organisation's vision and mission:

D/ What is your Unique Selling Point/value proposition?

E/ Describe your products/services (please also supply any promotional brochures, marketing material that you use to promote your products and services).

F/ Who is your target market? Describe in detail including geographical location, gender, economic group, age, ethnicity, and primary language of purchaser or decision maker.

G/ How do your customers/clients think and behave?

H/ What are their needs?

I/ Who are your primary competitors?

J/ What is it about your competitors that they do well?

K/ What is it that they are doing wrong or badly?

L/ What makes you different from your competitors?

4. Defining the scope of your site.

Which of the following best defines the scope you want for your site?

- Provide secure online purchasing.
- Educate our target market about our industry, organisation or business.
- Build brand awareness and drive customers to our 'bricks and mortar' store/office.
- Communicate with existing clients, customers and business partners.
- Inform and communicate with new markets.
- Improve access to company information, expertise and personnel.
- Showcase areas of specific expertise or industry knowledge.
- Provide a means of keeping the site fresh and up-to-date with current information.

Other:

5. Considering the content of your site.

Your site content should reinforce your point of difference and distinguish you from your competitors. List 3 key differences between you and your competitors that you want to emphasise:

1/

2/

3/

It is important to see the site from the visitor's point of view, and consider what content they would find most important and useful. Chances are they will be visiting for a specific reason, so make sure they will be able to easily find what they are looking for.

Which of the following content ideas do you consider your visitors would find the most important and useful?

- An introduction or profile of our products and services, focusing on benefits and how we will solve the customer or client's particular 'problem'.
- Secure ordering and payment facilities for goods and services online.
- Enquiry form containing specific questions designed to help define the nature of the enquiry. This should also include a privacy statement informing the site visitor about how the information they give will be used.
- Site search function (if the site is extensive).
- Full contact details.
(This is very important! If your business is relatively new or unknown, then potential customers need assurance that your business has a physical address they can visit or ring if things go wrong, and not just an anonymous box number).
- Testimonials and profiles of key personnel. (If you are in a service related business then this will assist with your credibility).
- Service and/or product guarantees, special trial offers or enticements.
- Newsletter downloads and subscription request form.
(Writing articles will reinforce your credibility and knowledge in your field. Newsletters are also a useful way to keep your business in front of your prospects on a regular basis).
- Downloads of product or service information, such as 'how to' guides, technical information, etc.
- Links to other sites that are relevant and useful to your site visitors. This will help to facilitate a 'links exchange' programme with the aim of getting the site link onto other sites, helping with our 'link popularity' in key search engines.

Our site content:

6. Site Marketing

There are literally billions of web pages on the web, so it is not enough to build a site without letting your target audience know how to find it.

What marketing tools will you use to promote your site?

- Optimisation of our site to achieve consistently high rankings in major search engines
- Paid Listings in Directories
- Pay-per-click campaign in Search Engines
- Referral links from other websites with the same target audience
- Including our URL (website address) in all our offline marketing material and advertising.
- E-mail Newsletters and direct marketing to our database
- Offering our specialist knowledge and expertise on relevant blog sites in order to grow our profile and reputation.

Other marketing tools:

7. Setting Your Budget

"The accepted wisdom within the marketing industry is that you should look to spend around 5% of revenue on your marketing activity. The secret however is to ensure that you spend what you can afford to spend and that you've evaluated the most effective way of using this money to generate the best return for your business"

Trevor Best, Icon Business Solutions

What budget are you going to allocate to your website design, development and marketing programme?

- \$2000 - \$4000
- \$4000 - \$6000
- \$6000 - \$8,000
- \$10,000 +

How many sales/enquiries/leads do you need to generate from the site for a good return on your marketing investment?

8. Your Preferences

A/ List the sites you like and identify what it is about them that you like.

B/ List the sites you dislike and identify what it is about them that you don't like.

9. Briefing your Development Team

Now that you have completed your website planning worksheet, contact Hot Pyjama Productions **NOW** on (03) 374 9929 or email wendy@hotpj.co.nz to set up an appointment to brief your development team. We guarantee to design and implement a solution that will meet the goals you have outlined above and grow your business.

Best Wishes



Wendy Riley-Biddle
Principal Designer/Director

PS: Don't forget to bring this worksheet!

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