Digital Promotion for Your Project or Community Group

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FutureCommunities
For a **United Future**

Meet the Trainers (1)

Gary Parker

BA (Hons) Social Science

- Chair of Future Communities
- 20+ years of experience in business support and fundraising
- future-communities.org.uk

Meet the Trainers (2)

- Providing website design and development services to SMEs
- Worked with a range of small business from a variety of sectors

Sybil Mayard

MSc Computer Science

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Workshop Outline

1. Do Your Research
2. Websites and SEO
3. Blogging
4. Social Media
5. Email Marketing
6. Google Business Profile and Local Directories
7. Video Marketing
8. PPC Advertising
9. Developing a Digital Marketing Strategy
10. Offline Marketing

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Do Your Research

Know your audience:

- Age group
- Gender
- Geographical location
- Education
- Occupation
- Family
- Income
- Interests
- Spending habits
- Pain points

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Build a Website

- Think about time available, your budget, your skills and the requirements of your project
- Plan the requirements of your site:
  - Pages required and content
  - Features (e.g. blog, photo gallery)
  - Functionality (e.g. newsletter signup form, e-commerce, contact form, chat bot)
- It is possible to build a website for free
- Using a website builder is the quickest way to get started
- We'll discuss a few popular website builders
- Don't forget to include legal information (privacy notice, terms & conditions)

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Wix

- You can develop a website for free
- No need to get a hosting plan - Wix provides the hosting
- Apps are available from the Wix App Market if you need additional features
- The platform does not require maintenance
- Wix can be used to build an e-commerce store
- To access advanced features e.g. removing ads, connecting a custom domain or taking payments online, you must upgrade to a paid plan

WordPress.org

- A very powerful and customisable platform
- You have access to a vast range of themes and plugins to enhance the functionality of your site, many of which are free
- Use WooCommerce to convert your WordPress site into an e-commerce store
- WordPress itself is free, but you need to set up hosting and a register a domain before installing it
- The platform needs regular maintenance (keeping themes, plugins and WP core files updated), and backups

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Shopify

- A very popular e-commerce platform, which powers millions of merchants worldwide
- You can sell an unlimited number of products on your Shopify store
- Themes are highly customisable without the need for editing code
- Apps are available from the Shopify App Store if you need more features
- The Basic Shopify plan costs ~~£25/month~~ **£1/month for the first 3 months!**
- Or, contact us about setting up an unlimited trial store for you
- 24/7 access to the Shopify Support team via chat, email and the community forums

Other Website Builders

- Squarespace
- Webflow
- Weebly
- etc.

Understand Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)

- Helps your website rank higher in search results
- Organic (does not use paid advertising)
- Your website **must** be mobile friendly
- Optimise page titles, meta descriptions and image alt tags - include relevant keywords
- Fix broken links
- Logical site structure, fast loading, good user experience
- Submit your site to Google Search Console
- Ensure that your site has an SSL certificate installed
- Add new content to your website on a regular basis
- Can use AI-generated content, but edit it before publishing
- Ask other website owners to link their website to yours (backlinking)

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Blogging

- Demonstrates that you are an expert in your field
- Maintaining a blog keeps your audience informed and engaged
- Helps to improve the SEO of your website
- All of the website builders mentioned previously offer blogging tools
- It is a long term process
- Your content needs to be relevant
- Publish posts on a regular basis (e.g. every 2 weeks)

Social Media (1)

- A very effective and inexpensive way to promote your project
- Engage directly with your followers
- Produce relevant content and publish regularly - like blogging, it is a long term strategy
- Most popular social media platforms include:
  - Facebook
  - Instagram
  - X
  - LinkedIn
  - TikTok
  - Nextdoor - good for creating a local presence
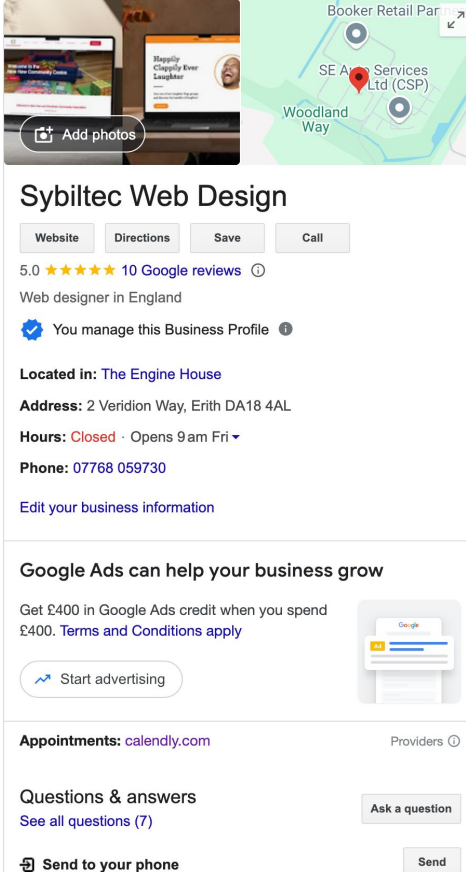
Social Media (2)

- The algorithms are constantly changing. Experiment with different strategies to find out what works best for you
- Look at your analytics to understand how your posts are performing
- A couple of tools to help you manage your social media:
  - **Meta Business Suite**
    - Works with Facebook and Instagram
  - **Buffer (free plan)**
    - Connect up to 3 channels
    - Schedule 10 posts per channel at one time

Email Marketing

- Email marketing is a powerful tool for keeping your customers engaged
- Think about the content, e.g. newsletter, offers, competitions, launch of new products/services
- Monitor key metrics:
  - Open rate
  - Click-through rate
  - Bounce rate
  - Unsubscribe rate
- Common email marketing platforms (all of these offer a free plan):
  - Mailchimp
  - MailerLite
  - HubSpot
- Be aware of GDPR requirements

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Google Business Profile

- Enter as much information as you can (contact info, opening hours, booking link, FAQs ...)Ask your clients to write reviews - send them a link that takes them directly to the form
- Respond to all reviews

Local Directories

- A local directory includes a list of businesses and enables users to find companies within a specific geographic region
- Listing your business in a local online directory can help improve your website's SEO. This is because when you create a new local citation, you're also creating a new backlink to your website
- Examples:
  - Bark
  - Yelp
  - Yell.com

Video Marketing

Some ideas:
- Tutorials/how-to
- Webinars
- Unboxing videos
- Free courses
- New product launches
- YouTube Shorts - up to 1 minute long

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PPC Advertising

- PPC stands for **pay-per-click**, a model of digital advertising where the advertiser pays a fee each time one of their ads is clicked
- Paid advertising is a fast way to gain visitors to your website and increase conversions, but can be expensive - define your budget
- You can run paid ads on search engines like Google or Bing, or on social media platforms
- Advertise on the platform(s) that your audience is using
- Monitor the performance of your campaigns so that you can make adjustments and improvements

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Offline Promotion

- Flyers/posters/leaflets
- Business cards
- Newspapers
- Word of mouth
- In-person networking events
- Markets
- Pop-ups
- Discount/loyalty cards
- Referral programmes

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Contact Information

This resource was produced by Future Communities

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Useful Links

- Wix: www.wix.com
- WordPress: wordpress.org
- Shopify: www.shopify.com/uk
- SEO Starter Guide:
  developers.google.com/search/docs/beginner/seo-starter-guide
- Mailchimp: mailchimp.com
- MailerLite: www.mailerlite.com
- Google Ads: business.google.com/uk/google-ads
- Google Analytics: marketingplatform.google.com/intl/en_uk/about/analytics
- Google Business Profile: www.google.com/intl/en_uk/business/
- ChatGPT: chatgpt.com
- Meta Business Suite: business.facebook.com

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