

How to Develop a Simple Website for Your Project or Community Group

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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

Workshop Outline

1. Know your customer
2. Why you need a website
3. Website builders
4. Web design best practices
5. Driving traffic to your website
6. SEO (search engine optimisation)
7. Blogging
8. Google Business Profile / local directories
9. Optimising your website for conversions
10. Tracking the performance of your website

Know Your Customer

Do your research to find out your target audience's:

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

Why You Need a Website

- Increases credibility and builds trust
- People are more likely to use an organisation that has a website
- You have complete control over how your website looks and functions, unlike social media platforms
- Manage your website from almost anywhere in the world
- Your website is accessible 24/7
- Reach an international audience
- Easier to track analytics and customer behaviour
- Small carbon footprint

Your Website is Core to Your Marketing



Getting Started

- 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)

- 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



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.



webflow

weebly

User Experience (UX)

- UX is all about how your users feel when they are visiting your website
- Do they they feel happy when using your website, or do they have a negative experience?
- Keep the end user in mind at all times when designing and building your website

Web Design Best Practices

- Don't use too many colours or fonts
- Consistent design, which aligns with your brand
- The website should load quickly, especially on a mobile device
- Responsive across all types of device (desktop, laptop, smartphone and tablet)
- Easy to navigate
- Accessibility - consider users with disabilities or impairments
- No distracting pop ups or ads

Driving Traffic to Your Website

- Blogging
- SEO
- Social media
- Google Business Profile
- QR codes
- Directories
- Backlinks
- Word of mouth
- Flyers

Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)

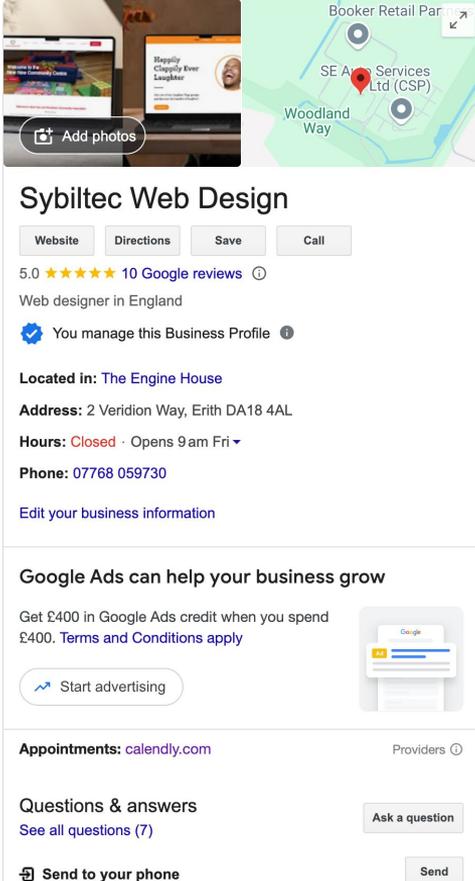
- Helps your website rank higher in search results
- Organic (does not use paid advertising)
- Your website **must** be mobile friendly
- Optimise page titles, meta descriptions and image alt tags - include relevant keywords
- Fix broken links
- Logical site structure, fast loading, good user experience
- 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)

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)

Google Business Profile

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



Sybiltec Web Design

Website Directions Save Call

5.0 ★★★★★ 10 Google reviews ⓘ

Web designer in England

✓ You manage this Business Profile ⓘ

Located in: [The Engine House](#)

Address: 2 Veridion Way, Erith DA18 4AL

Hours: Closed · Opens 9 am Fri ▾

Phone: 07768 059730

[Edit your business information](#)

Google Ads can help your business grow

Get £400 in Google Ads credit when you spend £400. [Terms and Conditions apply](#)

[Start advertising](#)

Appointments: [calendly.com](#) Providers ⓘ

Questions & answers

[See all questions \(7\)](#) [Ask a question](#)

[Send to your phone](#) [Send](#)

Local Directories

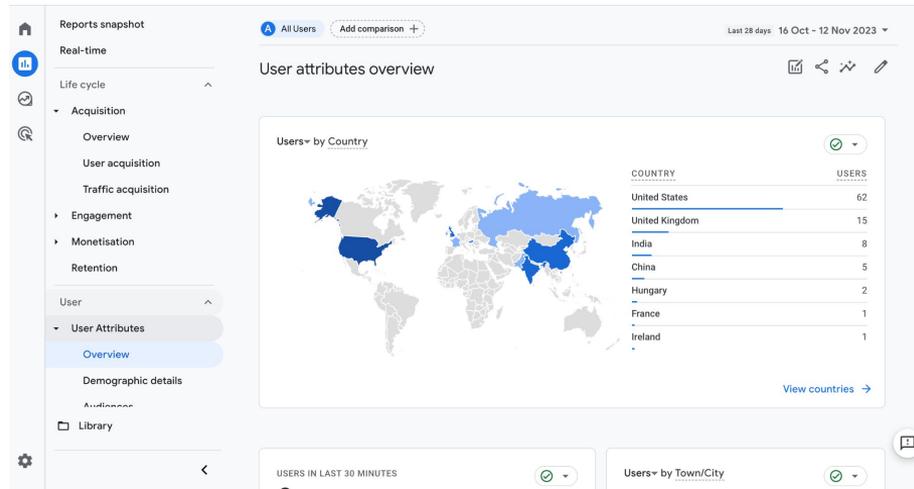
- A local directory includes a list of businesses and enables users to find companies within a specific geographic region
- Listing your business in a local online directory can help improve your website's SEO. This is because when you create a new local citation, you're also creating a new backlink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

Optimising Your Website for Conversions

- Placing CTAs (calls-to-action) strategically throughout your website
- Make it easy for the visitor to take action (e.g. placing the booking form in a location which is easy to access)
- Using the appropriate language and tone of voice
- Good user experience

Track the Performance of Your Website

- Install Google Analytics 4 (free tool)
- Monitor metrics such as pageviews, acquisition, number of users, locations of users, devices and browsers used etc.



Contact Information

This resource was produced by Future Communities

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- YouTube: [@futurecommunities9383](https://www.youtube.com/@futurecommunities9383)

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
- 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/