

# THE SIMPLE WEB SITE GUIDE

WEBSITES CAN BE DAUNTING, BUT THEY DON'T HAVE TO BE!  
READ OUR FREE EBOOK TO GET STARTED.

TECHNOVORE

# Welcome

Whether you are just starting out with your first website or are already on the way to web domination, a little extra information never hurt anyone right? Hopefully this ebook will provide you with a little information to make your life easier and the internet a better place for everyone.

Before we get started, we thought you might enjoy a picture of a kitten.



There. That was calming wasn't it. Ready to embark on a learning journey? Great! Let's get started!

# The Uncomfortable Truth

## YOU.MIGHT.NOT.NEED.A.WEBSITE.

That got your attention, didn't it!

As a web developer it's considered heresy to say it out loud.

But it's also true....

There are a lot of businesses and people that have a website when they don't need one. They think they need one because we have been indoctrinated into thinking that we need a website to sell and be taken seriously.

The truth is a website is nothing more than a tool you use to solve a specific problem for you or your business. Handling orders, spreading information, building credibility, acting as a platform for your personal development, a learning resource, marketing automation tool, customer interface... you get the idea. A website shouldn't be something you just throw together and hope for the best, if you're going to have one then it should be (in no particular order):

Useful	Representative	Secure	Visible
Maintained	Accurate	Targeted	Legally Compliant
Focused	Fast	Responsive	Accessible
Backed Up	SEO Ready		

("But that's a lot of stuff?!" we hear you say. Well yes, yes it is but for very good reasons.

### IMAGINATION EXERCISE

We like to think of the Internet as a public park. Instead of flowers, it is full of amazing websites that represent things built by talented people, things that make the park look nice, things that make the park a nice place to be, things that teach people new skills and confidence to be their very best. But this park has a problem... Think of bad websites as carelessly discarded dog poop all over that park. There you are, enjoying the shade of a well crafted ecommerce bandstand by the photo sharing service lake, you think to yourself - I know I'll grab a cloud based accounting ice cream from over there when you SUDDENLY and without warning, stand in a dog poop plumbers website that someone has carelessly left lying about. Aww man. Day ruined and your belief in the niceness of the park sullied.

If you really need a website - and remember, you might not. You are unlikely to get the website you want, doing what you need it to do, using a simple page builder platform.

You remember how, when you wanted to build that nuclear reactor you just watched a YouTube video and knocked one up out of yogurt pots and blue tack? Or that time you needed that heart transplant and you grabbed your pizza cutter and a piping bag and got stuck in? No of course not, because sometimes it's better to get help from people who do these things day in, and day out. It doesn't have to be us, but if you want it done properly then it should be someone (unless you are a web design company, in which case you guys have probably got this).

## How Do I Know If I Need A Website?

Take a look at these 2 simple steps – it takes a bit of work but in the end it will save you time, money and a lot of potential headaches!

### STEP 1 – WHAT DO I NEED TO ACHIEVE?

What issue are you facing that makes you think you need a website?

Do you need to generate more income? Do you need to tell people about a product or service? Do you want to share your holiday snaps with your family? Being clear about what you want it to do is essential to figuring out if you need it.

### STEP 2 – HOW ELSE COULD I DO IT?

Once you know what it is you want to achieve think carefully about how else you could achieve the same outcome. By thinking laterally at this point, you might strike brain gold (which is probably not a real thing?)

You might come to one of the following conclusions:

1 – Nope, it simply has to be a website. There is nothing else that can possibly do what I need.

2- Actually, these people are right. I could get the same results by [insert absolutely stonking idea here].

Or, (and this one is our personal favourite)

3 – Wait a second.... I do need a website, but, if we [insert absolutely stonking idea here] as well, the results will be at least 5 times better!

You might actually want to go through this process a number of times to make sure you have captured all of the things you would like a website to help you with.

WRITE THEM ALL DOWN!

If you picked option 1 or 3, you should keep reading. If you ended up at option 2, well congratulations on streamlining your choices and whilst we think you will still enjoy the rest of this ebook, you can feel free to stop reading now. It was nice to meet you, keep being awesome!

## Now What?

### WHO CAN I GET TO HELP ME?

You've done the hard work in steps 1 and 2. Relax into this one, the rules are really easy.

Find someone who:

- 1 – Inspires trust
- 2 – Is reliable
- 3 – Is available and responsive to your requests
- 4 – That values and understands what you do
- 5 – That you can visualise a long-term working partnership with
- 6 – Has a proven body of work and references/reviews

That's it... We aren't going to say you should work with us to the exclusion of all others, it is important that this relationship is solid so take your time choosing someone, ask questions, talk to them and look at their portfolio. The most important thing is that you feel secure, valued and that you are confident in the ability of your chosen provider. After all, if the person you choose is doing a bad job, you might as well grab that yogurt pot and piping bag yourself.

This bit should be obvious, but

**DO** find out how much you preferred supplier charges (including extras) and

**DON'T** make your final decision based on price alone. (please refer to previous yogurt pot examples, cheaper isn't always better)

### STEP 4 – HOW MUCH WILL IT COST ME?

The honest answer is, we have no idea. We only just worked out you actually need a website after all!

How much a website costs is dependent on a number of factors including but not limited to –

How much you can afford.

What you want it to do.

What sort of support you need in maintaining it.

How critical is it to your business?

There are hundreds of factors which affect the price of a website, which is why it is important to have an understanding of the sites value to **you** and your business.

To help you out, we are going to give you some example prices from our own business. (If you're reading this in 2044 thinking you can get a bargain website from us then you'll be disappointed because the prices are fixed and published in 2019/20.)

This are a guide based on some of the sites we have worked on recently. If you want a price of your own, you are going to have to get it the hard way buster and give us a call!

		Simple	Moderate	Complex
Build Your Own Site	Standard Hosting	£10 (/mo)		
	Social Enterprise Hosting	£5 (/mo)		
Website as a Service	Build			
	Maintain (/mo)	£15		
One Page Site	Build	£400	£500	£600
	Maintain (/mo)	£100	£150	£150
Multi-page	Build	£1,200	£2,000	£3,000
	Maintain (/mo)	£150	£150	£200
E-commerce	Build	£3,700	£5,000	£7,000
	Care Package (/mo)	£200	£200	£POA

As you can see, as complexity increases, the cost of building and maintaining a website gets higher. No surprises there!

IMPORTANT: If you are thinking "Woah, that is expensive!" then you have a problem and might need to go back to the beginning of the ebook.

If you are still thinking of your website as a cost to be minimised and avoided then you may not have considered its long-term value, or its potential for return on your investment properly. Of course it's important to get great value from your website, but if you have correctly identified the role your site will fulfil, what this means to you and/or your business and how it will benefit you, then you will see that your website is an investment in your goals

#Lifehack - Never buy the cheapest brakes, tyres, solicitor or websites. Better to be safe than sorry!

One thing to consider. Does your chosen Web Designer offer the option to split the payment for your site over time? If so, consider carefully if this might work for you but

don't sign up for any expensive credit packages. Find out what the whole cost will be before agreeing.

## What Do Those Different Options Mean?

You are still reading? Good! We weren't sure you were going to make it through the tyres/websites bit.

So what do those options mean? Well, again, the answer will vary. We can only tell you about our way of doing things. You should definitely talk to other providers and get a feel for what they can offer but we will talk you through the options above so you understand the lingo.

### BUILD YOUR OWN

This means you already have your own website or the skills to build one and you want somewhere for it to live. If you are at this point, then you should already be fairly sure that you need a website and it should be fulfilling the goals and functions that you planned for it when you set it up... You did have goals and plans right? Of course you did! On the off chance that you didn't and you don't really know if your website is legally compliant, secure, achieving your sales goals etc, book a chat with us or your preferred web design team and look through it.

Ask these questions:

- Is it doing what I want it to do?
- Is it doing what I need it to do?
- Can I prove both of those things and if so, can I set up regular monitoring as part of a set of business or goal metrics? Don't just look at your web analytics, look at your sales, your customers through the door, whatever you can to make sure your site is doing what you need it to do.
- What else would I like it to do?
- Is it fast enough?
- Is it secure?
- Is it up to date? Is your content fresh? Is your contact information up to date? Is your website using the most recent software?

If you are happy with the answers to all of those things, then congratulations! You are doing a great job, grab yourself a cup of celebratory coffee and go on with your day! Whoop!

If you want to move the hosting of your existing site to a local company with friendly support who can be there to help if you ever develop a problem. Get in touch.

Otherwise - as you were soldier!

**DID YOU KNOW?**

**THAT INCONVENIENT  
REBOOT OR UPDATE THAT IS MAKING YOU  
MAD IS ACTUALLY YOUR COMPUTER DOING  
A LITTLE**

# *Self Care*

**BE MORE LIKE YOUR  
COMPUTER AND LOOK  
AFTER YOURSELF WHEN YOU  
NEED IT, NOT WHEN IT  
SUITS OTHERS.**

**TECHNOVORE**



## WEBSITE AS A SERVICE

Sometimes, you go through all the questions about a website and it turns out, what you need is a simple, cost effective presence on the 'interwebs'. No fancy features - just a single page website or landing page to put on your business card for those delightful business breakfasts so that people get to know your brand, have an understanding of what you do and can contact you easily. (See, even a simple one page website can say a lot about you!)

We can hear the shouts of "JUST USE WIX" or "SQUARESPACE IS EXPENSIVE BUT SO WORTH IT" coming from the crowds right now...

you could do this, just remember your pooper scooper ok?

We offer a super simple service which gives you a hosted and maintained single page website (we pre-load an awesome theme for you and you simply add your own content and you can use our library of awesome stock images and graphics!). We make sure it stays fast, secure, available, all those other good things and we offer you help along the way to make it better. You can spin up a website pretty much instantly for a project, event or business AND when the time comes for you to up your game - we can migrate your design to a full site and get you up and running quickly. There are no long-term commitments and you can move away at any time all for a low monthly payment.

Get in touch to find out more!

## A ONE PAGE SITE

You might need a bit more than a landing page for your business. Perhaps you need some simple purchasing or booking options for your project, integration with another website or service or some custom features that our Website as a Service doesn't have. This is where the One Page Site comes in. Simple, flexible, affordable and awesome.

## A MULITI-PAGE SITE

Things are starting to get serious now! More pages, more space, plugins running anything from a membership organisation to an online e-learning platform! A custom design, your options are almost endless. It can be hard to know where to start with a

bigger site like this but your web design team can talk you through the planning and implementation to avoid making any costly mistakes. This is a great option for moving your existing business website but make sure you consider the SEO implications of changing or migrating a website, it can have quite an impact! If you are worried about this, talk to us, your preferred web designers or website maintenance team to find out more.

## E-COMMERCE

An e-commerce website can be quite an undertaking. You need good quality content, stock images, payment processors, fulfilment integrations, SEO and quality analytics all whilst staying within the law. The ins and outs of an e-commerce site are beyond the scope of this document but if it is something that you want or need, then any good web team will be able to help you. It sounds daunting but professional teams can get it done. Budget accordingly though!

## SUMMARY

So that's it, a concise summary of the services and solutions that we can offer you and your business.. We are far from the only game in town though so do your research and ask questions. Find a person or team you are comfortable with and explore what will achieve your aims! Just don't forget about the care plan!

# Why Do I Need A Care Plan?

A care plan...why do I need that? Why do you get your car serviced? Because, if you don't the chances of it breaking down increase right?

Here is a list of statements that we believe are self-evident:

- Your website is an investment and investments need some care to thrive.
- You could do everything your website needs yourself, it isn't magic or witchcraft.
- Poorly cared for sites are at best annoying for the people using and managing them and at worst a potential target for hackers and a risk to your (and your customers) security.

So with that in mind, if you can't (or won't) pay someone to look after your site for you, these are the things you should be doing (and why).

Thing	Reason	Frequency
Backup your data	If your website goes down, for whatever reason, it's great to know you can just restore it with a few clicks of a button right? We all know backing up is essential. Don't get caught out	At least weekly for low traffic low change sites, daily to 12 hourly for important sites and 4 x daily minimum to hourly for a busy e-commerce site
WordPress Upgrades	WordPress is great. We love it. And it powers a large portion of the internet which makes it both a target for hackers and backed by a huge number of people working on security. This means that updates are fairly frequent and necessary. It is important to research and consider the implications of clicking update now before doing it though. Occasionally issues with WordPress or so called "Breaking Changes" can render your site completely inoperative so make sure you have a backup. Research the compatibility of your plugins and themes and set aside a good chunk of time to test your site after the update.	These updates occur as and when they are needed. Please don't enable auto update and forget about it. You will be absolutely fine, right up until you aren't and one day you may find customers telling you that your site has been down for weeks and they "thought you knew". To be on the safe side, check daily.
Plugin Upgrades	Just in the same way WordPress Core needs to be updated to remain secure and functional. So do your plugins. And much like the WordPress updates, you need to make sure you are backed up and have researched how the update works with your platform updates.	These updates occur as and when they are needed. You should check daily.
Theme Upgrades	Just in the same way WordPress Core	These updates occur

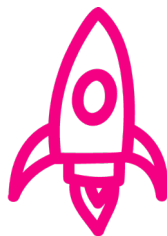
	needs to be updated to remain secure and functional. So do your themes... see all info above!	as and when they are needed. You should check daily.
Security Monitoring	Checking your site for intrusion, file changes, malware etc. Site hacking is no joke and can take a long time to sort out. We recommend using security plugins to monitor activity and provide 2 Factor Authentication for access to your site. Your site should be scanned regularly. You don't want to help the scammers and hackers by making their jobs easier, in the worst cases, you too could be liable for fines and prosecution!	Weekly as a minimum, daily is preferable, especially for large e-commerce installations.
Database Cleaning and Optimisation	In order to keep your website running at its best it is important to keep your database (the thing your website runs on) clean and optimised.	You should do this at least weekly.
Analytics and Performance Monitoring	How often you check this will depend on what your aims are for your site and to some extent, which analytics service you are using.	Graphed visitors over the month is bare minimum. If you have an e-commerce store you are going to want to pay a lot more attention to your data than this!
Uptime Monitoring	How often does your website go down? How long for? The answer should be not often at all, especially if you use a cloud-based server infrastructure but it does happen and when it does it is usually as a result of a problem with your sites software, plugins or theme. The thing is, if you aren't monitoring it, you won't get any advanced warning of any issues. Our monitoring systems (Yes, systems, we have 3 different ones!) run 24/7. We include this information and suggestions in our monthly client reports.	You should have this monitored 24/7 with down and up notifications. Downtime for any site, let alone an e-commerce site is a super bad thing!
Scanning and Fixing Broken Links	This is more about reputation management and search engine ranking than it is about the functionality of your site. But if you have a link on your site (either internally or externally) it should go where you say it does.	Scan your site at least weekly (more often if you update content a lot) to find, fix or remove any broken links. Think of it like weeding a flower bed.
SSL Certificate Monitoring and Padlock repairs	Your SSL padlock used to be a 'nice to have' thing that told people they weren't dealing with scammers. These days search engines	You should check your site thoroughly at least once a month. Again,

	and browsers like Google and Chrome actively discourage users from visiting a site without a valid SSL certificate. You NEED one - it needs to be intact across all of your pages and it is quite easy to break it by uploading or linking content from outside of your site.	more often if you are running an e-commerce site.
Block and Quarantine Bad Bots	You can't really do this manually, but nevertheless, you should use a reliable plugin to block and quarantine any bad bots that aren't playing by the rules. Bots crawl over the internet looking for things, They can be indexing your site for a search engine, or looking for prices to compare and they have rules to follow. Some bots are looking for weaknesses and flaws for hackers to exploit and these bots in general, do not follow the rules laid out for them, those darn rebels. Block them to keep your site that little bit safer!	Continuously.
Server Software	From time to time server side software will need to be updated. A good example is php. Updates are few and far between but when they happen, it is usually for a good reason and it is important to keep up to date.	You should check at least once a month.

So there you go. There is a basic list of the things you should be checking and how often on your website.

Doesn't look so hard does it! You got this!

But if you have better things to be doing with your time then why not let us do it for you?



# What Next?

That's it. We have come to the end of this super whistle stop, basic ebook on websites. Stick to the following and you will be fine!

- Think carefully about a website, what you need it to do for you and how it can improve your business or appearance.
- Talk to as many people as possible and pick the one you feel most comfortable working with.
- Listen to their advice.
- Do you have the time to take care of it? If not, have you considered hiring someone to maintain it?
- Don't poop in the park.

If you have any questions or want to discuss any element of this ebook, get in touch. We love to hear from you!

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# Glossary/Terms

This ebook has a lot of industry specific jargon in it, so we have put together a little glossary of some of the terms. We have also included a few extras, just in case you have heard them and want to know more.

Term	Explanation
Analytics	
Bots	Automated programs that run over the internet. They can behave a lot like users and complete tasks such as attempting logins, gathering information or harvesting email addresses.
Child Theme	
CMS	CMS stands for Content Management System. This is the thing that handles your pages, posts, comments, pictures etc. Your content in short.
Content	
Database	
Downtime	The amount of time that your website is not available on the internet.
GDPR	
Open Source	
Plugin	A small program that "plugs in" to your WordPress website to increase its functionality. Plugins can be for any number of features from forums to payment gateways, online shops to maps.
Server	The computer or computers that your website (and others) sits on.
Theme	This controls the way your website looks. There are literally thousands of options.
Update	Taking a plugin or program and installing a newer version with enhanced features or security.
Upgrade	To improve. Usually to increase the functionality or performance of one or more components.
Uptime	The amount of time that your website is available on the internet.
Web Designer	A person who changes the way a website looks.
Web Developer	A person who builds elements for a website including coding custom plugins

	and programs.
WordPress	An open source, content management system that makes building a great website easy and affordable.

## Credits

Written by Rob Wick

Edited by Jess Holliland

Inspired by All the mistakes I have made over the years so you don't have to.

Image of super sad looking Cat from [Pexels](#) (a great place to get free imagery from)