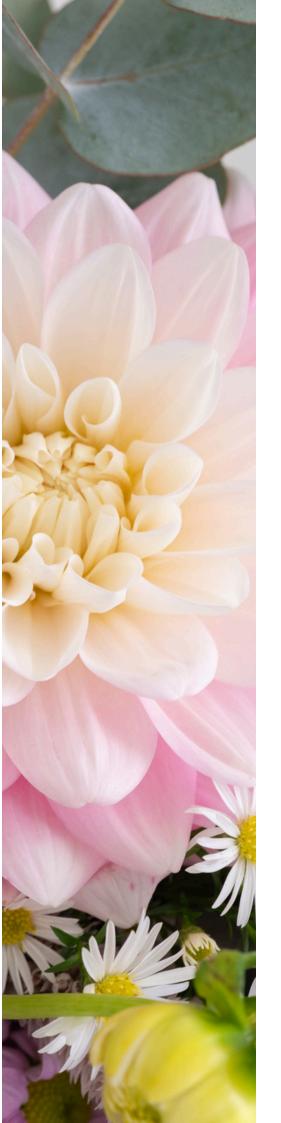# Website Design

Stage 1: Planning

A Practical Website Checklist for Small Business Owners

Welcome

Whether you're starting from scratch or giving your website a much-needed refresh, this guide is here to help you gain clarity and confidence before we dive into the design process.

A successful website is more than just a pretty homepage — it's a strategic tool that supports your business goals, attracts your ideal clients, and reflects the heart of your brand.

As you work through this checklist, you'll start to uncover what really matters for your online presence.

I can't wait to work with you to bring it all to life!

How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you think through the key elements of your website before we begin the design process.

Grab a notebook and pen, or start a new document on your computer. There are no right or wrong answers, so take your time and jot down what feels true for your business right now.

The more detail you can provide, the more tailored and effective your website will be.

Once you've worked through the checklist, we'll use your responses as the foundation for your site's structure, content, and design direction.

This guide is for your personal use and is not intended to be shared with others.

Why Do I Need a Website for My Business?

Your website is your business' online home — a place that's 100% yours, where people can learn about who you are, what you offer, and how to take the next step with you.

Unlike social media, which is always changing, your website is a space you control. It builds credibility, supports trust, and helps your ideal clients decide that you're the right fit.

A well-designed website works for you 24/7:
- It can answer questions, collect leads, take bookings or payments, and showcase your services — even while you sleep.
- It helps potential clients feel confident in reaching out.
- It gives you a professional edge, especially in competitive or sensitive industries like health and wellness.

If you want to grow, streamline, or simply show up more confidently in your business, a strong website is a smart investment that keeps working long after launch.

Website Strategy

Project Goals & Marketing Plan

What are the main goals for your website?
(e.g. sell products, generate leads, showcase services, educate, establish credibility)

What role will your website play in your broader marketing plan?
(E.g. lead generation, email list building, educational hub, online sales, support existing clients)

Your Ideal Client

Who is your ideal client or customer?
Who have you most enjoyed working with in the past?
What do they have in common (needs, values, industries, personality)?
What values or personality traits do they have that make working together enjoyable or meaningful for you?

Why Do I Need an Ideal Client?
Knowing your ideal client is one of the most powerful things you can do for your business — and your website.
When you get clear on exactly who you're trying to reach, it becomes easier to attract the right people: the ones who value what you offer, are easier to communicate with, and are more likely to take action (like buying, booking, or referring you to others). Your messaging, visuals, layout, and even the language you use can all be tailored to speak directly to that person — making your website more effective, and your work more enjoyable. Instead of trying to speak to everyone, you'll be creating something that connects deeply with someone — and that's where real results come from.

Strategy Cont.

Visitor Intent

What are the top 3 reasons someone would visit your website?
Are there other useful or secondary things your visitors may want
to find or do?

Visitor Experience

How do you want people to feel when they land on your site?
(E.g. calm, inspired, confident, understood, motivated)

Calls-to-Action

What specific actions do you want visitors to take?
(e.g. book a call, sign up for a newsletter, buy a product, fill out a form)
How can you phrase these in a way that hooks your visitor's emotions
as well? (e.g. Embrace your calm today)

Timeline

What is your ideal launch date?
Are there any key dates or events this site needs to be ready for?

Why you?

What specific problem does your ideal client need help solving —
and how do you solve it better or differently than others?
What objections or hesitations might they have before choosing to
work with you, and how do you address those?

Considering Content

Start thinking about what content you will need to include on your site and what pages you may need (e.g. home, about, services, FAQ, blog, shop, contact etc.)

Will you write this yourself, or will you outsource this?

Legal

Do you have (or need help with) a Privacy Policy, Terms an Conditions of Sale, Terms of Use, or other required pages?

Does your industry have specific legal requirements or restrictions that apply to your website content?

Images

Will you be using existing photos or scheduling a professional shoot? Do you have stock images or will you need help sourcing them?

Website Content Updates

Who will be responsible for updating or managing the website after launch? (You, a team member, or will you need support?)

What content will need to be updated regularly?
(e.g. blog posts, new projects, seasonal offerings)
What content may need less frequent updates?
(e.g. testimonials, team bios, service packages, pricing)

Design

We'll think more about design and styles later in the process. For now, have a think about:

Brand Assets

Do you have a logo, brand colours, fonts, or style guide? Do you know where to find your hi-res logo files?

What you like and what you don't like

As you look around at other sites, start to make a list of things you like or don't like about different sites.

Is there a paragraph font that you like? how about menu styles? button design?

Once you're done, get in touch and let's get to work!

A well-planned website not only looks good — it saves you time, supports your business growth, and helps the right people find and connect with you.

Keep this resource handy as you move through the design process, and remember: a website is never really "done" — it's a living tool that can grow and evolve alongside your business.

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