

Are you well FED?

using your website to feed your business

Conference Notes

Jacqui Carrel



Website Wonder

Why do you need a website?

You need a website so people can be FED. That is, your site will help them:

- **F**ind you
- **E**ngage with what they find
- **D**eal with you

If you don't have a website

First, get your business Facebook page up and running while you work on your site: you can spread the word and build a following through your posts and targeted advertising. Next, start thinking about what it is you want people to see and do when they come to your site; this will help you write the content properly. Next, start thinking about how you are going to get your site noticed; this will help you construct it properly.

If you use blogging software to make your site (such as WordPress; see below), you can write plenty of blog posts in advance and set the date and time when they will appear. You can also set the posts up so they appear simultaneously on Facebook and Twitter, etc.

What should you use to build/rebuild my site?

There are so many choices out there!

Software (eg, Dreamweaver)

These programmes used to be the only way to get a half-decent website. However, you need to know what you are doing and they can be time-consuming to learn. Really, unless you are a geek, you probably don't want to bother.

Write your own

You need to know HTML and CSS; can be time-consuming to learn and may need to make separate mobile site

Website builders (such as those supplied by web hosting companies)

These are very simple to use – if you can make choices and drag and drop, you're in! Most allow for viewing on tablets and mobiles. The downside is they have limited functionality, it's harder to optimise them, you're tied into the host package, and the 'made by' tag is there for all to see – great for hobbyists, but not for businesses.

Open source builders (such as Joomla and WordPress)

These packages are made by nice, helpful and clever people just for the love of it and you can use them for free. We find Joomla is more clunky than WordPress and has less functionality, so it's WordPress we use.

WordPress

We use WordPress for most of our sites for a number of reasons. There are two types:

The [wordpress.com](#) version

This software is great for bloggers and non-business sites. It has less functionality than the .org version, but it is free to use, you don't need to buy a domain name. If you go for their free hosting, your URL will look something like [mysite.wordpress.com](#). If you pay for the hosting (and get rid of the .wordpress tag), you might just as well go for the superior features of the .org.

The [wordpress.org](#) version

This software is excellent for any SME and can support shopping facilities. We use it because:

- It is Google-friendly
- It offers a huge amount of functionality
- You can choose from thousands of free themes ('looks'), or choose to buy one
- Most themes can now be used/seen properly across mobile devices
- You can easily embed pictures, maps, videos and podcasts into the pages
- Blog posts and their hierarchies and archives are sorted for you
- Once you have been shown the ropes, it is straightforward to use
- ... and more 😊

In addition, we feel strongly you should have the option of making updates/editing/adding pages rather than having to pay us to do it; with WordPress, once we've given you some basic training (included for free in most of our packages), you can do these simple tasks. We can also train you or colleagues to do more complex tasks.

We find most clients do smaller bits by themselves and ask us to do larger tasks... though some have us make all additions/changes and some do the entire lot themselves

Your site

If you are making/updating your own site

1. Strongly consider using WordPress (See above)
2. Use plenty of content (See below)
3. Learn what not to do from sites like these:

[www.exmouth-view.co.uk](#) (Try shrinking it too)

[www.flatpakhouse.com](#) (Try out the navigation! Look at the static, unchanging URL)

[www.riversideartcenter.org](#) (Try shrinking it too)

[www.headhunterhairstyling.com](#) (Would you want this person cutting your hair?!)

[www.arrestling.com/index.htm](#) (My eyes hurt!)

[nwo killers.weebly.com/our-beliefs.html](#) (My eyes hurt! Try shrinking it too. Note URL)

<http://www.roverp6cars.com> (Try shrinking it too)

Have a good look around at websites in your genre, including [competitor websites](#), and note what features/functions/looks are good and that you could use on your site.

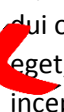
Content

Use informative, relevant, up-to-date, optimised and pleasant-to-read content in order to engage your readers and get them to take action. This action could be sharing, signing up to your email list, asking for details, or buying something. Add fresh content regularly.

Include **'anchor text' links** to related internal pages and external sites. Anchor text is where you hyperlink words in a sentence rather than putting in the URL.

If you add **pictures** (a good idea), make sure they are low res (quick to upload) and optimise their metadata; for example, instead of 123abc.jpeg, rename it to pringles-hairdressers-jersey-reception-area.jpeg.

Make the content **easy to read**. Use headings (and heading tags), short sentences, plenty of paragraphs and white space and have dark text against a pale background (or vice versa). Include calls to action (eg, 'To get XXX, click here before it's gone!')



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Lorem ipsum is faux Latin used as a page filler when building your website so you can get an idea of layout.

You can generate it [here](#).

Lorem Ipsum


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Class Aptent

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A **blog** is a great way to add fresh content. Blog posts can be written in a more informal style than the page content. Blog posts can be added from the admin part of the site, or set up to update via email.

Repurpose your content to create other content, such as articles, audio and video scripts, ebooks, etc. Upload them to social sharing sites, etc, and make sure they are all linked back to *relevant* pages in your site.

In Summary

Make sure you have a website.

If you are making a website or having a website built for you, take careful consideration over which software you use. We use WordPress as it has many advantages, but there are other packages out there – just make sure the sites are responsive so they can be read easily on tablets and mobiles.

Make sure your site is something you can easily add to and update. Always include a blog.

Content helps your site:

- Get seen in searches and clicked on
- Be informative and interesting
- Communicate with prospects and get them to take action

You can repurpose content to bring in leads and 'link juice'. The content can be used in blog posts, articles, slideshows, podcasts, videos, advertorials, manuals and more. Being published (Kindle and books) shows you as an expert and is a good way to increase credibility and leads.

An integral blog means you can add fresh, relevant content without having to alter page content too much. You can link your posts to social media.

Of course there is so much more to a website and getting your business seen and used than we were able to cover in one short session, but I hope this gives you a few guidelines to be getting in with.

You can contact me with no obligation to see if I can help you/your colleagues with your website and content creation and publishing.

With very best wishes,

Jacqui



Jacqui Carrel – Website Wonder