

**.CYMRU  
.WALES**



**WHY YOUR  
BUSINESS  
NEEDS TO HAVE  
A WEBSITE**

.....

**AND 3 EASY STEPS TO  
GETTING STARTED**





88% of consumers normally do at least 10% of their shopping online, with

**37%**

of consumers now saying the frequency of their online grocery shopping increased during the peak of the coronavirus<sup>1</sup>

## GETTING STARTED

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Creating a website is an amazing way to grow your business and reach both new and existing customers.

Websites bring a host of great benefits: a window on the digital high street, driving footfall to your physical store, increased opportunities for your business to be discovered, and can be a potential new sales channel via e-commerce.

In this handy guide, we're going to explain the benefits of having an online presence, dispel the common myths, and offer some easy steps to getting started.

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# FIVE REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD HAVE A WEBSITE



## REASON 1

### Customers can find you easily

The customer buying journey has evolved as the internet has changed the way we shop.

Every minute of every day, shoppers are becoming more reliant on the internet, seeking information on what to buy, where to eat, and which businesses to engage with.

Not all your potential customers are expecting to buy online, but they do want to know about the businesses they might use now or in the future. Potential customers could be searching for what you offer in your location, but will struggle to find you if your business is not online.



## REASON 2

### Your competitors are online

Most retailers already have a website. When customers are searching for products and services, they are attracted to the businesses that offer the things they want in the closest location to where they want to shop.



## REASON 3

### A website makes your business more trustworthy

Customers expect to find businesses online. Research shows that if you don't have a website, you risk being perceived as less trustworthy and credible in the minds of shoppers.

The same applies to email addresses, with some retailers still using free email addresses with providers such as Gmail or Hotmail. Again, research has shown that businesses doing this risk appearing unprofessional and being taken less seriously by customers.

Having a yourname@ email address and yourbusinessname.wales or yourbusinessname.cymru website address are simple ways to raise your business profile instantly.

Using a professional website and email address helps to extend the reach of your business and enhance your brand, reputation and high street credibility.





## REASON 4

### Ensure you're open 24/7

Customers expect to browse and research, anytime, anywhere, 24/7.

Making your business constantly available with an online presence is an easy way to ensure your retail store is never closed. Customers can visit you virtually from wherever they are, and they can see the products and services you have on offer, find you, and check out your location and opening hours.

## REASON 5

### Communicate with your customers

Having a website is a great way to get to know your customers and creates lots of opportunities to communicate with them.

You can tell them about your latest products, events and promotions, and they can tell you what they want and how they think you are doing. There are many online tools that allow you to monitor, communicate, and receive feedback including pop-up surveys, testimonials, and website reviews.

Meeting customer expectations is critical in today's world of retailing. The rules of the game are changing and being online has become a fundamental part of the high street.

You can use a website as a stand-alone extension of your physical real-world business, but you can also build a social media presence to engage with customers, perhaps by sharing reviews or FAQs. The extent to which you use social media will depend on the characteristics of your customers, but for most businesses it is a great way of extending your reach.

Not only can a website and social presence help you to interact with your customers and encourage sales, you'll also be able to share and showcase the great things your customers are already saying about your business.



*“Our website is an important element of our digital brand and identity. Our domain name plays a vital part in how our customers and stakeholders recognise our business as the Development Bank of Wales, for Wales. Our domain name helps us to define our presence online as an integral part of Welsh life and the Welsh economy.”*

**BEVERLEY DOWNES, MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR AT THE DEVELOPMENT BANK OF WALES**

# MYTH BUSTERS

Here are some common myths we will dispel to help assure you that the online world isn't as intimidating as it might seem.

## MYTH 1

*“I don't need a website, my business is doing fine as it is”*

Having a website isn't just about selling online (which is completely optional), it's about helping more customers find you over your competitors. Being online can open lots of exciting marketing opportunities and allow you to maximise customer relationships and strengthen brand awareness.

## MYTH 2

*“It will take too much time”*

We appreciate that business owners are wary of the time required to set up a website and get online. However, creating a website can be a simple process and doesn't have to be time consuming, especially when combined with the right tools, resources and guidance.

While your new website will need occasional updating (once live), it needn't consume all your time.

Once you start to understand the mechanics of getting online, there are many platforms designed to make maintenance as easy as possible and help you develop your business online. Setting aside a little time each week is an excellent way to start, and your website can evolve over time.

Welsh Business births increased by  
**103%**  
in the year to 2020 Q4<sup>3</sup>

**78%**  
of UK Consumers think a professional-looking website makes all the difference when selecting a company<sup>4</sup>

During the COVID-19 crisis  
**72%**  
of users bought goods online<sup>5</sup>

## MYTH 3

*“It's too technical”*

It's completely understandable to find the idea of getting online intimidating, but the process can be a lot easier than you might think. The internet has many simple step-by-step resources to help get your website up and running.

Some website providers will take on the technical work for you, and many website builders are designed to help newcomers create a great looking website.

There are lots of options to help you develop your digital skills, including free website templates that allow you to simply drag and drop your content and images.

## MYTH 4

*“It's too expensive”*

If you start looking into professional web-building platforms or expensive consultants, you might find the process can become costly. However, there are lots of low-cost solutions available as you start to explore the online world.

Domain registrars (companies who sell the domain names), website platforms and web hosting services often have low-priced package deals, great bundles and special offers that you can take advantage of when you start online. Hosting a website can cost a few pounds a month depending on the size of website and what you want to achieve.

## MYTH 5

*“I don't know where to start”*

It's not uncommon for the process of getting online to be slightly daunting but there are plenty of great resources out there to help. Plus, most of the processes are designed to help newcomers to get started.

# THREE EASY STEPS TO GETTING STARTED NOW...



## STEP 1: CREATE YOUR FIRST WEBSITE

Planning your website – before you get started set aside some time to plan what you want to use your website for and how you want it to work.

### WHAT DO YOU WANT YOUR WEBSITE TO DO?

Deciding on the purpose of your website is very important. By having your goals in mind before you start and while you're creating your website, your efforts will remain focused. Which of the following goals do you identify with the most?

- Better customer communication
- Drive footfall to your store
- Brand awareness
- Network and contact-building
- Provide information to prospective customers on your products and services
- Generate sales leads / future sales orders
- Online sales and service

Keep in mind who your ideal customer is throughout the process of setting up your website. What is their age range, interest, location and occupation? What would they like to see on your website?

### WHAT TYPE OF WEBSITE IS BEST SUITED FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

A website doesn't have to have e-commerce functionality to be an effective online home for your business. Here are some options:

#### Brochure website

This tells potential customers what your company does, what it offers and how to get in touch. This could be quite a simple website consisting of a couple of pages, perhaps including an online catalogue of all products and general information (e.g. opening times and location). You could also include customer case studies as testimonials.

#### Online shop (e-commerce)

An e-commerce website will allow you to sell products directly from your site and take secure payments over the internet.

#### Blog

Although a blog will sometimes be the sole function of some websites, most businesses use a blog to complement a brochure or e-commerce website.



## STEP 2: BUILDING YOUR WEBSITE

### HOW DO YOU WANT TO BUILD YOUR WEBSITE?

There are lots of options available for building a website depending on your level of expertise, how much time you have and your budget. Many of the website building packages are very user friendly and offer simple 'drag and drop' functionality.

Many registrars (which is who you register your domain with) offer easy to use website builder software with drag and drop menus and a wide range of ready to go templates.

Alternatively, if you're short on time, have the budget available or would feel more confident involving an expert, a website design agency or freelancer can handle all the work for you.



### WHAT SHOULD YOU INCLUDE ON YOUR WEBSITE?

Regardless of the type of website you're building, there are some fundamentals to include:

- Business name and logo
- Unique selling point and the benefits of your product or service
- A clear headline on what your business is all about and what you offer to customers
- Some great imagery showcasing your products or services and any current offers
- Contact details and location

- Any awards your business has won, product guarantees and security offered (more for e-commerce websites)
- Links to your business' social media accounts so customers can start following you

It's important to keep updating your website and ensure it remains relevant to your target audience, a few minutes a week might be sufficient.

### TEST YOUR WEBSITE

Make sure you run your website on all the major search browsers to check everything appears as it should and looks good (e.g. Firefox, Internet Explorer, Chrome and Safari). Don't forget to test out your website on mobiles and tablets too, as lots of customers will access your site via portable devices.

## STEP 3: ATTRACT CUSTOMERS TO YOUR WEBSITE

Once you've got your website up and running, you need to let potential customers know it's there. Below are some marketing ideas to help generate site traffic:

### Social media

Social media is a great tool to raise brand awareness, particularly in your local area, and connect with your customers. With 70% of people in Wales with a social media profile<sup>6</sup>... that's a big audience!

Once you've built up your following, sharing your site content via social platforms can be a great way to get more traffic to your website.

Plus, you'll be able to:

- Gain valuable customer insights
- Increase brand awareness
- Create targeted advert campaigns (these are surprisingly inexpensive)
- Easily share content and information
- Build relationships with your customers
- Improve brand loyalty
- Gain customer feedback

### Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)

SEO is about maximising the visibility of your website in non-sponsored Search Engine Results Pages (SERPS) so your business appears higher on the list of rankings on sites like Google and Bing.

Although it may sound complicated, there are some simple steps you can take to improve SEO, which you can find out about in our article [5 SEO mistakes every business should avoid](#).

Local SEO is great for retailers as it's all about targeting potential customers in your local area. For example, if you were to search for 'home interior shop' on Google, you should see a results page that not only responds to the keyword you typed in, but also tailors itself to your location. This can be excellent for businesses looking to target potential customers in their location.

### Email marketing

Email marketing involves using email as a tool to communicate with your customers, directly emailing your target audience to promote your business and products. We would recommend you look for ways to encourage customers to sign up for emails, such as offering them a monthly newsletter of new products instore. Money saving offers or vouchers are often a successful way to get subscribers to an email database.

You can use email marketing to:

- Enhance customer relationships
- Build customer loyalty
- Acquire customers
- Increase brand awareness
- Generate sales

If you decide to use email, the key is relevance and engaging your audience. Don't start over-mailing or spamming customers.

### Learning from your online presence

Once you're up and running online, there are some great tools that can tell you everything from where your target audience lives online to how many people are visiting your website.

[Google Analytics](#) is a popular (and free) web analytics service, that provides a wealth of useful and interesting data on how your website is performing and who is visiting it. Most of the basic useful information can be found easily on the ready-made dashboards and there are plenty of guides out there if you wanted to delve deeper in the future.

From a study of 1,000 small business owners, email marketing was ranked as the second most effective medium after Social Media for building brand awareness.<sup>8</sup>

These are just a couple of examples of what you could find out from Google Analytics. Remember, the longer your website is live, the more data you'll have available to compare:

- How many people are visiting your website (per day, week, month, year)
- How long people are spending on your website
- Which of your webpages are being visited the most
- The age and gender of visitors to your website
- Which devices people are using to visit your website

If your business is also active on social media, you can get further insights into your customers. For example, Facebook Insights can tell you the age, gender, lifestyle, education and job role of your fans as well as past purchase behaviour and how frequently your target audience is using the platform.

70%

OF PEOPLE IN WALES  
HAVE A SOCIAL  
MEDIA PROFILE<sup>6</sup>

Email marketing has  
the highest return on  
investment for small  
businesses.<sup>7</sup>



Being online will open a whole host of new opportunities for your business so, what are you waiting for?

If you would like any further support or information about anything featured in this guide, please get in touch via email to [support@welshdomains.wales](mailto:support@welshdomains.wales) or telephone +44 0333 222 5720.

You can find lots of helpful articles, blogs and free guides on our website too - [ourhomeonline.wales](http://ourhomeonline.wales)

## FOOTNOTES/REFERENCES

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