



# The Website Guide: What to consider for your website project

*By Marlon McPherson - V1.0*



Setting up a website for your business can be a big decision and one that is difficult to make, especially if you are completely new to the process.

This mini-guide aims to break down the key things you'll need to consider when making your decision on how to plan and proceed with your website project.

Whether you want to do it yourself or hire a professional, in the end, this guide should give you a clear idea of what to take into account.

Here are some of what's covered:

- Determining the role of your website.
- The various platforms
- Domain name and hosting
- WordPress CMS

## **The Primary Role**

Is your website going to be simply there for brand awareness, or will it need to capture leads and process transactions?

This is important to be clear about at the very start as it will help you determine what will need to be implemented on your site and therefore guide your decisions around the resources, expertise and budget you'll need.

For a business, I would like to think that at the very least, lead generation is paramount as you'll need to have people to sell to. Even if you don't yet have your product or service ready, it is a great idea to have a way to build an audience with content on your website and grow an email list of potential customers from that.

If you already have something to sell, having your sales page and checkout system ready would be obvious in order to make those all important sales.

Create a document and start mapping out the most important functions of your site, and eliminate anything that doesn't need to be there now. A good way to figure this out is to look at any feature or functionality that will not directly lead to sales and eliminate them for now.

Keeping it simple with as few moving parts as possible creates the best user experience and the least amount of friction for leads and sales conversions. In addition, this also means less for you to manage and take up valuable time.

## **Platform**

There are two main ways to create a website. One way is by using what's called a content management system (CMS), the other is by creating static html pages.

### **What's the difference?**

- **HTML Site** - Static html pages requires you to write code or understand it to be able to create your pages and it's also not as easy to add new content on a static site.
- **CMS** - Using a CMS is most likely the option that will give you the most flexibility over your content (pages, posts, images and other files) and managing your website. You don't need to know code for this and it's an easier system to use. There are lots of different CMS's but the one I use and recommend is WordPress.

I'll cover more on WordPress further on in this guide.

## **Domain Name**

The domain name is the actual name that people will type in when they want to go to your site, for example, bbc.com or amazon.com which are two popular domain names. The domain name is also sometimes referred to as a "URL".

I recommend getting your domain name for your site ready even if you are not yet ready to start your website. This is because anyone can buy any domain name if it's not yet taken so you want to make sure you get the name you'd like to use before anyone else.

With that being said, most obvious domain names have already been taken so you'll have to get creative if what you want isn't available. You can try the name on different domain extensions.

The extension is the end bit such as .com

There are lots of others you can try such as, .co .org .us .uk .co.uk etc.

You can search for and purchase domain names from a domain name registrar such as [godaddy.com](https://godaddy.com) or [namecheap.com](https://namecheap.com).

## Hosting

This is a very important part of setting up a website as in order for anyone to see your website over the internet, it needs to be stored (hosted) somewhere where it can be accessed 24/7.

When choosing a hosting company, make sure that they are reliable and have good resources and systems to help keep your site secure & fast loading. It also helps to have good quality support when you need it so having access to knowledgeable staff can save you a lot of frustration during and after setup.

Generally the dirt-cheap hosting companies are not ideal for a serious business website as you may end up with more hiccups and downtime on your site which is not great for business.

I recommend only high quality hosting - at this time for me this is [SiteGround](https://siteground.com).

They make it easy to setup and manage your WordPress site, as well as keep it secure, plus they have modern systems with very fast page load speeds.

You can [visit SiteGround by clicking here](https://siteground.com) or go to [siteground.com](https://siteground.com).

## WordPress CMS

WordPress is by far the most used CMS in the world with over 30% of websites being run by it. Here are some of the reasons why I think you should consider using it for your website too:

- Massive user-base - with so many users, should you need it, there is lots of support and information to help you through its large community.
- It's Open-Source - this means that the platform isn't owned by any one company. Instead it is run by a team of volunteer developers and enthusiasts who keep contributing to the development of the platform and therefore the platform itself is free to use by anyone, and anyone can contribute to its development.
- It's flexible - you can create just about any type of website using WordPress. Lots of developers have created additional software to further extend the functionality of WordPress beyond simply having Posts & Pages. These additions are called plugins & hundreds of them can be downloaded and installed directly inside WordPress for free. There are also lots of paid plugins that can be purchased all over the internet that is a turn-key solution for various types of sites. Plugins can include shopping carts, contact forms, opt-in forms, payment systems, photo galleries, media players, membership systems and many more.

- Native to blogging - one way to get your website found in searches is to publish helpful blog posts which will then get indexed by search engines such as Google. Wordpress comes with a blog system built right in so you can get started straight away.

## Content

Your website has to have engaging and compelling content to help you accomplish your goals. Whether it's the copy (text) that's been written for the pages, or posts that you publish on the blog, good content is what will help keep visitors on your site and get them to take the action you want, i.e. sign up, opt-in, or make a purchase.

If you have good copywriting skills, you can write your own content. Otherwise I recommend finding a copywriter/editor to work with to help you craft your copy to make sure it highly appeals to your target audience.

Copywriters, editors, & content writers can be found online through social media or through google searches. I recommend working with them directly as oppose to hiring through online marketplaces such as Fiverr, or People Per Hour, where quality of work or your overall buying experience may not be that great.

## Wrapping Up

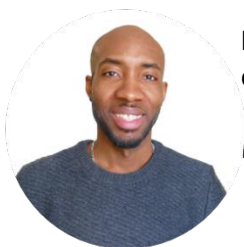
Now that you have a good understanding of what goes into website creation, hopefully you can make a more informed decision on how to approach your project.

WordPress is a valuable skill to learn, especially if you are bootstrapping your online business and don't have a lot of funds to invest in hiring developers and designers. Hiring website professionals or agencies can end up costing you a few thousands, to tens of thousands depending on your project needs.

I intend to teach what I know about WordPress websites through my content so that you can apply them on your own and create a website that works for you, with the least amount of headaches.

Please continue to follow my content, & should you have any questions please contact me on my website at [marlonmcpherson.com](https://marlonmcpherson.com) where I offer 1-to-1 consulting and done-for-you business website solutions.

## About the Author



Marlon McPherson is a content creator, educator and online entrepreneur who shares content around online business strategy and content marketing.

Find out more on the website, [marlonmcpherson.com](https://marlonmcpherson.com)