

7 things to consider before your next website project



It's complex, but it shouldn't be complicated.

How's that for a way to sum up what goes into building a website?

Thanks to technology and innovation, the technical aspects of website building have gotten easier – if you know what tools you're looking for. It's the systems, planning, simplification and execution that are still your obstacles.

New websites often get overcomplicated before they even launch.

Business owners approach it thinking they have to be all things to all people. That's not the case. People want less, not more. So, here are seven things to consider before building - or redesigning - your next website.

Yes, it's an extensive list and a lot to consider. The point, however is to consider as much as possible upfront, in order to distil your website project down to a targeted, focused, purposeful tool that will help you achieve your business goals and ultimately, your lifestyle goals.



ONE

Your Vision



A personal, hands-on
approach to property
management



What does success look like to you?

Not just for the website and your business, but for your life.

I think it's much more widely accepted that success comes in all shapes and forms these days. It used to be that a job title or a salary amount determined whether you were "successful" or not. Which is completely fine if that's what drives you and motivates you and it's what you truly desire. But as you're considering building your own website, I'm guessing that perhaps that's not the case...

I found this definition of success online and it really resonated with me:

Success = financial stability + creative freedom + lifestyle design

Financial stability means having control over your time, workload and income. It means you can sustainably earn the income you want without working more than you want.

Creative freedom means working as much as you want, when you want, where you want and with whom you want.

Lifestyle design means arranging work around your lifestyle, not the other way round. It means being able to prioritise your family, your health, your hobbies and still deliver great work.



TWO

Purpose & Customer



Value Proposition: What problems do you solve for people? Who do you help? How do you help them?

A value proposition is a statement that answers the 'why' someone should do business with you. It should convince a potential customer why your service or product will be of more value to them than similar offerings from your competition. You know why your company is great, but do your potential customers know what sets your brand apart?

A good value proposition can give you an advantage over your competitors and is often what your prospects use to evaluate you. And for many consumers, your value proposition is the first thing they encounter when exploring your brand, as well as the thing that determines how your visual brand is designed. So, having a clear, concise value proposition is more important than ever.

In any business, it is critical that you know who your ideal client is. Failing to know who your ideal client is often where entrepreneurs go wrong.

It is often a very transitional moment when business owners first discover who their ideal client is. Business owners operate their companies for years without truly knowing who their ideal audience is, questioning why the sales process always remains so hard and why it never seems to flow.



TWO: PURPOSE + CUSTOMER

It's not uncommon to hear, especially from service-based businesses like marketers and business coaches, that what they offer "is suitable for everybody." This is where so many business owners fall flat; they have such a generic offer that it doesn't strongly capture the attention of anyone. Having a niche is key.

You may argue that this narrows your market and the number of suitable clients, but what it actually does is enable you to appeal to an audience that truly values what you do. The more you come to know your ideal client, the easier it will be for you to create content that speaks directly to them. You become magnetic. When a potential client feels like you "get them," your offer becomes so much more appealing.

Once you've established your ideal customer, the problems you solve for them and what it means for your customer to have those problems solved, it should be fairly straight forward to create your one-sentence business purpose. Sometimes referred to as a mission statement, it helps to keep your business purpose front of mind for you and your staff during the day-to-day operation of your business. Some choose to also share their business purpose with their customers by displaying it in customer areas like reception or meeting rooms. It helps everyone to know what their individual purpose is and the overarching goal they are striving to achieve.

Use the template to create your businesses purpose statement:

I help (who do you help - be specific):

to (what do you do for them - the deliverable):

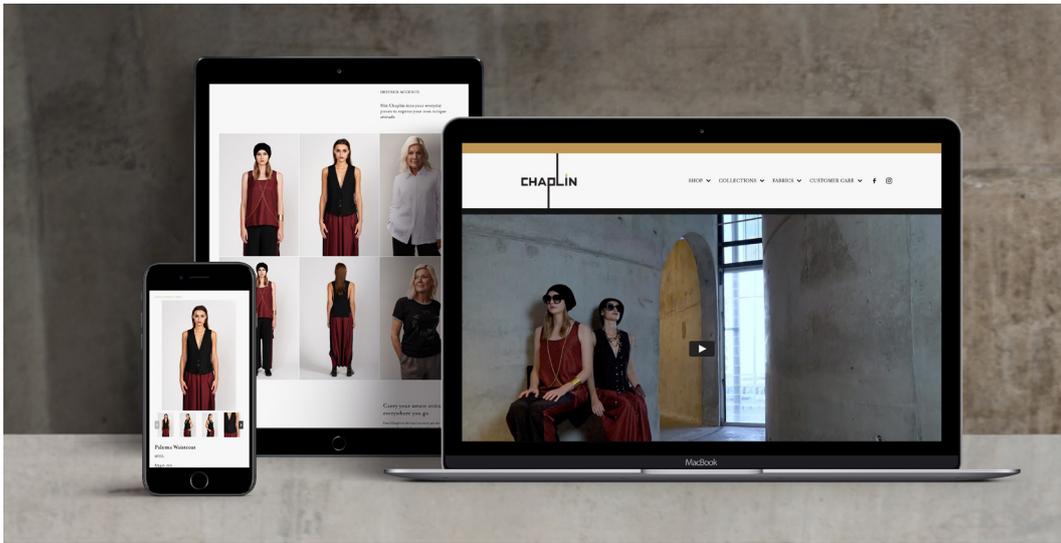
so that (what does this truly mean for them - the desired outcome):

Example: I help entrepreneurs to build websites that communicate the purpose, values and personality of their brand, so that they can effortlessly attract their dream clients, and achieve financial, creative & lifestyle success.



THREE

Pricing & Products



What is the value of the products or services you offer?

Such a simple question that requires such a massive answer – one with a huge impact over the viability and success of your business!

Pricing is often the place in business where service providers struggle the most. Having to set a price for a service is hard. It is not just about internal costs, margin and what you should really be charging in order for you to be profitable. It's also about getting to know your competition, how they are pricing their services, and, most importantly, the value perceived by your potential customer.

There are three different pricing approaches to consider. Each have advantages and disadvantages and it's likely you'll want to come up with a pricing approach that takes all three into consideration.

- Cost-based pricing
- Market-based pricing
- Value-based pricing



THREE: PRICING + PRODUCTS

When it comes to WHAT you are selling, in terms of website strategy, it pays to keep it simple. Choose from three strategic options:

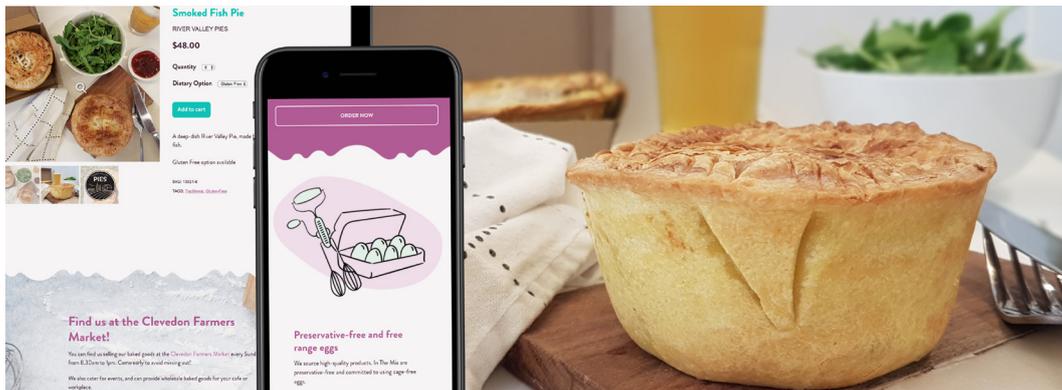
- Sell products and services. An eCommerce site can generate revenue and profits, but it often requires a larger budget to create and run it.
- Generate leads. You can develop and market this type of website for less money. Don't skimp on what you'll need to produce qualified, trackable leads.
- Establish credentials. These are the least expensive to build. Use this website strategy to build awareness, but keep in mind that you can't use it to sell things or generate leads.

What are the three main products or services you sell (if any) and your pricing strategy for each one?



FOUR

Marketing



How will you invite your ideal customer to visit your website?

For a successful website, branding and marketing need to be working together. With branding, you develop the voice and image that you want to deliver to your audience — based on the core values and message of your brand.

Marketing, then, is how you invite your ideal client to experience your brand — more specifically in this example, your website.

Many business owners make the mistake of thinking that a website is a marketing tool, when in fact it's a branding tool. Marketing is the set of actions you take to drive traffic to the website and a good website will be designed around that potential customer journey. Some examples are:

- Social Media
- Search Engines
- Vlogging or Blogging
- Email Marketing
- Networking — yes it's possible your traffic could come from offline sources
- TV, Radio, Newspaper and Magazine Advertising
- Client referrals and Reviews



FOUR: MARKETING

We can do one thing really well or we can dabble in many – it really is up to you, your business and your ideal client as to what’s going to be the best strategy for you. When you know your ideal client, where they hang out, what the problems are that you can help them to solve, it can help you decide where to spend your time, budget and attention in terms of marketing your website.

So keep what you’ve learned in the modules so far front of mind when considering your marketing plan, so you can be strategic about the way you choose to market your website, and design it with that marketing plan in mind.

How will your ideal client discover your website, and what do you want them to do once they are there?



THERE'S NOTHING QUITE LIKE A CUP OF ARTISAN TEA

All tea is not created equal. The way premium loose leaf tea or artisan tea, as we like to call it, is created has a profound effect on how it tastes, smells and makes you feel. From the way the tea is grown, to the way it is crafted, through plucking, withering, oxidizing, rolling, drying and finally sorting, each step has an important role to play in creating the experience that you will have when you brew and sip your cup of tea. From black, to green, white, oolong and fermented, there are thousands of a rich and artisan teas, with each offering a different flavour, aroma and sensory experience.

What's more, loose leaf artisan tea supports your health and well-being. From helping to boost your immune system and reduce free radicals to bringing you focus and calm, premium loose leaf tea nourishes your body and mind.

[SHOP NOW >](#)



FIVE

Branding



What should your business look and sound like? How should it make people feel?

Let's start with the sometimes not-so-obvious question: What IS branding?

Branding is so much more than a look or a logo. It has come to signify the emotional "gut feeling" reaction a company can elicit from its customers. Your brand is the set of perceptions people have about your company. But branding is the set of actions you take to cultivate that brand.

In other words, your brand is a noun, but branding is a verb. When you design a logo, that's branding. When you develop your brand voice, that's branding. When you get together with your marketing team to brainstorm an ad campaign, that's branding. And when your staff speak with your customers on the phone, or you have to deal with an issue that may crop up with a client, how you deal with it is also branding.

Any action you take that has the potential to shape your brand is, in a nutshell, branding.



FIVE: BRANDING

So, getting clear on your brand and how you want to be perceived will help you make decisions of all kinds in your business, not just website and design decisions. When we are clear on “who” and “what” our business is, and who it is for, the answers to many questions that would otherwise cause us uncertainty.

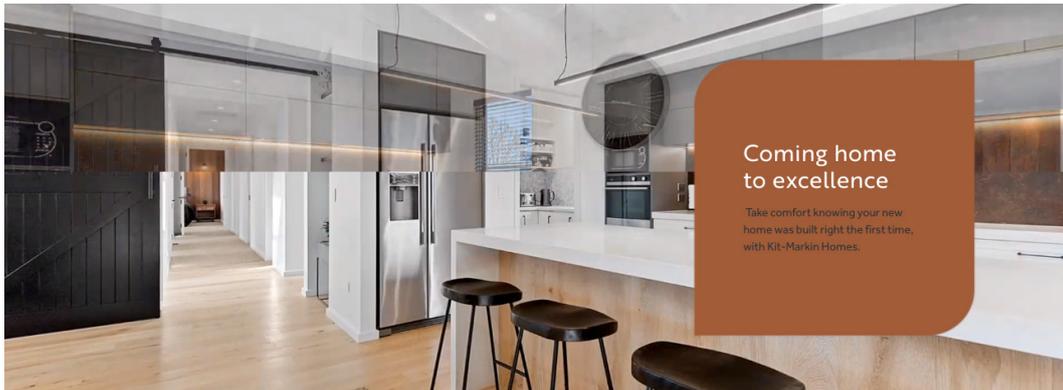
This saves us time and stress and keeps us focused on our success as well as keeping our customer-facing brand messaging and design, consistent.

What are the values and personality of your brand?



SIX

Content



What information, graphics and images need to be included on your website?

The most common form of content, and often the most neglected, is the humble written word. Written content is the simplest means of communicating who you are and what you have to offer to your audience.

But writing effective content that will rank on Google, engage your audience, and compel that audience to do what you want them to do requires an understanding of the basics of marketing, user behaviour, and SEO.

Written content is a form of digital marketing, which means you need a content strategy - that is, you have to write with a specific goal in mind.

This doesn't mean that all your content needs to be sales oriented - that's overkill and can be extremely annoying - however, all the content on your website service or product pages, blog posts, etc needs to have a purpose. When you create a page or post, there's usually a pretty obvious goal attached to it:

- Buy a product
- Request an appointment
- Fill out a contact form
- Sign up for a newsletter



SIX: CONTENT

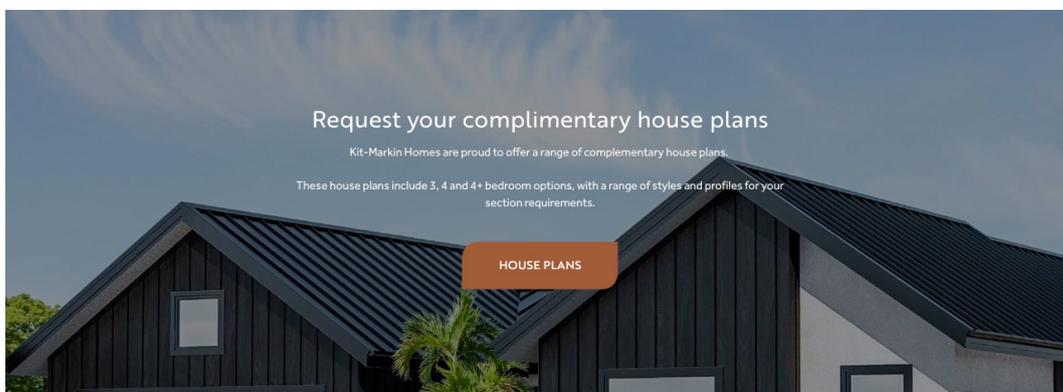
Some goals can be more subtle and long-term, such as getting a visitor to view you as an authority or trust you, as is often the case with word-of-mouth service-based industries where someone will visit a website to validate what they have already heard. The goal may also just be to get a visitor to talk about you with their friends and family, or just to know that you exist – brand goals.

Just like speaking isn't the only way to communicate with someone face-to-face, text isn't the only way to communicate on your website. In real life, you can get communication cues through facial expressions and body language. On your website, users might not be able to read your body language, but they can certainly receive information from the visuals on your site.

Visual communication is an important part of website design. It can show changes in processes, emphasize the most important information, and draw users' attention.

- People remember 10% of what they read and 80% of what they see
- Humans process images 60,000 times faster than text
- Most people read about 25% of the words on a page, but 80% will watch a video

What copy (text) is going to be included on the website and how will the messages be strengthened with other content such as photography, graphics and video?



SEVEN

Technology



What functions does your website need to be able to perform?

One could argue this question should have been at the top of this list, however I think it's good practise to consider your goals, your brand, your audience and your content before you decide which technology you will use.

Technology should support your website goals, brand and content, rather than the other way around. Choosing a website theme and then populating the template content is a sure-fire way to ensure that your website and lifestyle goals aren't met and that your website budget (both the time and money you spent) is wasted.

There are many website builders on the market. It can get overwhelming to decide. Focus your evaluation on which of them is best suited to your needs based on:

- What kind of look, feel, and features you want – both now and in the future
- How much time, effort, and money you have in your budget
- Whether you're experimenting or want something lasting

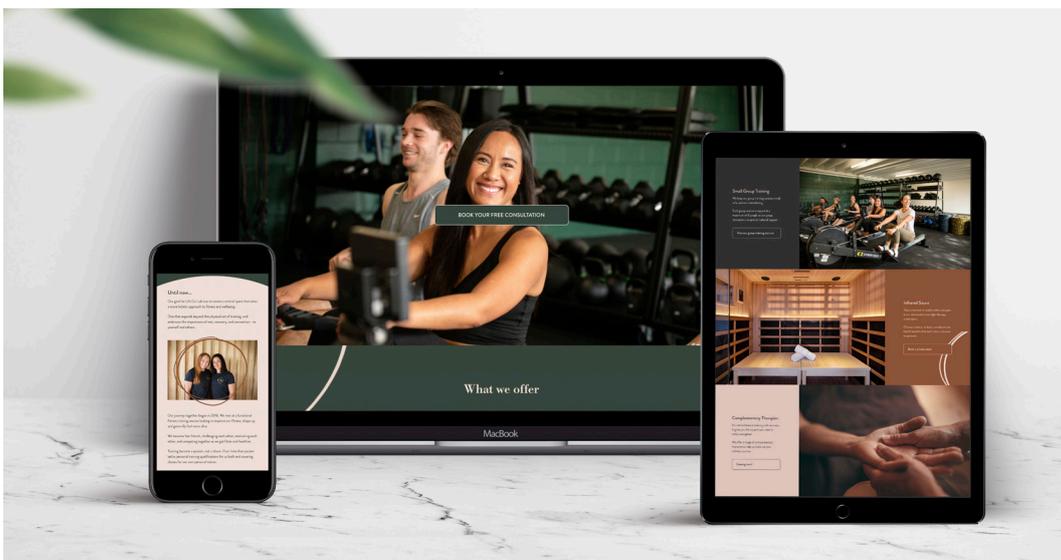


SEVEN: TECHNOLOGY

A good website designer should be able to tell you the pros and cons of one website builder over another, as well as the benefits of custom-builds vs existing technology. Always be wary of a website designer who aligns with only one website hosting platform (or does custom build work only) as they will always be looking to sell their website solution rather than giving you the best advice for your needs. And the last thing you want is to decide to add a feature to your website after the launch that isn't possible with the technology you've chosen.

Some features you might want to consider are:

- Blogging and Vlogging
- Password Protection
- Connecting your Social Media
- Creating Forms
- Google Analytics & Adwords
- Merchant Feeds for Instagram, Facebook or Google Shopping
- Courier and Shipping Integrations
- Customer Collection
- Selling Digital Products
- Accounting Integrations, eg Xero, MYOB or Unleashed
- Inventory and Stock Management Systems
- Payment Gateways – Stripe, Laybuy, Google Pay
- Customer Accounts & Wishlists
- Customisable Products
- Selling Subscriptions or Memberships
- Discount Codes or Gift with Purchase



SEVEN: TECHNOLOGY

Thinking about admin time and manual tasks in your business, what functions does your website need to be able to perform, in order to help you achieve your goals?

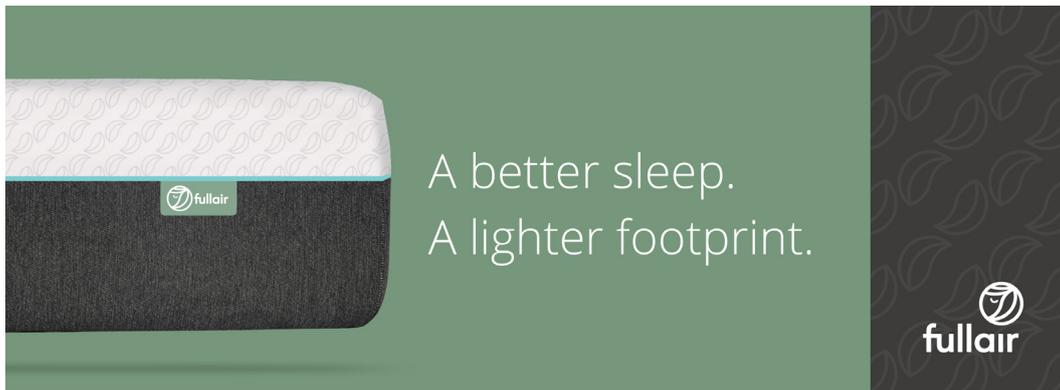
Is there likely to be a phased approach in terms of technology? Perhaps, for example, you want to continue fulfilling orders manually for now, but you want to be able to integrate your website with a courier company or 3PL in the future. Or perhaps an automated membership system will save you admin time down the track?

List any features you will want to be able to consider adding in the future as you grow:



BONUS

Hiring a Professional



By now you're probably getting a good feel for the things you need to think about before embarking on a new website design project.

There's one important topic I haven't covered.

Why you should consider working with an experienced brand and website designer instead of going down the DIY route.

It boils down to the following reasons:

1. A highly-skilled and experienced brand and website designer will consider technology, content, design and marketing right at the outset, during the planning stages and consider every aspect of the business, operations and ideal client before beginning the project.
2. You'll save time. While you're focused on growing your business, I'll be developing your new brand and website. I've taken many clients through my process, so it's streamlined and efficient. It minimises disruption to your business and keeps the project moving forward.
3. Less stress (and probably headaches too!) When it comes to technology you need to be confident your setup works correctly, is optimised to bring traffic to your website, and creates a good user experience. If you invest in professional experts you'll receive a professional expert result.
4. Save money. Yes, investing in custom brand and website design with an experienced professional costs money. But it's important to consider how much money could have been made in the time you took to DIY your brand and/or website. Or how much you may end up spending to correct mistakes/unsatisfactory work made by an inexperienced designer.



BONUS: HIRING A PROFESSIONAL

Which leads me nicely into my signature package: flourish

The beauty of this package is that everything is taken care of for you.

From the creation of a brand that truly represents you (brand strategy, logo design, typography, colour palettes, brand guidelines, brand stationery designed, and more)...

To your website being completely built, designed, and fitted out with custom brand photography, videography, graphic design, copywriting, SEO, product uploading and mobile optimisation...

Everything you need is included and managed for you by me. That's a big weight off your shoulders, right?!

As a designer and builder of hundreds of brands and websites since 2002, you can be confident about the result you'll get.

If you're interested in learning more and working with a partner who is passionate about supporting business owners to fulfil their potential, I'd love you to book a call to talk about your project with me, or download more details about the flourish package.



Tonia
(A.K.A. Designer Tones)

BOOK A FREE CALL

PACKAGE DETAILS

