

# TURN YOUR BOLD IDEA INTO A BUSINESS

with help from GoDaddy & SCORE

Dana Brown  
Business Owner & GoDaddy Customer  
[simply-sweets.com](http://simply-sweets.com)



# WELCOME

SCORE™ – Mentors to America's Small Business – in cooperation with GoDaddy™, is proud to offer this practical e-guide for anyone seeking to develop an online presence with a business website. SCORE and GoDaddy share the common goal to bring helpful education and resources to entrepreneurs.

The following pages feature practical information for building your online business. This guide, paired with the collection of online workshops presented by GoDaddy, will help you connect online with your target market to attract new customers, increase sales and build word-of-mouth buzz for your business.

SCORE mentors are also available to help. Our 11,000 volunteers give their time and expertise to help small businesses with confidential, free business advice. Founded in 1964, the SCORE Association has helped more than 10 million entrepreneurs build, expand and protect their small businesses. You can find the SCORE office nearest you by going to [www.score.org](http://www.score.org).

We're ready to help you live your dream and wish you all the best in your business endeavor.



## Table of Contents

<b>1</b>	
The Basics of Online Business .....	4-5
<b>2</b>	
Secure a Domain Name .....	6-7
<b>3</b>	
Plan for Website Success .....	8-9
<b>4</b>	
Choose Your Website Designer .....	10-11
<b>5</b>	
Create Website Content .....	12-15
<b>6</b>	
Increase Online Visibility .....	16-17
<b>7</b>	
Expand Your Reach with Social Media .....	18-19
<b>8</b>	
Drive Traffic to Your Website .....	20-21
<b>9</b>	
Generate Leads with Your Website .....	22-23
<b>10</b>	
Launch Your Digital Identity .....	24-25
20-Point Digital Identity Checklist .....	26



# THE BASICS OF ONLINE BUSINESS

1

You want to be successful. Maybe you have an idea for a small business. Perhaps you've already started one and are looking to take it to the next level. Whatever your goal, SCORE and GoDaddy are here to help you launch your digital identity. From establishing a lead-generating website to reaching your target market through social media, we have what you need to effectively market your brand, connect with customers and generate sales online.

## Why do you need to develop a digital identity?

### Accessibility

Your actual store might close its doors at 5 p.m., but a website is open 24/7 to showcase your products and services, contact information, store hours and more.

### Branding

In today's competitive marketplace, you need a strong brand to stand out. That means you need to be online with everybody else. A website, social media profiles and other web-based efforts will help you raise brand awareness, establish credibility and develop a loyal — and growing — customer base.

### Establish Credibility

People want to do business with people they trust. Today's consumers generally put more faith in businesses with a professional digital identity. It's a fact: the Internet is a popular, flexible and cost-effective platform for building credibility and trust.

### Connect with Customers and Prospects

Can you consistently interact with current customers and reach out to prospects without breaking the bank? With the Internet, the possibilities for engaging with your target audience — on a global scale — are endless.

### Generate Sales Leads

A well-planned digital identity can function as a lead-generating machine. Increase your customer base with a website, social media profiles, contact forms and email marketing campaigns.

85%

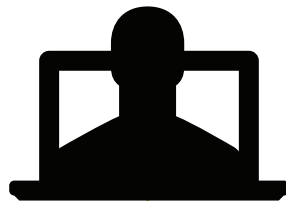
OF CONSUMERS USE THE INTERNET  
TO FIND LOCAL BUSINESSES.

Source: Search Engine Land's 2012 Local Customer Review Survey

Chelle Stafford  
Business Owner & GoDaddy Customer  
[recipeforfitness.com](http://recipeforfitness.com)



# WHAT ELEMENTS COMPRISE YOUR DIGITAL IDENTITY?



## Domain and Website

A domain name (like [www.coolexample.com](http://www.coolexample.com)) directs people to your website, and helps protect and promote your brand. To go with your domain, every small business needs a website to tell your unique story, market your products and services, and expand your reach to a wider audience.



## Email

Web-based email is an easy way to communicate with your customers, leads and business partners, no matter where you are. It helps you stay connected, organize your business contacts, and manage your busy work schedule.



## Social Media Profiles

Social networking can help you build an online community around your business or product line. Sites like LinkedIn®, Facebook®, and Twitter® are ideal for both promoting your products and services and interacting with customers to cultivate loyalty.



## Local Reviews

By establishing a track record for quality on third-party testimonial sites like Yelp® and Angie's List™, you inspire consumer confidence. Take a proactive approach to managing online local reviews to build the confidence that fuels success.

## Online Real Estate

It's easy to understand how your domain name and website work together when you think of them like real estate. Your website is your house, sitting on a piece of land with a street address. That piece of land is known as your hosting account—the space on the Internet where you place your website's files. People find those files—which they see as your website—by going to your online street address. This is your domain name.

YOUR DOMAIN NAME

YOUR WEBSITE

YOUR HOSTING ACCOUNT

# SECURE A DOMAIN NAME

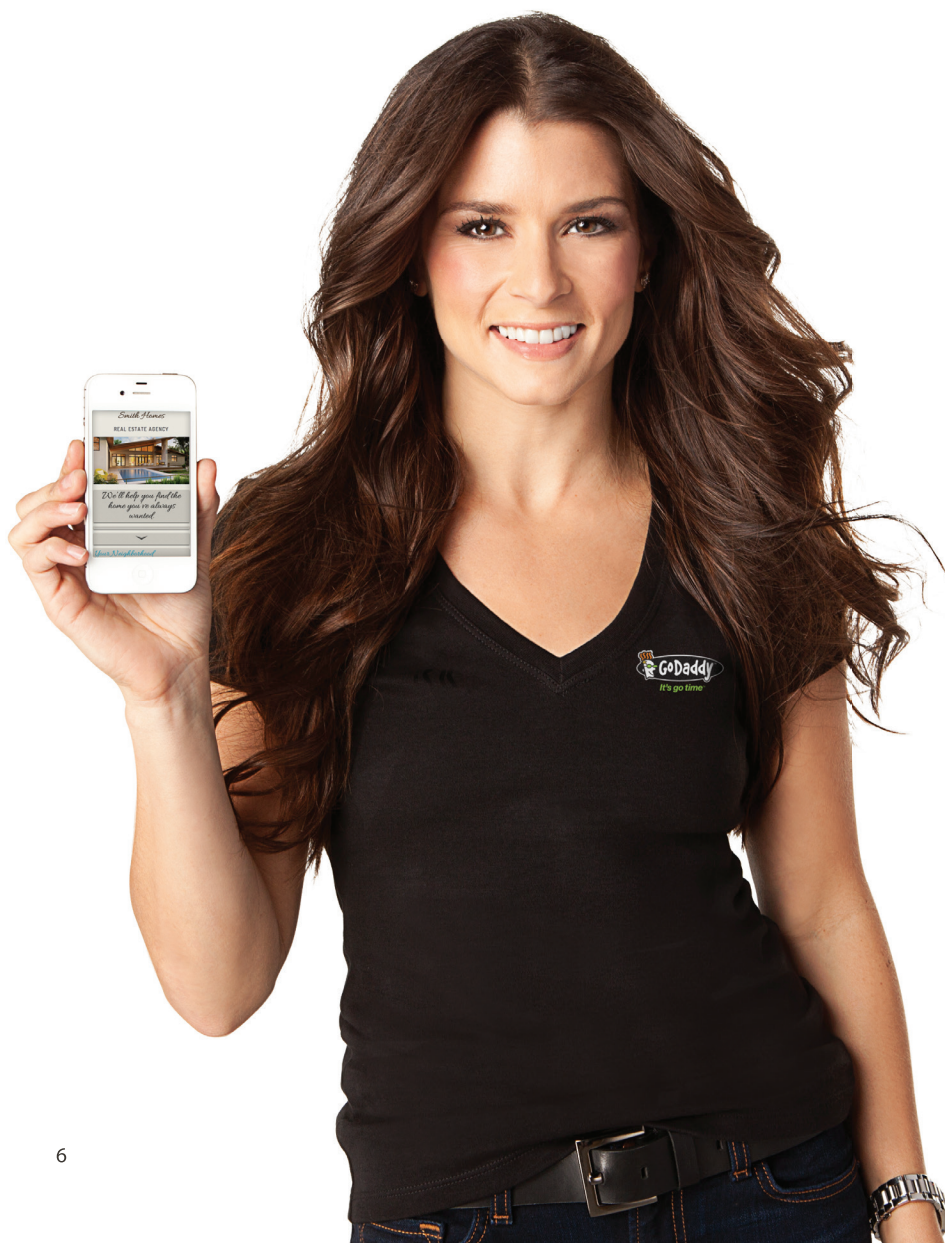
# 2

You might not be familiar with the term “domain name,” but you’ve seen them all over the place—on billboards, in commercials and online. The bolded examples represent a domain name: **www.coolexample.com** and **info@coolexample.com**. Look familiar?

When people sit down to their computers or use their mobile phones to search for restaurants, plumbers or any one of countless products or services, the search results include a list of websites identified by their domain names. You want your business to be on that list.

Your domain name is how visitors find you online and it’s the foundation of your digital identity. Getting a domain name requires two steps: 1. Choosing a domain name 2. Registering the domain name.

do•main name | dō măn nām | a unique address that represents a website



MORE THAN

# 1/3

OF U.S. SMARTPHONE  
OWNERS USE THEIR  
MOBILE PHONES TO  
**FIND STORE**  
LOCATIONS ONLINE.

Source: comScore's Mobile Future in Focus 2013



# CHOOSE THE PERFECT DOMAIN NAME

Finding the perfect domain name is tricky in the fast-paced, competitive world of online real estate. To help generate a domain name that's perfect for your business, complete the following fields with your business information:

Industry: Ex. Landscaping

▶ \_\_\_\_\_

Services: Ex. Lawn Care

▶ \_\_\_\_\_

Products: Ex. Fertilizer

▶ \_\_\_\_\_

Geographic Location (if applicable): Ex. Los Angeles

▶ \_\_\_\_\_

Words that describe your services: Ex. Speedy

▶ \_\_\_\_\_

Now that you have a solid list of business-related words, try combining the words to create a domain name that's available and memorable. If you come up with a few domains and don't know which combination you like more, consider running your names by a few friends to hear what they think. Don't forget to evaluate different domain extensions like .com, .net and .info.

And remember, the shorter your domain, the better. You don't want your customers to mistype your domain and go to a different site, so consider registering misspelled versions of the domain name you choose.

## Register Your Domain Name

After you've chosen the perfect domain name, it's time to make it yours. That's when you turn to a registrar like GoDaddy. A registrar is an accredited organization that sells domain names to the public. When you register a domain name, you only lease it for a specific period of time — you do not own it. For example, when you register a domain name for one year, you need to renew your registration when that year is up or someone else might get your domain. Most individuals register a domain name for three to five years.

If the domain name you want isn't available, don't worry. You can purchase an already-registered domain name through the domain name aftermarket or auction. Sometimes you have to pay a little more, but a good domain is worth the investment. You wouldn't settle for your business's name ... so why settle for your business's domain name?



## Domain Privacy

Owning a domain name really is like owning real estate: there's a public record of who owns what, accessible through the WHOIS database. WHOIS lists every single domain currently registered in the world, along with the name and contact information for whoever registered the domain as its administrator. This can be great if you welcome that kind of visibility, but if you don't, you can opt to hide your personal information with domain privacy.



## What's an Extension?

A top-level domain name (TLD) is the domain's extension. This is the part of the domain following the "dot." The most common TLDs you see are .com, .net, .info, .co and .org. They describe your company and can give your site regional recognition. The most popular TLDs have been around for years — which means it might be tough to secure a domain name that ends with .com or .org.

However, with new industry changes, get ready to see generic top-level domain names (gTLDs), which are extensions that aren't linked to geographical regions or special authorities. Instead, gTLDs are typically used to describe organizations and businesses, such as .plumber, .shop and .radio.

The availability of these new extensions makes it a prime time to get your business online.



**Bulk Domain Registration** Some registrars, including GoDaddy, offer bulk pricing when you register multiple domain names at once.

# PLAN FOR WEBSITE SUCCESS

# 3

You've got your domain name and you can hardly wait until it's pointing people to your business website. Before you dive into building your site, however, you should take some time to think about what you want it to accomplish.

Do you want your site to inform? To inspire? To generate sales leads? To actually sell products or services?

In general, business websites are either informational or sales-driven in nature. For example, an eCommerce site lets you sell products online. When you decide what you want your site to do for your business, you can begin building the type of site that will achieve those objectives.



## Selling Products Online

You offer an amazing line of products, and you want to reach more customers — and sell more products — using the Internet. Here's what you'll need to start:

### Online storefront, also known as a shopping cart.

This is where you'll display images and descriptions of your products. You'll also want to find a shopping cart option that includes features like shipping and inventory tracking. GoDaddy's Quick Shopping Cart® lets you design the look of your store, add products to your catalog, and select shipping, payment and tax options.

### Payment methods.

You can use a third-party service like PayPal® to collect payments, or you can use a secure merchant account to accept credit card payments. Merchant accounts let you accept payments from major credit, debit and gift cards on your site — so your customers don't have to leave your online storefront to pay for their goods. You also want your customers to feel safe when they go to your website. If you plan to include an online ordering form, storefront or both on your business website, you'll want an SSL certificate to ensure your customers' transactions are secure.

### Prices and promotions.

Be sure to establish competitive prices for your products. Consider offering promotions, and advertise them on your site and social media profiles.

An advertisement featuring a woman, Leah Williams, smiling and holding a piece of jewelry. She is wearing a red top and a necklace. The background shows a jewelry store with various items on display. Overlaid text reads: 'AMERICAN E-COMMERCE SALES TALLIED ABOUT \$343 BILLION IN 2012.' Below this, it says 'Source: eMarketer'. At the bottom, it identifies her as 'Leah Williams, Business Owner &amp; GoDaddy Customer' with the website 'rubymaejewelry.com'. The GoDaddy logo is in the bottom right corner. A small number '8' is in the bottom left corner.



# PRE-PLANNING YOUR WEBSITE

Start to figure out the best type of website for your business, with features that will help you achieve your online goals by answering the following questions:

What is your overall objective for your website? Ex. Showcase my pet grooming services

▶ \_\_\_\_\_

Who is your target audience? Ex. Pet owners

▶ \_\_\_\_\_

Where is your target audience? Ex. Los Angeles

▶ \_\_\_\_\_

How do you want visitors to describe the “feel” of your website? Ex. Edgy, fun

▶ \_\_\_\_\_

How much information do you want to provide on your website? Ex. As much as possible

▶ \_\_\_\_\_

Do you want to interact with customers using your website?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not sure

Do you want to establish yourself as a thought leader (to build credibility) through your site?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not sure

Do you want to increase referrals with your site?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not sure

Do you want to drive business to your brick-and-mortar store?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not sure

Do you want to collect visitor contact information?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not sure

Do you want to sell products or services on your site?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not sure

If so, do you want to process payments on your site?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not sure



If you plan to sell products on your website, you'll need high-quality pictures of your wares from various angles. Plan ahead to make sure the images in your online storefront window will capture site visitors' interest — and compel them to buy from you, rather than your competitors.

# CHOOSE YOUR WEBSITE DESIGNER

# 4

You might not know much about building a website, and you probably don't have time to figure it out. Consider these factors when deciding who should build your website and how to do it: cost, customization, complexity, time and maintenance.

Luckily, you have options to make the perfect business website happen:

## Do It Yourself

If you want complete control of your website's overall look and management, building your own website is the way to go. You have two options:

**Site Builder:** Great if you want to create an attractive website in a short amount of time. You typically begin by choosing a pre-designed template and then replacing the text and images to meet your needs. The layout and design is done for you, so you don't have to deal with difficult decisions about placement of text and graphics. Updating your site is also quick and easy. With GoDaddy Website Builder® you can easily create a professional website with hundreds of customizable designs, all tailored to your business. You receive all you need, including domain, hosting, marketing tools and 24/7 award-winning support.

**Content Management System (CMS):** If you like the idea of building and updating your own website without learning HTML, but want more flexibility than a site builder, consider using WordPress® or Joomla™. These free programs use themes to control the look of your website and a dashboard to update content and add pages. You're able to create a professional-looking site with a lot of functionality.

## Professional Designer

If you have an idea for your ideal site, but don't want to build it yourself, consider hiring a professional website designer. This is the most expensive route to get online, but it can be a great investment. A professional designer can collaborate with you to turn your vision into a fully functional, customized website that meets your online goals.

GoDaddy's Dream Design Team® knows just what it takes to build an eye-catching, effective site. Selling products? They can also build eCommerce sites. Affordable service includes hosting, marketing tools and more.





## CHOOSE THE OPTION BEST FOR YOU

	You — Site Builder	You — CMS (WordPress or Joomla!)	Professional Web Designer
Cost	Avg. \$50 - \$150/year	Free	Avg. \$500 - \$3,000 initial design fee
Hosting	Often included	Avg. \$50 - \$150/year	Avg. \$50 - \$150/year
Skill Level for Building Required	Beginner	Intermediate	Advanced
Your Time Required	Moderate	More, depending on complexity of site	Minimal to no time, depending on service
Customer Support	Tutorials, help guides; phone, chat support with some products	Support websites	Varies, fee
Updates	Immediate, free	Immediate, free	Varies, fee
Advanced Features	Not available	Available, fee or technical knowledge required	Available, fee
Mobile Website	Varies, often included	Varies, often included	Available, fee
Website Design	Pre-built templates included	Custom templates available for purchase	Custom design

A PROFESSIONAL DESIGNER  
CAN COLLABORATE WITH YOU  
TO TURN YOUR VISION INTO  
A FULLY FUNCTIONAL,  
CUSTOMIZED WEBSITE THAT  
MEETS YOUR ONLINE GOALS.

Dave Cox  
Web Professional & GoDaddy Customer  
digitalcoconut.com

GoDaddy.com/SmallBusiness

digitalcoconut

# CREATE WEBSITE CONTENT

# 5

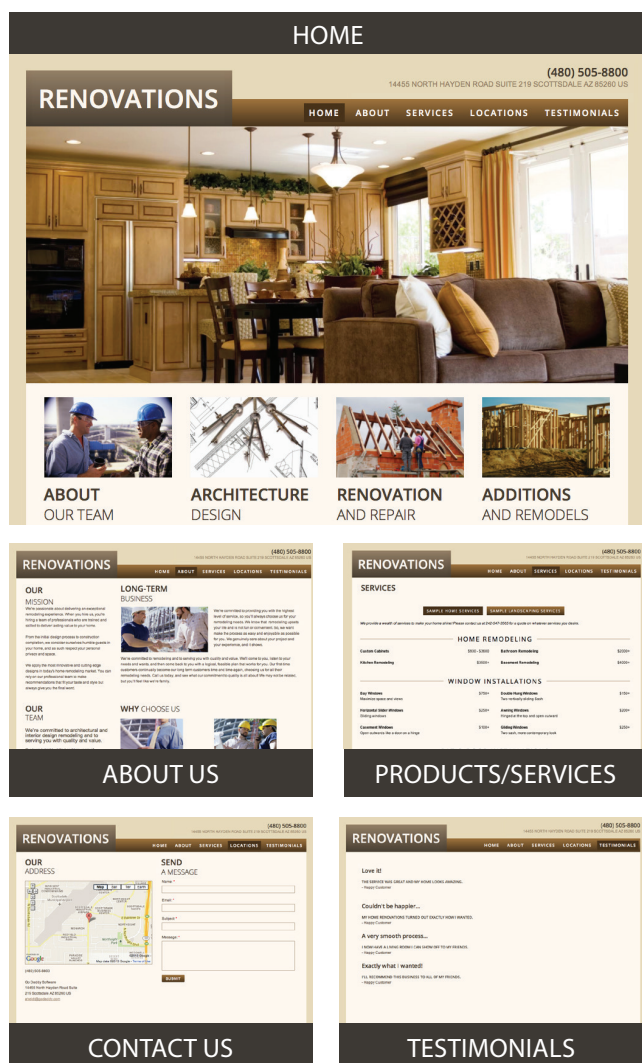
A compelling story is the heart of a successful business website. How did you get started? What do you tell customers about your business? How do you explain to friends how you make a living? Think about your mission, your passion, what makes you stand apart from the competition, as you begin to develop the content for your site.

## Five Core Pages with Simple Navigation

It might seem daunting, but developing content simply means telling your story with impactful words and images (photos, videos, your logo, etc.), presented in an appealing way. You can do that!

You're going to tell your story using a handful of pages on the Internet. It's important to make this space—your website—easy for visitors to navigate. A click here, a link there, and they'll get a clear idea of who you are and what you can offer them.

Our Content Creation Worksheet for Websites will guide you through the process of creating content for the five core pages you need to make your business shine online: Home, About Us, Products/Services, Testimonials and Contact Us.



## Design Elements

Whether you build your site yourself or hire a professional, you'll need to make decisions about the look of the site. You'll want to consider:

### Logo

Incorporate your company logo into your website's design. Maybe you want to echo the colors of your logo on your site, or make the logo "pop" against a contrasting background.

### Colors

Choosing the right palette for your website can harmonize it with your brand. For example, a creative company might go for vibrant colors like teal, orange and gold, while a more subtle palette of dark blue, grey and white might be more fitting for a strategic consultant. Think about the feelings colors evoke for you and match them with how you want your customers to feel.

### Fonts

Think about the fonts that might best represent your particular business—from bold, linear styles to more delicate, feminine fonts.

### Layout

Consider the amount of "whitespace" (space between elements) in your design. A lot of whitespace can denote clarity or simplicity, while having very little of it can make your site look active or intense.



## Image Hints

When it comes to websites, the word-to-picture ratio is especially important. By using a few thoughtfully chosen pictures and/or short videos, you can quickly convey the information and impression you're going for.

### Show instead of telling.

If it would take a thousand words to explain something, showing it is better. Use product shots and video demonstrations to create an impact. Don't dilute their power by inundating your site with them; use images and videos only where they're going to really do some work.



# CONTENT CREATION WORKSHEET

## Home Page

Your home page is where you make your statement. It's where visitors should know what your site is about, and be enticed to learn more. You want to include the top things visitors need to know in order to decide to do business with you. Who are you? What do you do/sell? Why should they trust you? How do they contact you?

Headline: Every page of your site, starting with your home page, should have a headline—a phrase that describes what's on the page and what you offer. Ex. Simply the Best...Because You Deserve It



---

Tagline: Describe your business in one short sentence. Ex. Professional residential glass replacement done fast—at reasonable prices



---

Description: Describe what's great about your business in a few sentences.



---

Inspiring Image(s): Anchor the page with one or two pictures that will capture visitors' interest and illustrate what you have to offer.



---

Note: Easy-to-use, template-based site builders like GoDaddy Website Builder give you many options for image placement on the home page.

Call-to-Action: What is the most important action you want your visitors to take before they leave your site? Be clear and concise. Ex. Call for a quote



---

Primary Contact Information: Include one main way for customers to contact your business—typically, your phone number.



---

Products/Services: List general categories of products or services. Include a short, bulleted list or several photos of your products or services on the home page, with a link to the full products/services page. Ex. Specializing in Residential Glass Services

- Dual Pane Glass Replacement • Custom Showers and Mirrors • Glass Shelves and Tabletops



---

Sign-Up Form: What information do you need to collect? Ex. Name, email address, phone number

Tip: The less information you require, the more sign-ups you'll get.



---

How will you motivate visitors to sign up? Very briefly describe why your visitors should sign up, and include this with your sign-up form.

Ex. Sign up for VIP access to special events



---

Endorsement: To showcase your credibility (and boost consumer confidence), include one glowing customer quote or review on the home page, with a link to the testimonials page for visitors to read more.



---

Badges/Logos: Any badges, logos, certifications or guarantees you can display on your site give you and your business instant credibility. Are you a member of professional and/or trade organizations? Have you been honored with any industry awards? Prominently display the badges and logos that represent such affiliations and honors.



---

# CONTENT CREATION WORKSHEET cont'd

## About Us Page

This is where you can really tell your story.

Describe your business in a few short paragraphs. What's your mission? How did you start your business, and why? What do you do differently than other businesses? Get personal. Be passionate.

▶

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Extras: Based on your business, you might want to include:

- Photos or video of you or your staff
- A short bio showcasing your expertise
- Company or product awards
- A quote from a customer about why they do business with you

▶

---

## Products/Services Page

This page is devoted to showcasing your products and/or services.

Categories: List the general categories of products and/or services you offer. Ex. Therapeutic Massage, Reflexology, Facials

▶

---

Details: Describe your products and/or services in more detail. Ex. Hot Rock Massage: This specialty therapeutic massage treatment provides a deeply relaxing experience for the mind, body and spirit.

▶

---

Extras: Based on your business, you might want to include:

- Product photos
- Services video
- Pricing
- Payment options
- Return policy, warranties or guarantees
- Shipping information

▶

---

---

---

---

### Testimonials Page

This is your opportunity to boost consumer confidence in you and your business by sharing recommendations, quotes and testimonials from your happy customers.

Testimonials: Ask top customers to write a few sentences about your products and/or services. Ex. "I wouldn't trust my air conditioning needs to anyone except the great folks at Cool Example." — Happy Customer



---

---

Ratings and Reviews: Display customer feedback posted on third-party review sites, like Yelp® and Angie's List™. Join (it's free to list your business) and encourage customers to rate your business.



---

### Contact Us Page

Think of this page as more than a place for people to get in touch with you by phone, email or address; it's also a way for you to generate leads to find more customers.

Contact Basics: How do you want customers to contact your business?

- Phone number
- Physical address, with directions and map
- Email address
- Hours of operation



---

---

---

---



Websites are all about interactivity. Connect your site with other forms of online communication – like Twitter®, Facebook® and LinkedIn® – to give your visitors other ways to connect with you. More on social media coming up!

Categories: Depending on your business, you might want to add contact "categories."

Ex. Product Returns – send to P.O. Box

Billing Issues – email us at [billing@coolexample.com](mailto:billing@coolexample.com)

Customer Support – call (800) 555-1212



---

---

---



# INCREASE ONLINE VISIBILITY

# 6

Since you've put so much thought and energy into developing your business website, you want to make sure people find it. A good first rule of thumb? Relevant content is king. Find your niche, and continue to develop online content that will resonate with your target audience. If you stick to that rule, you'll be well on your way to achieving your online objectives. Still, it won't hurt to learn about what it takes to improve your site's visibility with major search engines like Google®, Bing® and Yahoo®.

search en-gine op-ti-mi-za-tion | **SEO** | the process of refining a website to get higher search engine rankings and organic visitors to your site, without paying for search engine placement.

## Use Keywords to Get Found

The idea of SEO is simple, but the steps to achieving it can be confusing and complicated. The more research you put into making your site more visible to search engines—a process known as “optimizing” your site—the greater return you're going to see in your rankings.

You type keywords when you search for products, services and answers on search engines. As a business owner, you can help capture the interest of search engines by assigning keywords to each page of your website. This is a big part of optimizing your site.

### Be Relevant

A relevant keyword helps online users find your site if they search for it using a search engine.

### Be Specific

The more specific your keywords are, the greater chance you'll have less competition and a higher rank. Your keywords should represent what you do, your location, the services you offer, your products and your industry.

### Be Strategic

Once you've chosen your keywords, use them in page titles, metadata, image names and in your website's page content. Use each word or word combination, as well as their variations, at least two to three times per page.

### Be Natural

Overusing, or “stuffing,” your keywords will harm your site's ranking because search engines read sites like we do.



David Gleason  
Business Owner & GoDaddy Customer  
crossroadsdiner.ca

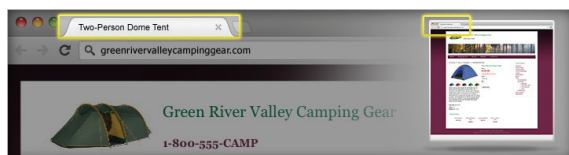


# METADATA 101

Meta tags are HTML tags that contain information to help search engines know what your site is about. Although meta tags aren't required to have your website listed on search engines, they help describe your website in search engine results and are important to successful search engine optimization (SEO). The basic HTML meta tags you should consider including on your site are:

**Title tags:** One of the most important elements in site optimization because they display your website's page names in the top bar of a web browser. Title tags should provide keywords that represent the theme of the web page's actual content.

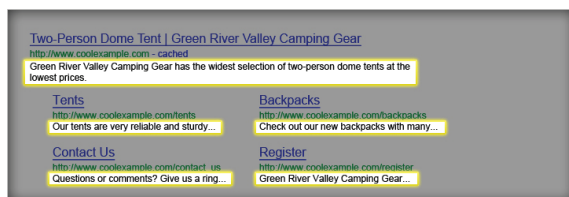
Ex. <title>About Us |  
Green River Valley  
Camping Gear</title>



Your Title Tags

**Description tags:** These are the few lines of text that display under every search engine result and define the nature and contents of the web page. The main purpose of the Description tag is to convince potential visitors to select your site from the search results pages.

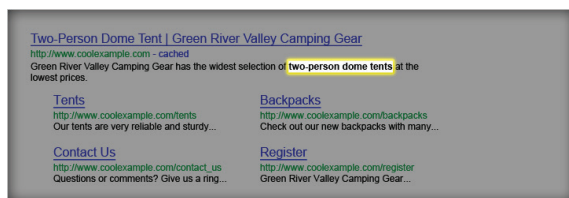
Ex. <meta name="description"  
content="Green River Valley  
Camping Gear has the widest  
selection of two-person dome  
tents at the lowest prices.">



Your Description Tags

**Keyword Tags:** These are words and phrases related to each web page.

Ex. <meta name="keywords"  
content="Two-person dome  
tent, Camping gear, Green  
river valley">



Your Keyword Tags



## Search Engine Basics

Believe it or not, everything online is connected like one giant spider web. Search engines help people find information that is stored in this massive, interconnected space. They use automated robots called "crawlers" and "spiders" to search the web and make connections using links. Each search engine employs a unique algorithm that turns the Internet's information into useful, relevant search results. That way, when a topic is searched for, only results related to that topic display.



## Optimizing Images

Did you know that looking for images is the second most popular way that people search online (after searching for keywords)? That's why, if you want your business to get noticed on the Internet, you need to leverage the magnetic power of pictures, logos and other visual elements. In tech-speak, images are important for search engine optimization (SEO) and social media marketing. In addition to making your business website and social media pages more attractive, images drive visitors to your site—and keep them coming back for more.



## Do I need a blog?

Adding a blog to your website is the perfect way to increase traffic to your site and boost search engine rankings. It also gives you a chance to interact with your customers, capture feedback about your products and services, and establish yourself as a subject-matter expert.

Once you have content in your blog, promote it through social media networks. You can also link to other blogs and sites, and hopefully they'll link back to you. This type of interaction builds traffic and your reputation as a solid source of information.



GoDaddy Website Builder™ makes getting found online easier with a built-in SEO feature that walks you through optimizing your site for search engines.

# EXPAND YOUR REACH WITH SOCIAL MEDIA



You're ready to take your digital identity to the next level: social media. By establishing an active presence for your business on social networks like Facebook®, Twitter® and LinkedIn® you can easily interact with customers and prospects online. Social marketing lets you:

- Make up-to-the-minute information available to the online community.
- Attract thousands of online followers with a few daily keystrokes.
- Target specific customer questions or issues, while making the same information available to all existing and potential customers.

By getting social, you will continue to build credibility, raise brand awareness and engage with current and potential customers.

## Best Practices for Using Social Media for Business

Position yourself as a reliable, credible and captivating professional. Follow these guidelines to help ensure success:

### Locate your audience.

Do your customers and prospects gravitate toward LinkedIn or spend more time on Pinterest? Do they have active Facebook and Twitter lives? Do they gobble up YouTube® videos? By knowing which social media sites your target audience frequents, you can work smarter to develop profiles on those sites.

### Get on multiple platforms.

It's easy to repurpose relevant, quality content for use on multiple sites, which increases your opportunity to reach more customers and prospects. Learn the ins and outs of making the most of individual social media sites by spending some time on their support pages.

### Start slow and work your way up.

Don't try to do too much, too soon. Learn the basics of one site before you start on the next.

### Make friends.

Social media is about people connecting with people. Even if you're representing a business, be sure to let your genuine, human side shine through.

### Post relevant and engaging content.

When you know your audience, you can post content that will resonate with your followers. Post photos, videos and other visual elements to boost engagement. Provide useful information in your posts, such as links to related articles and videos. This will help establish your credibility as a valuable resource within your industry.

### Be accurate.

Your posts can help build credibility; be sure to check your facts, spelling and grammar.

### Remain active, but practice restraint.

Make sure your content is fresh and up-to-date for all of your social sites. A non-monitored or dead social space is worse than no social space at all. However, don't over-post—once or twice a day is adequate—and always remember that you're representing your brand.

### Think twice.

Once you post, it's out there to be shared on a global scale. Take a few minutes to consider the content of your message and the best tone in which to deliver it.




### Connect your social media profiles to your website.

People love to follow their favorite companies, but your customers might not always know you're on their favorite social media sites. Make it easy for them to find you by placing social media widgets on your business website—a place they're sure to visit.



# SOCIAL MEDIA SITE COMPARISON – BUSINESS & BRAND MARKETING

With so many social media platforms available, it's hard to decide which sites provide the biggest return on your time and money investments. Use the following chart to compare three of the largest platforms – Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn – to help determine the most effective social media sites for you and your business:

			
Description	Twitter	Facebook	LinkedIn
Size*	500 Million Users	1.1 Billion Users	225 Million Users
Profiles	Personal and/or Business (separate accounts)	Personal and Business (separate pages)	Professional
Relationship Types	Followers	Likes (Business)	Connections
Groups	Engage Using Hashtags	Create, Join or Share	Create or Join (50 Max.)
Activity Required for Best Results	Twice Daily	Daily	Twice Weekly
<b>Benefits</b>			
FREE – No Cost to Join	•	•	•
Ability to Share Information with the Public	•	•	•
Unlimited Followers	•	•	•
Increases Online Visibility	•	•	•
Drives Traffic to Your Website	•	•	•
Real-Time Conversations	•		
Paid Options to Boost Visibility	•	•	•
Character Usage	140-character limit	Unlimited	Unlimited
Share Products and Services	•	•	•
Find New Business Contacts	•	•	Optimal
Keep Up with News and Trends	Optimal	•	•
Share Company Milestones	•	•	•
Run Promotions & Special Deals	•	•	•
Profile Viewable to Anyone	•	•	Must Have an Account
Build Credibility	•	•	•
Find Employees			•

\*As of July 2013.

## ENGAGE YOUR CUSTOMERS



### Be real.

Show your personality in your posts. Remain professional but conversational.



### Encourage open dialogue.

Social media is not your megaphone; make sure your posts invite followers to respond.



### Ask questions.

Want to hear what your customers consider your best product? What about their thoughts on your new logo? Invite customers to share their thoughts.



### Respond to feedback.

When your customers take the time to post a comment, you owe it to them to craft a considerate, genuine response.

# DRIVE TRAFFIC TO YOUR WEBSITE

# 8

Your business website is the star of a digital identity that now includes the social media profiles you decided will best meet your online goals. You've spent time optimizing your site to help search engines find it, and you might have started a blog to increase your visibility on the web.

But don't stop. Driving traffic to your website is an ongoing process. Attracting visitors to your business's online home takes time, patience and even a little money.

## Proven Strategies to Drive Traffic



### Leverage Social Media

While most people still find websites using search engines, an increasing number of online users are discovering new sites by way of social networks. Include your site's URL in all bios on your social channels. Craft engaging posts that include links to more information on your website (like videos). Connect with influencers in your industry, and ask them to share relevant links to your site.



### Send Business-Class Email

This is a big one. Because you own a domain name for your business website, you can also use it for company-branded email. Every time you send an email from that account, you are marketing your website. As opposed to using a free, generic email account, you succeed on several important fronts when you use an account linked to your domain name (like jim@coolexample.com):

1. You show that your business is serious enough to have your own website and email.
2. You etch your domain name into email recipients' minds.



### Maximize Blogs

Incorporating a blog into your website gives you a forum to share timely, pertinent info about your products or services, comment on industry trends, or simply show your business's "personality." The result? You can position yourself as a subject-matter expert while promoting your brand. Entice visitors by publishing thought-provoking — even controversial — content, and add momentum by publicizing this content through your social media outlets. Drive even more visitors to your site by hosting guest blogs authored by industry influencers and maybe even satisfied customers, asking them to share the link on their social platforms.



### Run Promotions

Consider offering promotions, redeemable through your website, strictly for your online audience. Research deal-of-the-day sites, such as Groupon™ and Living Social®, to see if they're worth the investment to get featured. Once you decide on your online promotion, get the word out by sharing it on your blog and social media profiles.



### Participate in Local Reviews

Sites like Yelp®, Angie's List™ and Yellow Pages® are the online world's No. 1 source for local business recommendations. In addition to offering a platform for sharing opinions about products and services, these sites give consumers another way to find businesses. The millions of people who use these sites can gain their first exposure to your business—and you—through them. Be sure to respond promptly and positively to the comments posted about your business.



## Paid Options

If you're looking for the biggest bang for your buck on search engines, consider paid advertising. Paid listings display separately on search result pages, and are generally listed as "Sponsored" results. Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn also offer some paid options that can help drive traffic to your website. Do a bit of research (online, of course) to learn how Facebook's domain Sponsored Stories, Twitter's Promoted Tweets, LinkedIn's targeted ads, and other paid options can help attract visitors to your site.

# 5 WAYS TO HANDLE NEGATIVE COMMENTS

Positive comments on social profiles like your Facebook® and LinkedIn® pages, and feedback on local review sites such as Yelp®, can make you feel like all your hard work is paying off. Conversely, getting negative feedback can be discouraging. However, negative comments are actually opportunities to cultivate customer loyalty.

Here are five ways to turn those unhappy customers into die-hard fans:

- 1 Respond Quickly. The last thing your customers want is to feel like they're being ignored. If you need time to look into their issue, communicate that and get back in touch as soon as possible.
- 2 Be Sincere and Transparent. If there's an issue with your products or services, let your customers know you're aware of the problem and are working on a solution. Communicate your genuine concern and commitment to addressing their issue.
- 3 Give a Discount. Sometimes people just need to know you understand their frustration. When you back up a thoughtful response with a discount, you don't just tell them you understand — you show them.
- 4 Make Yourself Available. Make sure you give an unhappy customer a phone number or email address that gives them direct access to a human being — especially if the issue is ongoing or if you're trying to troubleshoot their problem.
- 5 Keep Moving Forward. Strive to resolve negative comments responsibly and stay focused on the good that can come from them. Your customers will appreciate you and your business a whole lot more if you do.



Include your website URL everywhere — print and online ads, social media profiles, billboards, radio and TV commercials, the side of your delivery van, etc. — to drive traffic to your site.

# 43%

OF INTERNET USERS  
AGES 24 TO 32 DISCOVER  
WEBSITES THROUGH  
SOCIAL NETWORKS.

Source: "How Consumers Found Websites in 2012" from Landscape: The Search Marketing Playbook, Forrester (July 19, 2013)

GoDaddy.com/SmallBusiness





# GENERATE LEADS WITH YOUR WEBSITE

9

Driving traffic to your website is key, but converting your website's visitors into leads is how you'll be successful. Finding out how many people visit your website is important, but until you know who those people are, you can't contact them individually or work to convert them to customers.

So, how do you use your website as a lead-generating machine?

## Collect Email Addresses

These days, we all communicate via email—so it just makes good business sense to maintain a database of email addresses for customers and prospects. Sure, you can place some sort of sign-up form on the counter if you have a brick-and-mortar store. But you'll find that your website is a much more powerful vehicle for soliciting email contact info from people who are interested in what you have to offer.

**Include a Contact Form** A contact form is the most basic way to collect your visitors' information. When they fill out your website's contact form, they do it because they have a question, need information or want you to contact them. It's where they go to connect directly with you.

**Add a Sign-Up Form** Visitors can receive information about products and services, updates, discounts, etc.

**Include an email opt-in box** on your checkout page (for e-commerce sites).

**Give a special offer** for joining the email list.



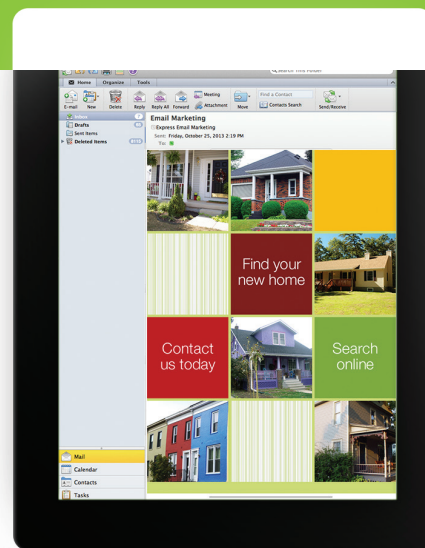
Reward existing customers and attract new business by running special offers on your home page and sharing the offers through email and your social media profiles.

## Invest in an Email Marketing Program

What to do with all of those email addresses? Reach out to those customers and prospects through a company-branded, value-laden, professional-looking email campaign. Email marketing offers a targeted approach to connecting with current and potential customers. After all, they've opted in to receive your email correspondence. It can build brand awareness and loyalty. Even better? The cost. Harvard Business Review recently called email marketing "the most cost-effective advertising method available today."

**Other benefits include:**

- Add a sign-up widget to your website.
- Store email addresses in a user-friendly database.
- Export email addresses for use in social media campaigns.
- Create email campaigns using templates.
- Track open rates/who clicks on what links.
- Create contact interest groups.



## Craft Compelling Calls to Action

A call to action is a convincing offer that requests contact information in exchange for something your visitors want. When you create a call to action that is short, simple and compelling, you motivate your visitors to take the action you want. They might not be ready to purchase yet, but they are on your site because they're interested in your products or services. You can even make your call to action link directly to a contact form.

# EMAIL MARKETING BEST PRACTICES

These best practices for email marketing can boost sales, attract loyal customers, and maximize your return on investment:

Only send email marketing campaigns to people who have signed up for or requested them. Email campaign companies offer resources like opt-in buttons or sign-up forms to help build permission-based contact lists.\*

Pick a send schedule and try to stick to it. Test different days and times to see which combination has the best open rate (the number of list subscribers who opened the email message, a percentage of the total number of emails sent). It's important that you're consistent with your email frequency.

Only include subject matter requested by your contacts. If you're in the business of selling widgets, and you ask website visitors to sign up for your monthly newsletter to receive exclusive widget discounts, stick close to that expectation. Deliver the kind of information your contacts signed up for and you'll continue to build credibility and trust.

Create interest groups to organize your contacts. Market more efficiently by placing your contacts in different groups based on their interests or preferences.

Avoid spam and trash folders. To prevent triggering spam filters, avoid using all caps or multiple exclamation marks in the subject line or body of your email.

Give your subscribers several reading options. Send both HTML and plain text versions of your newsletter so all of your contacts can read your message on their computer or mobile device.

Put a name to your email. Consistently use either your personal name or the name of your business as the From or Sender name.

Keep building your contact list. Add calls to action and sign-up forms to your website and social media profiles, and collect contact information in person at events or conferences.

\*Email marketing helps you comply with anti-spam laws by insisting that you create and maintain a 100-percent permission-based Contact list. You can learn more about the Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA) and the Controlling the Assault of Non-Solicited Pornography and Marketing (CAN-SPAM) Act through the Federal Communications Commission at [www.fcc.gov](http://www.fcc.gov).

COMPANIES THAT USE  
EMAIL MARKETING  
ESTIMATE ITS OVERALL  
RETURN ON INVESTMENT AT

119%.

Source: 2013 MarketingSherpa® Email Marketing Benchmark Survey

With a strong website and social media profiles in place—plus the know-how to drive traffic to your site(s), effectively engage with followers and generate leads—you're in a great position to grow your business.

So what's next?

## Keep Your Website in Tip-Top Shape

Updating and maintaining your website's content and functionality is key to staying current and delivering what your visitors want and need. Plus, continually updating your site with relevant content will work wonders at improving your search engine visibility. Keep it fresh with consistent blog posts, up-to-date photos and videos and design tweaks that reflect evolving trends.

web an•a•ly•tics | web an-l-it-iks | the measurement, collection, analysis and reporting of Internet data for the purposes of understanding and optimizing web usage.

## Track Your Website's Performance

Recall those goals you set for your business website? Sure, you'll know as you progress toward them. But you won't really know how well your website is working to meet your online objectives—not in any quantifiable way, at least—without help from web analytics.

As a small business owner, you should know how many people are visiting your site, how they found it, and if your online marketing efforts are working. Web analytics products can give you all of those answers, and more.

- **Visitors:** Learn about visitors to your website, such as whether they are new or returning, how they found you, where they are located and which browsers they are using.
- **Pages:** Gather information on specific pages so you can analyze the effectiveness or popularity of each page on your site.
- **Referrers:** Find out which websites, URLs, search engines and keywords lead visitors to your site.
- **eCommerce:** Get specifics about revenue-boosting and lead-generating visitor activities, such as purchasing products and signing up for newsletters.
- **Mobile:** Discover how many customers access your site using their mobile devices and how they use your mobile site.
- **Social Media:** Measure the success of your social media profiles with details about others' engagement with your social content.
- **Advertising:** Learn about the effectiveness of your online marketing efforts and measure your advertising return on investment (ROI).



There are a number of products that can analyze your site to tell you what's working and what's not. Do your research to find the web analytics program that's right for you and your business.

## Stay Social

As you consistently interact online with your customers and other members of your social networks, you'll start to figure out where your time is best spent and the type of content that resonates loudest with your target audience. This knowledge will enable you to tailor your social media strategy to meet your specific needs. You don't want to spread yourself too thin, so make smart use of your limited time by building active profiles on the social sites most favored by your target audience.

Deep engagement on the sites that matter most to your audience will yield better results than superficial engagement over every available social platform.

## Get Mobile

Don't get left in the mobile dust. More and more consumers are turning to their smartphones and tablets to search for local products and services and to make online purchases—known as m-commerce. You want your business to be there for them, so make your website mobile-friendly! Some easy-to-use site builders, including GoDaddy's Website Builder®, convert your website to mobile automatically.

## Hone Your Focus

Channel your time and energy into online avenues that prove most effective for your business—email marketing, a particular social media platform, a call to action on your home page, whatever works best for you. After you get your digital identity rolling, take a step back and evaluate your progress. Revisit your goals and make adjustments based on your experience.

Just like in the brick-and-mortar world of business, success online is all about working smarter, not harder.



U.S. M-COMMERCE SALES  
WILL REACH NEARLY  
**\$39 BILLION**  
IN 2013—TRIPLE THE  
AMOUNT SPENT IN 2011.

Source: eMarketer, "Smartphones, Tablets Drive Faster Growth in Ecommerce Sales," (April 2013)



# 20-POINT DIGITAL IDENTITY CHECKLIST

Without a doubt, a strong digital identity will help your business grow. Have you covered all the basics necessary to launch your business's online presence? Use this checklist to help track your progress...and stay on pace for online success.

1. Did you register a relevant, memorable domain name? .....	Y	N
2. Did you set ambitious, but realistic, online goals? .....	Y	N
3. Did you weigh your website building options and make a choice that takes your unique needs into consideration? .....	Y	N
4. Did you create content for five core website pages: Home, About Us, Products/Services, Testimonials and Contact? .....	Y	N
5. Do you clearly explain who you are and what you do? .....	Y	N
6. Does your home page have a call to action? .....	Y	N
7. Have you included customer quotes, reviews or testimonials? .....	Y	N
8. Have you clearly defined your pricing, warranties and refunds? .....	Y	N
9. Did you use compelling images (photos, videos, logos, etc.)? .....	Y	N
10. Did you include your primary contact info on every page? .....	Y	N
11. Did you use relevant, specific keywords in your website's content? .....	Y	N
12. Did you include meta tags on your website? .....	Y	N
13. Did you consider the benefits of including a blog? .....	Y	N
14. Did you create profiles on social media networks with the greatest potential value for your business? .....	Y	N
15. Did you include social media buttons on your website (i.e. Can a customer "Like" you on Facebook' from your site)? .....	Y	N
16. Did you set up a business-class email account? .....	Y	N
17. Do you have a sign-up form on your site to collect email addresses? .....	Y	N
18. Have you considered an email marketing program? .....	Y	N
19. Do you have a special offer for website visitors and social followers? .....	Y	N
20. Have you looked into web analytics to improve your site's performance? .....	Y	N