



Marketing casebook: Success by design

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Would you like your customers to see you as a highly polished and professional business, even while you work in your pyjamas? Welcome to the world of website design – creating an online presence to showcase your business day and night.

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Introduction

The internet has revolutionised the way we do business today – no question. But the cornerstone of internet marketing is website design; creating a front for your business that cements the impression of an effective and professional outfit.

With the internet operating even while you sleep, it is crucial to consider how your website automates your business and reaches the widest market possible. The presentation, architecture and content of this website are just as important as the fixtures, fittings and signage of a traditional high street store.

With the right design, you may not even need to field enquiries to generate a sale – your website can solicit and close the entire sale before processing the funds straight into the bank. And none of this costs as much as you may think!

Whatever the goals for your website - whether you're looking for an online brochure to drive enquiries or a sales powerhouse to make you money while you lie on the beach - understanding how to achieve the best web design solution is vital.

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Setting your goals

You should analyse your reasons for wanting a website before going ahead with a design. There are many examples of poorly designed websites that could have been improved with careful planning and a greater focus on the business intentions.

The website needs to not only attract visitors, but be capable of producing the response you want – converting visitors into customers. By establishing early on whether your goal is for visitors to lodge telephone or email enquiries, increase visits to your high street store, build a recognisable brand image or complete a full transaction online, your website can be designed and finessed to achieve success.

By having a clear idea for what action you want each page to promote in the reader, Netregistry can help produce a website that is more likely to perform in exactly the way you hope. Use the questions below to help identify the issues your website design will need to address. But always remember that an over-ambitious website may be the wrong decision if your business isn't ready for it. A smaller website can always evolve with your business, but a large website may result in taking more of your time and resources than you are practically able to give.

Do you want your website to...

- Generate enquiries by phone or email for you to close the sale or take bookings? **Beginner**
- Use Flash imagery to create a strong presentation in the international market and/or build a strong brand? **Intermediate**
- Process sales automatically online 24x7? **Expert**

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Other considerations

- Do you want to lead potential customers to your existing business?
- Do you intend to focus on a few products or a wide range?
- Will the website need to include a lot of images and/or text?
- Will the site need to be updated often? (New stock, news, etc)
- Is your target audience technically comfortable? (Take into account target age and their likely exposure to the internet)

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Jargon translator

Brochureware site – a website that works simply as an online brochure, to encourage customer enquiries. Often a static site.

Static site - a website with unchanging pages.

Dynamic site - allows webpages to change based information entered. Includes online shopping carts, search functions or leaving comments or posts.

Shopping cart - an application that allows a customer to select and pay for items within the website itself.

Payment gateway - attached to the shopping cart, this is the encrypted process for transferring payments to your bank.

HTML - HyperText Markup Language - used to build most static webpages.

Flash - a programming language for creating animated imagery and interactivity.

Content management system - Sometimes called a CMS, a content management system is an internet application that allows you to edit and manipulate your website online.

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Basic

Why the basic option

- You are starting a new business
- You are targeting a small local market
- You don't need a shopping cart or online purchasing
- You have a very small budget to start
- You need only a small number of pages

Approach

After two years as a stay-at-home mum, Sacha Leigh-Murray was itching to start working again. But rather than be forced into compromising her family around someone else's schedule, Sacha hoped to run her own part-time business from home.

And so Wonder Play began offering arts & crafts classes for preschoolers in November 2007. To attract those crucial first bookings, Sacha knew she needed a targeted campaign. By using a well-placed print ad to drive local parents to a strong website, Sacha hoped to attract enough enquiries to succeed.

"People these days expect a website. They want to be able to research you before they book," says Sacha. "I needed the website to encourage people to pick up the phone and ring me to book a trial class."

To get started, Sacha contacted Jordan at Netregistry. Because Wonder Play was a new business targeting a small area, and with only a small budget, Jordan recommended

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Netregistry's Custom Website service. "Jordan discussed how we needed to keep the style young. It's about kids, it's about art, it's about colours. And this helped decide the style we went for."

Solution

Sacha provided Jordan with a logo and a print advertisement for reference. Jordan advised her to visit other sites to develop ideas for the look and feel she wanted. This guided Netregistry's designers to produce three individual templates before Sacha selected the final design.

"Sacha knew what she wanted," explains Jordan. "We combined this with our knowledge of how consumers instinctively navigate through a site and the journey we want them to take so they reach the decision we're hoping for. It's very important to keep the purpose of the site as the driving force behind all the choices you make."

Conclusion

Wonderplay.com.au went live in December 2007. "I was surprised by the amount of email enquiries. When I'm working at night after I've put my son to bed, I can still be making bookings, answering the emails I received during the day."

One of the benefits of a professionally designed website has been the strong brand personality. "People have commented that I look like a large franchise. I wanted to look big from day one because I hope to expand and grow over time."

A simple five page static site was perfect for Sacha, and the low price meant costs were contained.

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Intermediate

Why the intermediate option?

- You are targeting a wider market, maybe even international
- You are competing in a field with large professional organisations
- You are ready to move up from your previous website
- You need to rebrand or relaunch your business
- You want to use Flash imagery in your website

Approach

Flash elements can enliven a webpage with exciting interactive images and eye-catching features to create a very strong and professional impression. So when Yarra Foods needed to update their website to sell their new direction in the global market, Michael Dougal decided to use a template incorporating Flash.

Yarra Foods has operated for five years as an international food trading company supplying business around the world with fresh produce from Australia, New Zealand, South America, USA, Canada, Asia, South Africa and Europe.

“We had a website hosted by Netregistry under yarrafoodexports.com,” explains Michael. “But when we decided to change the direction of the company to include branded products for retail supermarket trading in Asia, we took the opportunity for a name change and a complete redesign of the website.”

Michael discussed his plans and goals with Sam at Netregistry. “Businesses need to see what we do, get a snapshot of our business. Hopefully this would encourage them to drop us a line.”

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After registering a new domain at yarrafoods.com to reflect the rebranded company, Sam and Netregistry began work on Michael's very specific design brief, adjusting, tailoring and implementing his chosen template into a brand new framework.

Solution

One major limitation of Flash-based websites is that internet search engines rely on text, not images, when ranking websites in search queries. As Netregistry is also involved in search engine marketing as well as web design, we were able to consider these limitations when creating the final design.

The finished website managed to marry the interactivity and sizzle of Flash animation with a text based website. By sticking with a text based HTML format, the website can still appear strong in search engine results, despite the strong use of Flash.

Conclusion

Yarrafoods.com went live in December 2007, coinciding with the launch of the new brand. Michael announced the relaunch with an email marketing campaign to his client base, informing them of the new direction and introducing the new website.

"The site has definitely had an impact. We get a lot of internet enquiries from online sources and there has been an increase since the new website was launched."

Many web designers offer to build complete websites in Flash, not understanding the risks of not using a text format. Yarrafoods.com exploited the benefits of Flash without compromising the effectiveness of text.

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Expert

Why the expert option

- You want a fully featured ecommerce store
- You want an automated website capable of closing and processing a complete sale 24x7
- You want to provide a user-friendly customer-oriented shopping experience
- Your business relies on individual product sales, not enquiries

Approach

Adding a shopping cart to a website requires a lot of planning and a clear understanding of your customers. When Wolfgang Mettel of Permanent Cosmetics wanted to give greater exposure to the company product range, a fully featured shopping cart was an obvious choice.

“We needed an avenue for the products,” says Wolfgang. “The training business was going well, but the products needed more exposure.” The previous website required customers to contact the business to lodge orders and couldn’t showcase the products satisfactorily. By adding a shopping cart to the website, the entire product range could be displayed more effectively and would encourage more immediate sales.

Wolfgang began researching various web design services before choosing an online store with a content management system and shopping cart, as recommended by Sam from Netregistry. Sam brought in the services of Patrick, an experienced web designer, to work closely with Wolfgang on this detailed project.

One of the first questions to be decided was whether the shopping cart would use a payment

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gateway to transfer funds direct to a bank account. Wolfgang preferred for the shopping cart to forward credit card details to be processed manually.

Solution

In configuring the shopping cart, Wolfgang needed to consider how customers would use the website and make the buying process easy with as few clicks as possible.

The website went live in 2007, but the work wasn't over. "Every website has issues at first. And there are so many things to think of with a shopping cart that there will always need to be changes as issues come up."

An immediate problem was a limitation preventing both retail and wholesale customers from being serviced. Patrick continued working with Wolfgang to solve these issues, refining and improving the site to provide the best customer experience, even when it required dealing with the original software manufacturers to find solutions.

Conclusion

To implement a full ecommerce store with shopping cart can raise many problems, even with planning and foresight. Wolfgang was pleased that Patrick continued to offer support to correct problems and ensure the website reached its full potential. "The important thing is having someone willing to work with you after the website has gone live to resolve the issues."

With the major issues fixed, Wolfgang is working with Netregistry again as part of the Traffic Accelerator program to increase the traffic to the website.

The shop is open! Now to attract the customers inside!

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Don't leave success to chance

Design a website that performs, with Netregistry

No two businesses are the same. Because of this, Netregistry consultants work with you to find the design solution that is right for you. With no two websites the same, orders are quoted based on the individual features and styles allowing you greater flexibility to fit within your budget.

With hundreds of new business websites being launched every day, many are doomed to fail due to poor planning and poorer design. Get your online business off to the best start with a website constructed with a clear plan to increase sales. You know your business better than anyone. When designing your website, we'll use that knowledge to give you the best options.

Whether you already have a website or are looking to launch one in the future, discuss your website strategy with one of Netregistry's trained consultants.

We believe Netregistry has the best value web design solutions for small business in Australia. Because Netregistry understands how today's consumers use the internet, they can show you how to attract more traffic to your website and at the same time convert more of those visitors into paying customers!

For a FREE no obligation quote, complete an online form at <http://www.netregistry.com.au/web-design/>

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