

# Online Marketing and Social Media

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q::Do I need a website if I have a Facebook page (LinkedIn profile, Twitter account, etc.)?**

A::A key difference between a website and a Facebook page is that the business owner can (and usually does) own the website. Facebook—and other social media sites—owns Facebook and can delete accounts without notifying the user. It's not possible to download contact information either, so it's not possible to "push" information and offers.

Both options can be valuable to a business, but it's important to understand overall functionality, who owns customer information, and the options available for staying in contact.

**Q::I don't have time to manage a lot of accounts. Which ones are the best?**

A::It's important to understand your customers and use that information to determine which options—online and offline—are best for your business. Ask yourself where your customers spend time online and what they are doing while there. Identify your goals and use that information to prioritize your marketing efforts.

**Q::What are some common marketing goals?**

A::Some common marketing goals are awareness, new customer acquisition, customer loyalty, making sales, and research. You may have other goals, but understanding your customer and your marketing goals are key to creating successful marketing programs.

**Q: How can I optimize my website for search engines?**

A::Search engine algorithms for finding the best sites to return in a search are constantly changing. Google, Yahoo, and other search engines want to return the results that are most relevant to their users (their customers). Some things that they might consider are:

- Domain names that match the keyword search
- Meta tags, especially the meta title and content description (click through rate from Google searches also helps so craft a content description that is compelling to users)
- Anchor text and back links (especially from high-traffic websites and high "authority" users tweeting your page links)
- Keywords and keyword phrases

- Fresh, original content, frequently updated (this applies to the content on the page referenced by the search engine as well as across the entire site)
- How many users/customers are accessing your content (search volume)
- Claim your listing on Google Places and other local directories to improve your local search results
  - Fill out the listing completely—the more information you can provide that demonstrates a local presence, the more beneficial the listing will be for your business (address, city, state, country, zip code, area code are examples of content that demonstrate a local presence)
  - Google gives preference to sites that are manually claimed by their owners

You should also be considerate of the user experience. Once someone visits your site, you want them to have a pleasant experience and easily find the information or products they are looking for.

**Q:: What is a web host?**

A::A web host is a company that puts your website on their server and makes it accessible on the internet. Costs and services can vary so be sure to understand what they provide, as well as what information you own and what information they own.

**Q::What is a web designer?**

A::Web designers create websites using web design applications or templates. The web designer may or may not also host a website on a proprietary server.

**Q::Should I design my own site or hire a web designer?**

A:: That depends. Remember that you will either spend time or money on developing and managing your website, online marketing, and social media and advertising efforts. What’s your time worth? How should you be focusing your resources? Ultimately, that answer is as individualized as your company and deserves serious consideration. Commit your time, energy, and money in ways that will be the most beneficial to you, your company, and your customers.

Ask questions of any potential provider, and interview at least three potential providers when making a decision about this and other product or service providers.

## Helpful URLs

The list below has been compiled from personal experience and from suggestions by small business owners in our community. It is not intended to be a recommendation of the services or products listed below, rather as a source to be your personal inquiry into the products and service options available. It's important for each small business owner to evaluate and decide on the appropriate tools and options for his or her unique business situation.

Register your website (between them Google and Yahoo account for approximately 65% of website traffic, but there are other search engines that are popular with internet users)

- Google submission page
  - [www.google.com/addurl/?continue=/addurl](http://www.google.com/addurl/?continue=/addurl)
- Yahoo submission page
  - <http://search.yahoo.com/info/submit.html>
- Live search (MSN) submission page
  - [www.search.msn.com/docs/submit.aspx](http://www.search.msn.com/docs/submit.aspx)

## Website templates

- [Wordpress](#)
- [Go Daddy](#)
- [Blue Host](#)
- [Yola](#)
- [CenturyLink Business Solutions](#)
- [Free website templates](#) (this search term will bring up several options like the one referenced here)
- [Consumer reviews of free DIY website templates](#)

## Other resources

- Step-by-step instructions: How to get listed in the Local Google Directory <http://www.sparkplugging.com/sparkplug-ceo/how-to-show-up-in-the-google-local-business-directory/>
- [Google Places](#) provides a free local listing for your business
- [Google Alerts](#) can help simplify keeping up with market buzz; it allows you to get notifications when information about you, your business, or other topics of interest are posted online
- [Google Trends](#) lets you more quickly review the hot search topics and also view the search frequency of key words and phrases
- Use AdWords to test key words and phrases <http://bit.ly/9FqW8F>
- Ecommerce guide <http://www.ecommerce-guide.com/>

- 10 Free Content Management Systems <http://woork.blogspot.com/2008/11/10-free-powerful-content-management.html>
- Information on auto-responders <http://www.directoryone.com/articles/autoresponderfaq.htm>
- Video search of multiple sites [www.truveo.com](http://www.truveo.com)
- Stats related to online trends <http://searchengineland.com/by-the-numbers-twitter-vs-facebook-vs-google-buzz-36709>
- An example of the exponential growth rate of social media (LinkedIn Company History as of 11/13/2010) <http://press.linkedin.com/history>
- Tools that allow you to manage multiple social media sites
  - [www.Ping.fm](http://www.Ping.fm)
  - [www.HootSuite.com](http://www.HootSuite.com)
  - [www.tweetdeck.com](http://www.tweetdeck.com)
  - [www.tweetie.com](http://www.tweetie.com)
- Email marketing
  - Free version (plus paid versions)
    - [Mailchimp](http://Mailchimp)
  - Free trials
    - [Constant Contact](http://Constant Contact)
    - [Infusionsoft](http://Infusionsoft)
    - [ActiveCampaign](http://ActiveCampaign)

**Local Registries/Directories where you can list your website**

- Google Places: <http://www.google.com/local/add/businessCenter>
- Yahoo Local: <http://listings.local.yahoo.com/>
- Bing Local: <https://ssl.bing.com/listings/ListingCenter.aspx>
- Yelp: <https://biz.yelp.com/signup>
- There are others (like etsy.com) that are product or service-centric. Are there any for your business?

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**Analytics**

- Google Analytics <http://www.google.com/analytics/>