

This article is part of our beginner's series and will take under ten minutes of your time to explain why your local company absolutely needs a business website. Fancy something a bit more advanced? Check out [our other articles](#).

Need Convincing?

It's absolutely necessary for local companies to have a business website. Last year, a staggering [97% of consumers searched for local companies](#) on the Internet. Whether you're a sole trader or international conglomerate, there's no reason why you should be hindering your business by not getting in front of your customers. For local companies it's easier than ever to find customers who are looking for products and services close to them. The advantages of the Internet can be harnessed to make your business as visible as possible. Whether you need only a handful of pages or an eCommerce site that sells your products online, the Internet can be used to leverage sales. As technology has become more widespread, blogs and eCommerce sites have become more accessible and small businesses should definitely be taking advantage. In fact, there's no reason why companies of any size shouldn't be utilising a business website as part of their core strategy. Here's eight key reasons why you should be using your business website to drive sales.

1.) People love to shop locally

Earlier this year, Facebook's research and insights department found that on average, people visit up to seven local businesses per month and [spend between 40% and 55% of their total monthly budgets](#) on local products and services. For many companies, their website is the first thing that potential customers see. Making a positive first impression counts and representing the personality of the business is paramount.

In addition, you will find that many searches are tailored to work for local businesses. For example, if you search for "restaurants" or "builders" using Google's search engine, it's implied that you are looking for products or services close to where it thinks you are and the results will be based upon your location. By getting in front of these customers, you can create more leads and sales with the customers that are interested in working with and buying from local businesses.

2.) Get your information out there

For many companies, sales start from a number of different sources. From word of mouth to print advertisements, different sectors will have different ways of reaching people. However, regardless of your sales and marketing strategy, it's imperative that people who remember you can find your local business's website. Whether they want to phone you, email you or drop into your store, it's essential that you put that information out there.

For people trying to find you, having easy access to lists of products and services, prices, email addresses, phone numbers, address details, opening hours and company information allows customers to work out quickly if your business is right for them. Obviously, the information you make available will vary depending on the type of business you have and the type of website you need. It is becoming increasingly clear though that customers are a great deal more savvy than they used to be and 44% claim they will [leave a website if there's no contact information](#) or phone number. Even more will leave if they can't tell

what your business does. Whilst the presence of more tech-aware customers does highlight the advantages and disadvantages of the Internet, capable companies can begin to create great relationships with clients by providing a solid first impression.

If someone recommends your business to a friend or colleague through word of mouth, that person is most likely to search for you online. By ensuring that your business website displays the information that clients want and need, you are likely to see better inbound leads and more informed customers.

3.) Show customers who you are

People tend to make snap judgements. Most users don't stay on websites for very long. If they do, they've normally made up their mind about the quality of a website [within the first ten seconds](#). From this, it is evident that a well-designed website is key. If you owned a retail store that was cluttered and poorly laid out with signage that was misspelled and pointed to the wrong location, you'd probably find that many customers would turn around the moment they stepped in the store. The principle is the same of your website. If visitors to your business website can't find the product or contact information they want, there is a good chance they will leave and continue their search with your competitors. Web design matters and your company's website gives potential clients a glimpse as to who you are, and whether they might want to do business with you.

For example, a wedding photographer that has an outdated online portfolio with images that take too long to load will drive business to their competitors, but a well-designed gallery on an elegant and contemporary website has the potential to fill the diary all summer. On the other hand, a local construction firm may want a professional site that highlights customer testimonials, professional qualifications and industry accreditation. It's important that the type of business website you have and your web design represents your company and demonstrates to your local customers who you are.

4.) People searching locally want to be your customer

Local web searches show a desire for your product or service. Someone who searches online for "plumbers near me" primarily does so because they want to hire a tradesman. Likewise, someone searching for local restaurants or cafés is most likely looking for somewhere to eat. By having your website be there when people search for the products and services you deliver, you have a great opportunity to land sales.

Google's data backs this up. 50% of consumers who conducted a local search on their smartphone [visited a store within 24 hours](#). In addition, 18% of local smartphone searches followed up with a purchase. A website for your local business becomes a great investment. Local searchers are an essential audience as the data illustrates that they are more inclined to be the type of customer who will eventually make a purchase.

5.) Target local customers

So you've finally been convinced about the benefits of a website for your small business. Once your website is in place, you can tailor your advertising to the customers you want to reach. Fancy placing an advert that pushes your local clothing company to the top of

Google's search result pages to people who search for coats within ten miles of your business? Or are you a furniture company who wants to target people who have recently moved to within fifteen miles of your showroom? Getting this right can drive huge amounts of people to your local business. The scope for advertising campaigns is almost infinite. And with digital marketing being incredibly scalable, you can start with a really small investment and grow this when you're convinced with the results. We understand that for many people, their own local business takes all their focus so if you've got a website with us, you can take advantage of our expertise and let us [run your digital marketing campaigns](#).

6.) If you don't, they'll find your competitors

We don't mean to scare you. However, the Internet is constantly evolving. New technologies emerge and once-expensive technology filters down and becomes more and more accessible. It's important for you and your business to stay ahead of the curve. If your customers search for the types of products and services that you provide and don't see your company, they'll flock to your competitors. Not having a business website is like being a retailer without a storefront. Customers will be coming to purchase your products or hire your services, but without knowing you're there, they will see your competitors and go to them instead.

Likewise, if your website is poorly designed it might be driving customers away. We've already stated that 44% of users claim they will [leave a website if there's no contact information](#) or phone number. The last thing you want is for your credibility to be damaged to the point where your potential customers would rather go to your competitors.

7.) Let clients come to you 24/7

eCommerce is no longer restricted to huge companies with massive budgets. Consumers expect more than ever. Whether you sell clothes or candles, tea or toys, there's no reason why you can't leverage the power of the web and make sales outside of business hours. Even if you aren't the tech nerd that we are here, you can still find solutions that are easy to use. If you are wanting to delve into the world of eCommerce but feel overwhelmed, give us a call and we can show you how simple it can be.

8.) Intelligent customer insights

Once you've got your website sorted it's possible to gain huge insights into customer behaviour from your website. Do you know what percentage of visitors to your website look for your contact details immediately? How many go straight to your products? In fact, do you know which of your products are viewed, but are left when the consumer sees a price? Once you know the answers to questions like these, you can tailor your business decisions to maximise impact. For example, if the website analytics for your mobile phone repair store show that a significant number of your visitors are using iPads and looking at your page about battery replacements, you may consider adding tablet repair to the range of services you offer.

We make no apologies that we are massive nerds when it comes to data and we love delving into the numbers. However, we know this isn't for everyone so we can provide you with analytics reports if that's what you want. We have a custom relationship with each of our clients, so if this is something you are after, [let us know](#) and we'd be more than happy to help.

Summary

It may be necessary for local companies to have a presence on the web, but there are also huge benefits. With many customers searching for products and services where they are, a good business website should be an integral part of your sales strategy. And if you need help with your website development make sure you hire a web design agency that knows your market. We are based in Nottingham and serve businesses, charities and not-for-profits across the East Midlands. We know our clients and we know their markets. If you think we can help your local business then [get in touch](#).