Website vs Landing Page

Website vs landing page : which do you need and why?

On a call with a client recently, I was asked about the difference between a website and a landing page, so I thought this would make a good topic for my blog this month!

In a nutshell, below are the key differences:

	Website	**Landing Page**
Number of Pages	Five or more pages	A single webpage and an attached thank you page
Information	All information customers need to know	Information about a specific item or offer
Functionality	May contain multiple modules and functions	Usually only has text, images and a form

Navigation	All pages are accessible	Limited navigation
Purpose	To explain or present the company	To sell or capture leads

Let's explore them in more detail.

What Are the Key Differences Between Websites and Landing Pages?

In comparing a website vs landing page, there are many similarities, but also some important differences as well. Understanding these can help you decide when you should use each one. This can help you choose the most cost-effective solution too.

Website: A website is ideal for attracting more customers and for portraying more complex ideas as it is larger and has more functionality than a landing page. It generally requires more investment and is best for established businesses or organisations. It can be a good way to help answer any customers' questions or concerns.

Landing page: A landing page is simple and easy to read, with a clear purpose. It is usually aimed at a particular target audience, instead of consumers in general. It is centred around a single concept which is usually promotional and aimed at engaging a potential lead. A landing page is usually, but not always, attached to a website.

Can't decide between using a website or landing page? Try a microsite!

We can't talk about websites and landing pages without discussing a third option… the microsite! If you can't decide between a website or a landing page, then a microsite may just

be what you need. A microsite is similar to a landing page in the fact it contains a single page but the page is much longer and explains a business and your product or service. There would usually still be a main menu/heading, but they will contain internal links which take your visitors to different sections across the page.

A microsite:
- Is usually one long, scrolling page
- Uses internal links to aid navigation between sections on the page
- Is ideal for describing a product or service in detail
- Creates buzz!

A microsite is similar to a website, but smaller, and the functionality is usually limited to simple forms and navigation. It's ideal for generating attention for a new business, product or service and for providing information or answering questions. Since it usually requires less investment, it can get up and running faster, making it a helpful pre-launch tool.

We've explained the differences between the three types, let's give you some clear examples of which type you should use when.

When Do You Need a Website?
To Tell Your Story

This is the place to answer all of the common questions a customer might have about your business. You can explain what your business is all about using pages entitled About Us, Mission, Values, Locations and Contact Us. The key is to

organise your web content in a customer-focussed way.

Explain Your Products or Services

People searching general terms like "landscaping," "dentist," or "blue dresses" might not be sure exactly what they need, or what's available. They are probably looking for more information before buying. Your website can show what you offer in detail and encourage customers to dig deeper.

Keep in mind that the purpose of a website is to inform, not necessarily to sell—that's the landing page's job.

Provide a Function

If your customers need to make online orders, schedule appointments or download research, you'll need more than one page. This online service section is connected to the public part of your website; however it would be "gated". This means it requires login information to access. Leads, customers, or staff might access this functionality.

Relate to Customers

Your website allows you to showcase your company mission, values, culture and style. Your website design should attract your ideal customer! It is difficult to create a clear message with a single page. With a website, you can communicate different messages, like your mission or values, on dedicated pages, while maintaining a consistent style throughout the site.

Improve SEO

Search Engine Optimisation—helping users find your business with the right search queries—is an essential part of most business websites. Targeting multiple keywords on one page is ineffective; it's better to have multiple pages to target the most valuable keywords in your industry. Each page should have a

dedicated keyword, so users can find it more easily in a search. This is a major benefit of a website vs a landing page.

When Do You Need a Landing Page?

To Grab Attention
With no navigation buttons, links, blogs or other distractions, a landing page keeps a visitor's attention better than the entire website.

Lead Magnets

Your lead magnet can be any type of helpful content gated by a form. A user fills out the form on the landing page (providing at least their name and email) in order to see the offer on the attached thank you page. This is why a landing page might also be called an opt-in page or lead capture page.

Design your landing page especially for the lead magnet, with all the focus on the content, form and keywords. Send the landing page link to your existing leads, use it with social media or use PPC advertising to generate new leads.

Attract Different Customers

You shouldn't have just one page for all your customers; while your website stays generally the same, you can create custom landing pages to appeal to certain market segments. The content, offer and page style you choose will determine the impact of the landing page on the new market.

PPC Advertising

Google partly judges the quality of pay-per-click (PPC) ads by their relevance to the linked page. A specific landing page built around the ad will be more relevant than a general Products or Services page. This means it appears higher in search results and gives visitors what they're looking for.

When Do You Need a Microsite?
As previously explained, the microsite is somewhere between a landing page and a website. It's usually a single, long page with internal links to help a user navigate between sections. Sometimes a microsite may be a better option than either a landing

page or a website. Here are a few such situations:

Creating Buzz

If no one has heard of your product or service by the day it launches, you've missed a big marketing opportunity. Pre-launch buzz is an integral part of a successful launch, and a microsite is a great way to give potential customers a preview of your new product or service. Direct new fans to your microsite and share the URL to boost the message whilst spreading the word through news sites, interviews, free trials, beta tests or other promotional strategies.

These microsites work best with minimal text and bold graphic elements like attention-grabbing photos.

A Big Campaign

Some promotional campaigns are too important to be tucked away on a corner of your website, and too big for a single landing page. In this situation, a microsite is a great option as it helps to separate the campaign from the sales-focused website without separating it too far. Microsites might also be used for a brand's milestone, such as a big anniversary or a goal reached.

Time-Sensitive Material

If you have a product or service that is going to spike in popularity for a short time, but interest will probably dwindle later on, a microsite is a great option as it takes a much shorter time to set up than a website. A microsite is ideal for events, seasonal products or big debuts, such as movie or book releases.

Still Undecided? Ask an Expert!

HDS work with websites, landing pages and microsites on a daily basis. We know instantly which is best suited for a particular need. You can view our work here for inspiration! For specific advice on your digital needs, book a discovery call today.