

# 11 THINGS YOU NEED ON YOUR SMALL BUSINESS WEBSITE



**I have a question for you. Is your website pulling its weight? Is it bringing business and sales? Or is it just sitting there, on the internet, pretending to work while secretly snoozing behind your back?**

**Hmmm? Well, if your website isn't working the way it should, it's time to give it a WAKE UP CALL.**

Sometimes it's a question of design over substance. Sometimes it's because the business owner didn't really know what they wanted when they had the website built (this happens more often than you might think). Whatever the reason, if this is ringing alarm bells with you it's not the end of the world.

I've put together a list of the 11 things you should have on your business website if you want to attract the right people (people who are likely to buy), get them to spend their hard earned cash with you and keep coming back.

Not all of them are essential (there's one even I don't have yet) but if you have half of these on your website then you're doing really well but the more you can include, the more awesome and effective your website is going to be.



[www.thegirlsmeanbusiness.com](http://www.thegirlsmeanbusiness.com)

# 1. A VERY CLEAR HOME PAGE

**Not just clear but aimed at your Super Customer. Your Super Customer is the type of person who is most likely to buy from you because you can't market to everybody - here's a blog explaining more about it.**

Your home page is your shop window. It's the first thing most people will see if you turn up in a Google search or they follow a link from social media and first impressions really do count.

You've done the hard bit, you've GOT them to your site, so don't let the side down now! It's time to take a good hard look at your home page through the eyes of a new visitor.

*If someone didn't know what you do, would it be 100% obvious just from looking at your home page?*

*Would a new visitor know what to do next? Would they know how to find what they are looking for?*

You need a potential buyer to be able to quickly and easily find their way around and BUY, with enough information available so they can make their decision there and then without having to contact you or do more research.

Look at every section, every image, every headline, every bit of your home page (on desktop AND on mobile) and see how it looks.

Test it out on your 'honest' friends or family and ask them to be really straight with you (and don't cry when they are!). It's much better to get honest feedback NOW, so you can fix any problems and ensure your potential customers stick around later. And you can always put a fake spider in their coffee later if they are particularly vicious. But just don't tell them I said that.

## 2. A GREAT 'ABOUT' PAGE

**Your 'about' page is your chance to tell people about you and your business. It's a chance to start a relationship with your visitors, to let them see if they feel you're their type of person.**

It's your chance to tell your story and the story of how the business came about. It's your chance to share your passion and enthusiasm about why you're doing this and how it makes a difference. It's your opportunity to SHINE! It's what makes you different from every other small business AND big business out there because it's all about the magic ingredient – YOU!

Don't waste it by sticking a bunch of stuffy, sterile blurb in there that could belong to anyone!

Fill it full of your personality - it will filter out people who are a bad fit and attract people who 'get' you.

Give your about page a makeover now! Here's another e-book that will REALLY help your 'About' page to zing!

### 3. A CONTACT PAGE

#### **You need a contact page on your website.**

Even if you don't want to share your home address or email address (in case you get hit by the spam bots) you can still easily add a contact form and let people get in touch.

But don't just leave it at a contact form. That's BORING!! If people are looking at the page, let's make the most of it!

Put a little message from you on there. Something like 'We love messages - it can get a bit lonely here with me and the dog, so tell me something nice or let me know how I can make your day better. Or write me a poem, that would be lovely!' But in your own words - you get the idea. If you get the opportunity to make someone smile, then do it - life's too short for boring contact pages!

While you're there, put your social media icons on there too and encourage people to follow you.

Put your hours of business on there - even if you don't own a physical shop with a door you lock at the end of the day, you still need to put boundaries in place. Put a map on there if people come to you.

Manage people's expectations and let them know how long it will be before they can expect to hear from you if they enquire.

Put a picture of YOU! And your dog/cat/budgie/stuffed tortoise. Stand out for all the right reasons. Contact pages can be AWESOME too!

## 4. A FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS PAGE

**Take all the questions people ask you in the course of your business, from pricing, delivery, returns, plus any product related questions and put them with your standard answers on a page on your website.**

This will make it easier for people to buy because you're answering their questions while they are browsing - it takes away the barrier of having to contact you before they can make a decision.

It makes it easier to buy. And you can put a link to your FAQ page on your Contact page.

But why not get a bit quirky? Why not add in a few fun questions while you're there. If you have a fab business name put the question 'How did I come up with my fabulous business name?' and say something like..."I'm SO glad you asked, here's the story..." or if you MAKE things then add a question "How do you come up with your gorgeous ideas?" and you can make your reply something like this..."Ooh, you're making me blush! Well, here's how it works...."

You get the picture. No need for boring FAQs - make sure you have all the information on there so that people can easily make a decision to buy but add in your sparkly personality too, just because!

## 5. A LIST BUILDER

**Just think about how many people land on your website - what happens to them if they aren't quite ready to buy? They click away and you've lost them. That's what! Which is awful.**

After all the trouble you went to, to get them there in the first place.

You have to hope they remember you when they ARE ready to buy but to be honest, some of them probably can't remember their child's birthday because they're so busy so what chance do YOU stand?

Hoping they remember is NOT a great marketing strategy, but luckily I have a MUCH better one for you.

Why not take the unpredictability out of it and grab them while they are browsing, so you can continue building a relationship with them even when they are long gone from your website? How? Start capturing your visitors' email addresses, that's how!

You need a reason for them to sign up to your email list and we call that a List Builder - and you need a List Builder on your website, toot sweet (that means RIGHT NOW in very bad French).

It could be as simple as a discount voucher or a tips sheet, maybe a little e-book or a 'how to' video. It could be a cheat sheet, a 'which product is right for you' sheet, a 'how to choose the best photographer/reiki practitioner/doula/event organiser for you' - you get the drift. And you can do this.

Think about what your Super Customers would love and what would entice them to hand over their email address. Remember to tell them they will be added to your mailing list when they sign up, just so you are marketing with integrity and they know what to expect.

## 6. UP TO DATE INFORMATION

**I have lost count of the times I have been to a website and their last blog was in 2003 or their prices don't work or the links are broken!**

Or you can see the news page hasn't been updated for five years and the social media stuff is out of date. They've put their Twitter account on there they haven't tweeted for a year!

There's nothing more likely to put me off buying from a website than seeing it's been 'abandoned'. That's telling me they don't bother with it and who knows if the company is even still in business? Is that REALLY where I want to spend my money? Yes, I know you're busy. Yes, I know it's hard to find time. But your competitors are making time. Just sayin'...

If you have a website, check it THOROUGHLY every 6 months or more often if you can. The more regularly you do it, the less time it will take each time.

Make sure all the links still work. Make sure the information is still correct. If you have social media accounts feeding into your site, make sure you're using those accounts or take off the feed from your site. Half an hour spent every 6 months could mean the difference between someone buying or not buying. Sounds like a no-brainer to me.

## 7. BLOGS

**Not everybody has a blog, but if you have one see if you can get it embedded into your website.**

Why? Well, a website is a static thing and when you first publish your website the search engine 'spiders' will be all over it, indexing it to appear in search results and paying it lots of attention. But after that, if nothing changes then there is no reason for the search engines to take much notice. They might pop over a few times for a virtual spider cuppa with your site, find the doors closed and the shutters down and think 'nothing's happening here, I'm off to find someone with doughnuts' and that's it, gone!

A blog is the way to change it and it's like sending out a party invitation to the search engine spiders to come over and have an indexing party.

Every time you put new content on your site (and a blog is the easiest and best way to do this) you're giving it another chance to show up in a search. That's got to be a good thing, right?

The other GREAT thing is once you've got used to writing a blog each month, you can use your blogs in LOADS of ways that will save you time in your other marketing. Yay!

## 8. AN 'IN THE MEDIA' PAGE

**I want you to have an 'In The Media' page on your website.**

Yes I know you don't like showing off but this is an order - if you've been featured in your local paper then put it on your In The Media page. If you had a product featured in a showcase in a magazine, take a snap of it and get it on your In The Media page.

Any time you've had any mention in a magazine, newspaper, radio show or TV programme then get it on your website (unless it was that time you appeared on 'You've Been Framed' falling off the trampoline in an embarrassing manner, or the time you got a police warning for heckling the local traffic warden, in which case not).

I go out of my way to get featured in places like Marie-Claire or Huffington Post or The Guardian, because it adds credibility to me and my business. For my audience it matters that I'm in those kinds of places - for YOUR customers it could be that the local paper or local trade magazine is brilliant!

Be proactive about seeking PR (here's a blog to get you started) and shout about it on your website.

## 9. A CLEAR ROUTE TO BUYING

**How many clicks does someone have to make on your website before they can give you their money? No seriously, count them, because it matters.**

It makes a HUGE difference if someone is busy and just wants to blummin' buy. There are times I've been trying to buy something and the checkout was SO longwinded I just gave up and went somewhere else.

I want you to iron out that process. Take out unnecessary steps. Get rid of hurdles. Make it REALLY easy for people to buy from your website.

If you've got twenty seven menu items squeezed across the top of your website, it's really hard for someone to find their way through. Get rid of some, restructure them. If you've got tons of choices and adverts and buttons plastered all over your front page, people don't know where to look. Simplify it.

If they have to fill in their details more than once, or you're asking for their birthday or shoe size without a really good reason that's NOT COOL. Cut it down to ONLY the information you really need.

Make it really obvious what somebody has to do when they get to your website. What do you want them to do?

Do you want them to join your mailing list? Do you want them to buy something? Do you want them to enquire? Really, there are only three things people should be doing on your site:-

1. Joining your email list
2. Making an enquiry
3. Buying

If they aren't doing any of these, how can you change it so they do? That's your homework!

## 10. VIDEOS

**Hey, you! I can see you ducking behind the sofa! It's time to come out and face the world. At the moment you're hiding behind a website, hoping people will love your stuff and buy it BUT you COULD be your business's greatest asset.**

You could be making them fall in love with your business and with YOU, with the way you do business and with your obvious passion for your subject. You could be turning them from strangers into people who feel you're a friend and that they know you. And guess what? Marketing is ALL about relationships – people buy people. Videos are awesome for marketing, so you'd better get over your video fears and start reading – it's definitely worth it.

At the moment, your website is just a lot of code on the internet. Yes, it's got pretty pictures and maybe even some amazing content but really, it's not very dynamic. If you were behind a shop counter or market stall, you could build a relationship with a visitor in person. But when someone visits your site, you are not there in person, so how can you bridge that gap?

How can you start to build relationships with them? How can you help them to get to know you? What you need is to add some movement, some personality, some magic – and VIDEO is the answer. You're going to have to get over yourself and over the fact that you're shy or you don't like the sound of your voice, or you could do with losing a bit of weight (in your opinion), or the fact that you don't know what to say. Just talk! Be yourself. Think about what your website visitors would love to know.

Share some behind the scenes stuff. Share some 'this is how I do this' type shots. Introduce yourself. Introduce the dog. Film yourself opening a new delivery. Show off a new range. Whatever your Super Customers would love to see – just put yourself in their shoes.

No excuses, if you want your website to really work for you it's time to be the video star on your website – I promise your customers will LOVE it and guess what? Most people NEVER do this – they let their excuses stop them and, well, that's their loss. Off you go, I'm ready for my close up Mr De Mille...

## 11. GREAT PHOTOS

**Have great photos on your website. Not BORING ones. Not same old, same old stock photographs of a goldfish jumping into another bowl or a red apple among a box of green ones. I actually might stick a fork in my eye if I see another of those. You can do BETTER than that!**

Have a lovely photograph of YOU for starters.

This doesn't mean that you have to fork out a lot of money for a professional photographer immediately (but definitely worth investing in as soon as you can afford it). See if you can get some shots of you at work - they can be rough and ready, taken on your phone, especially as you're trying to convey what you do and use those for now. But please don't use your wedding photo with the veil cropped off. We'll know.

If you make products, do them justice! Even if you can only use your phone, make sure that you have them in daylight or otherwise get the best lighting you can, make sure you try and 'prop' them, it makes all the difference. I've seen many a good small business website spoiled by badly lit, badly detailed photographs that just needed better lighting or some simple props. Don't let that happen to you.

And if you're ever tempted to pick a photo of a red apple in a box of green apples, unless you SELL apples, just imagine me sticking a fork in my eye because that's what I'll do if it see it and to be honest, it hurts so RESIST, RESIST, RESIST!

## DO YOU HAVE SOME WORK TO DO?

Do you need to lie down in a darkened room yet? Or are you feeling very smug and saying to yourself 'just call me a website ninja'?

If your website needs a makeover, don't despair. Just make a list of what needs doing and do ONE AT A TIME. Do the easy ones first. And if you struggle with writing, ask if someone can help you. This is important stuff!

**Your website has got away with sleeping on the job for far too long - it could be helping you take a salary, it could be saving you loads of time, it could be SHOUTING about your business. If yours isn't, then it's time to put a rocket up it - no excuses, off you go!**



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## ABOUT US

**Claire Mitchell is a marketing and business coach, an Amazon best-selling author and mum.**

She works from home in a little village by the river in the North East of England with husband Mitch, daughter Chloe and dog Meggie. She's been featured in Marie-Claire, The Guardian, Closer, Essentials and the Huffington Post. She's been featured on TV-AM, Radio One and The Apprentice.

## ABOUT THE GIRLS MEAN BUSINESS

**Created by Claire Mitchell, The Girls Mean Business is an online business school for women. She runs a number of courses and classes including:**

### THE GIRLS MEAN BUSINESS CLUB

**An AMAZING group of women business owners who are determined to build their business, no matter what!**

This is SUPPORT ON STEROIDS! Learn all about business and marketing with people who KNOW what it's like to feel flat, isolated or out of your depth – who GET what it's like to build a business when life gets in the way and who WANT to learn and help others do the same. It's AWESOME! A monthly class and challenge get you motivated, little surprises through the mail make you happy and likeminded people to hang out with make you SUCCESSFUL. Yay!

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## 30 DAYS TO BOOST YOUR BIZ

### **The 30 day motivation programme for women business owners.**

30 days, 30 mini lessons, lots of motivation and a fantastic, supportive Facebook group = HUGE progress and the foundations for AWESOME success.

## SMALL BUSINESS SUCCESS CAMP

### **The ULTIMATE BUSINESS SUCCESS COURSE for beginners (or those who are rusty and need to start again properly).**

7 modules, over 100 bite-sized videos and a whole bundle of planners, cheat sheets and workbooks. Perfect if you don't have time to waste – you can just pick a mini-class on the topic you're struggling with and watch it right now. Job done, move on. Or you can work through all the modules and watch yourself morph into a successful business owner before your very eyes! Yay!

## THE BIG GIRL KNICKERS BUSINESS ACCELERATOR

### **The SERIOUS BUSINESS BUILDER'S COURSE for seasoned business owners who are a bit flat or stuck in their business and are ready to be bold, brave, put on their big girl knickers and step up to the next level.**

12 modules, over 100 mini- videos, monthly challenges, regular bum kicks and NO EXCUSES! If you are serious about building this business, if you've HAD IT with getting by, if you're DONE with doing OK, it's time to get those big girl knickers on and show the world what you're made of!

**We've also got Online Coaching Made Easy and Supercharge Your Sales as well as lots of other amazing free and paid resources on our website. What's not to love?**

**No excuses, time to build that AWESOME business!**

*love, Claire xx*



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