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*Fred Lotgering*

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## What is the Difference Between a “Profitable” and a “Profit-Draining” Local Business Website?



Today, every business - big or small - needs to have a website. Times have changed and in order for businesses to stay ahead of their competition, there is no question about the fact that having a website is a key factor. However, simply having any old website will not do.

There is a very big difference between a website that inspires a potential customer to do business with you, versus one that inspires a potential customer to run in the opposite direction because your site doesn't have the proper tools in place.

Think about your current website right now. Do you think that your website has what it takes to increase your overall revenue? Does your website inspire and intrigue visitors... or does it present them with no value?

The days of putting up a generic website have come and gone. In fact, most marketing experts will tell you that having a poorly designed website is actually worse than having no website at all.

Not only does it not help you bring in new business, but it is an expense that you must keep up with month after month – with no results to show for it.

We all know how important having a website really is, but there’s much more to it than simply having one.

By now, you are probably wondering what makes a website profitable vs. non-profitable.

What are the important elements that one should take into consideration when designing and building a website?

In this report, we will cover the most critical aspects you should consider about your website if you are looking to make it work for your business.

### ***Professional Website Design + Easy Navigation= Profit***

Did you know that, generally speaking, you only have less than 15 seconds to make a first impression when someone is visiting your website? Make these 15 seconds count by having a professionally designed web page.

If your website is poorly designed, there is a great chance that a potential customer will stop looking at your site right away and never return. They will simply go to one of your competitors with a website that pleases them in a visual and engaging way.

Your website becomes the face of your company in the virtual world; always keep that in mind. For many people, a visit to your website will be the first point of contact with your business. If you want them to continue visiting your site (and your business for that matter), it has to look professional and contain the proper conversion tools to generate interest.

Would you walk into a business meeting wearing a stained white t-shirt and ripped jeans? Think about the websites that you visit on a regular basis; what stands out about the ones you like? They’re probably clean, crisp and provide you with important and relevant information. As you can see, much time and thought should go into the design of your business website for the best results.

One very important aspect to making your website visually appealing is the color schemes that you have chosen for your site. The colors of your website must be easy on the eyes. If your colors are too bright or too dark, being able to view the website may be troublesome for some people.

Also beware of using different color combinations that clash instead of complement each other. Try to match the color schemes with your logo to ensure a nice combination.

Keep the font colors basic as well. Stay away from bright font colors as it often makes it hard to read. In a nutshell, think “simple” when designing your website.

If you want your website to be attractive to the masses, never have flashing or blinking images. Not only do many people find this annoying, it can cause headaches and eye strain for others.

The navigation of your website must be easy to use as no one wants to spend time searching around for information on your website. Always make sure that your navigation list:

- ◆ Includes all of the important aspects of your business
- ◆ Is easy to find
- ◆ Is easy to use

Today, most professional websites choose to have the navigation menu on the left sidebar or at the top. While you do not have to put it in these exact spots, just keep in mind that if your site doesn’t make it easy for visitors to find what they need, you could lose potential customers or clients.

People no longer have the patience to sift through a site just to find an email address, phone number, directions, prices, and other crucial information.

Lastly, a website that was designed 15 years ago does not meet the professional standards of today. Technology has advanced tremendously in recent years, so just because your website may have been “up-to-date” 15 years ago, does not mean that it is today. Keeping up with the modern times on your website will help to ensure that your website attracts your target audience, ultimately converting them into buying customers.

### ***Make Sure Your Website is a “Direct Response” Website***

Have you ever visited a website and finding the company's phone number seemed like an impossible feat? Was their phone number in small, tiny font at the bottom of the website? Was it listed on just one particular page of the website (not the home page)? Or even worse, was it not listed at all?

You probably agree that this is very frustrating for website visitors who are looking to make contact with a business. Therefore, make it easy and simple for your website visitors to reach out to you to inquire about your products and services.

How?

First thing first, what do you want your visitor to do when they land on your website? Do you want them to call you for your services? Should they fill out an email inquiry form? Tell them this! You need a call to action on your website that is located in multiple highly visible sections and pages; especially the home page.

Most experts will tell you that your call to action (whatever it may be) should be “above the fold.” Above the fold means the top section of the screen before someone has to scroll down the page to continue reading. You want it to be as clear as day, which makes it easy for your audience to do business with you.

Email opt-ins are a must have for every business website. Most people today are very comfortable connecting with businesses via email, so having an email opt-in form will allow you to build a list of valuable prospects and customers.

Once you have your customers’ email addresses, you now have an instant communication channels to keep them in the loop with your business. You can send them emails with free, valuable information related to your industry as well as occasional promotional offers.

Remember an email opt-in list is not spam mail; these are potentially loyal customers who are willingly giving you permission to contact them about your business. Not having an email opt-in list on your website is like turning away customers who may want to do business with you. Just as no business should be without a website, no business website should be without an email opt-in form.

### ***Be Found by the PUBLIC with SEO***

Search engine optimization (also known as SEO) is a must-have for businesses who want to generate traffic (=potential customers) to their websites. With millions and millions of websites in the vast world of cyberspace, the best way to ensure that your target audience is finding your website is with the use of SEO. SEO can generally be broken up into on-site SEO and off-site SEO.

Let's take a look at on-site SEO in more detail.

SEO helps the search engines list and rank your website on the major search engines such as Google, Yahoo and the like. SEO can sometimes be a bit complicated to grasp as rules changes on a frequent basis but it is important to understand that when designing your website, it must be designed with SEO (Google mostly) in mind.

On-site SEO covers a myriad of elements that help search engines, as well as consumers, find your business based on certain geo-targeted keywords. Consumers

type these keyword terms into the search engines when looking to find businesses in your local area.

Some other elements of on-site SEO include proper page titles, meta tag descriptions, H1 and H2 headings, outbound links, inbound links and a variety of other key components. Google is now famous for making regular changes in requirements.

On-site SEO should be done by a professional who understands SEO and the importance of having proper SEO done. Simply putting a website online will not work.

Professional SEO experts use a variety of tools such as Google Analytics, competitive research analysis, and deep keyword research and other expensive tools and subscriptions to ensure that your website will rank properly for the correct keywords.

When done properly, your business website could rank highly for a number of popular local keyword terms related to your industry, which means your customers and potential customers will have a much easier time finding your website. This element is something that should never be overlooked unless you are okay with having a website that gets no traffic.

### ***To Blog or Not to Blog***

Today, most of the business websites that you visit will probably have a blog as well. Blogs have come a long way and today they are considered now a standard for a business website as well. A business blog is one of the best things that a business owner can do to help increase their off-site SEO as well as to build credibility in their particular field.

Having constant, relevant fresh content is also another key component of SEO as a whole. Google in particular gives prominence to websites and blogs that are updated regularly and continuously provide high-quality content. So by simply blogging on a regular basis, you will be helping to increase your overall web presence and rankings.

With a blog also comes the importance of having your website designed with a CMS system in place. CMS stands for Content Management System and it allows one to easily update the content on their website with a few clicks of a mouse. Some of the most popular examples of a CMS system would be Wordpress, Joomla, and Drupla.

All of these have a small learning curve but there is no programming knowledge needed. The point of any CMS system is to allow anyone to be able to log into their website or blog control panel and update the content on a regular basis – without having to rely on their web designer.

So when you have your website designed by a professional make sure that they are using a CMS system. In most cases, they will also provide you with a walk through on how to use the system.

Older designed websites, generally speaking, do not use CMS and this is why many people have a hard time updating their websites. If you are still using an out-of-date website, it is time to make the change to one that will allow you to change your content whenever you wish.

Do not overlook the power of a business blog. If you feel that you cannot write well enough or simply do not have the time, consider outsourcing the job to a professional content writer. You will be surprised at how powerful a well written blog can be when it comes to gaining more online visibility.

### ***Slow and Unreliable Web Hosts are No Good for Business***

What good is having a website that takes 5 minutes to load? Furthermore, if your website is “down” more than it is “up,” you are hurting your business more than helping it. Today, no business should ever settle for a slow or unreliable host.

There are many different web hosts to choose from these days, so do some comparison shopping when it comes to choosing the right web host for your business. Some things to look for are reliability, 24/7 customer support, speed of the servers, how many servers they have, how much space they give you, and the overall reputation of the company.

A simple Google search will provide you with some of the basic information you need about any particular company. Ask other people you know for recommendations as well as your web designer. In many cases, they can offer hosting in addition to building your website. If they cannot, they should be able to recommend a reliable host. Never, ever try to cut corners by going with a free host. Remember, you get what you pay for.

### ***Go Mobile***

In the technological driven world we live in, your website has to be mobile-friendly. Today, statistics have shown that more people will check for local businesses on their mobile devices than ever before. So this means that your website has to work with all mobile devices if you don’t want to miss out on the massive mobile audience.

You have two choices when it comes to ensuring that your website works on mobile devices.



1. One is to stay away from Flash and an overabundance of large graphics when designing your site. It is very important to note that any website designed with Flash, will not work on any Apple products. This means that users who are using an iPhone or iPad will not be able to see your website from their mobile devices. Of course, you can understand what a huge mistake that could be.

Talk to your web designer and let them know that you want your business website to be as mobile-friendly as possible. If you choose this route, your mobile site will look identical to your static site but may be slow to load and require a lot of scrolling by mobile users. This is due to the small size of mobile devices in comparison to a computer screen.

2. The second, and more logical option, is to have a mobile version of your site designed. These are generally very similar to your static site but often include fewer options. For example, if you are a retail shop the mobile version may show current sales that are going on as well as the address and phone number of your location. It may not show the entire catalog on the mobile version but there is generally the option to view the full site as well.

Having a mobile version of your website ensures that no matter when or where someone decides to visit your website, they will be able to find it and view it on their mobile device without a lot of hassle. There is no question about it; every business needs to keep “mobile-friendly” in mind when it comes to their website.

### ***Time to Get Social***

By now, you already know the importance of social media, right? Social media has become one of the biggest forms of advertising and marketing for businesses of all sizes. As a business owner, your website should be tied directly into your social media profiles.

This allows consumers to connect even further with your business by clicking through to your social media pages from your website.

Many companies will choose to run promotions on their social media platforms and offer special incentives for people who connect with them there.

While your website is the “face” of your business online, social media is the “voice” for your business. So it only makes sense to tie them in together. Social media is free advertising and connects your business with a broader audience in a very personal and intimate way.



Business Blogs and social media go hand in and hand. Therefore, having your social media icons such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Google+, LinkedIn, etc. displayed on your blog or website in a clear and prominent place is crucial.

### ***Professionally Designed Websites are the Only Way to Go***

Your business is important to you; your website should be equally important. There has been a major shift in the way that consumers do business. The process they use to find new products and services has drastically changed.

The general public expects a website that is professional designed, easy to use, provides useful and relevant information, and is overall visually appealing. If your website has become outdated or is not getting the traffic you want and need, it is time to make some changes.

By following these tips, you could very well be on your way to finally having your website work for you – instead of you steadily putting money into it with no return.

Don't you think it is time you made the change and allowed your website to increase your overall bottom line? The time is now.

I work with local businesses in the area by helping them turn their outdated websites into the customer-generating tools they were meant to be.

If you are interested in learning more about how your website could be improved to help bring in more visitors, more customers, and more profits for your business, contact me at for a free proposal.

Looking forward to do business with you.

***Success!***



**Fred Lotgering**  
**LotCon Biz Solutions**

Fred Lotgering is a professional Internet Marketing consultant working from multiple locations around the world. He is dedicated to help to grow small and medium sized businesses by offering a variety of Internet Marketing tools! He is the owner of LotCon. (“**LotCon**” comes from **Lotgering Consultancy**). LotCon is registered in the Netherlands, soon also in Brazil). For more products suitable for “YOUR” business please go to: [LotCon Biz Solutions Blog](#)