



How to know when YOU NEED A WEBSITE

Before deciding to build a website (either hiring someone, or giving it a go yourself) there are 4 essential questions to ask yourself. Grab a cuppa tea, and ask yourself...

1. What stage of business am I in?

There's a darn helpful idea that I was introduced to a few years ago, by Tad Hargrave (MarketingforHippies.com). It is the idea that our business is like a tree with different stages of growth determining the strength and weight the tree can take. We don't expect a tiny little sapling to provide us with life-saving food, shelter, or shade do we? We have to wait for it to mature!

Let's take a look at the 4 Stages of Business:

"Stage One: Creation – In stage one, you're doing a lot of experimenting still. You don't have a clearly defined niche yet. You likely have no help at all with your business and you are absolutely not able to sustain yourself financially – you can't make a living at this level. In creation, things are new. You've had the idea to start a business and are full of excitement. The seed germinates and begins to sprout. At this stage the plant is far too soft and flimsy to bear much weight. It's very flexible but not that sturdy."

It might just be a little too early to start pouring your time, energy, and resources into a website at this stage. Take some time instead to let yourself play, vision, dream, and try new things.

"Stage Two: Concentration – At this stage, you might be beginning to get some part time help but you're only barely paying the bills in your business. You're squeezing by and the money is up and down. You focus on your marketing and money comes in but then you focus on delivering your products and services and the business dries up. Back and forth. Feast and famine happens a lot here. But, at this point, you've figured out your niche and what your business is about. You're getting the business model down and developing the systems you need. This phase is like the phase of rapid growth of a plant. There's a lot of hard work and a lot of learning here."

It is during this stage that a website is the best next step to work on!

“Stage Three: Momentum – At this stage, you likely have a full time employee or two and your business is generating enough revenue that everyone is getting paid a fair amount. You are thriving. You have a solid niche and business model. In momentum, there’s a firming up of your business just as plants get that woody growth that prepares them to bear fruit later.”

“Stage Four: Independence – At this level, you could go on vacation for six months and your business would still be making money for you. You likely have many people working for you and airtight systems in place.”

2. Do I have a product or service, and a way to get paid?

I know this sounds super basic, but ask yourself...what is the product or service I am selling, and do I have a system for taking payments? If you’re not clear on what it is you’re offering, and a payment system (cash and check, credit cards, paypal, etc.)...then when we go to make your online brochure (your website), we won’t know what to put on it!

3. Is it necessary?

“Well, everyone needs a website, right?” Let’s take a look at this. Is what your selling NEED a website to continue to be sold? Do you have a small microbusiness selling ethically and organically crafted skin products? Are you consistently sold out, and don’t need any more customers? What will you get out of creating a website? In this scenario, maybe its for FUTURE income stability. (You want to get your name out there, so that if for some reason you have the need to bring in more income, you have a digital platform set up and ready to do so.) Here’s some ideas to think about, if you’re not sure your business NEEDS a website.

[Is your small business READY for a website?](#)
[Signs your small business website is OUTDATED >](#)

4. What can I joyfully pay/afford to pay?

This is an important question. To start, is your business doing well enough (or do you have enough savings) to afford \$15/month or \$120-\$160/year for just paying your hosting and domain services? (Let along a designer to make the initial site). Most of the sites I do are between \$300-\$600.

The price of a site is so variable because of a number of reasons. (How much back-and-forth we need to do, how detail oriented you are, how many photos you're wanting or needing, if there's more complex needs such as an online store, booking system, member area, etc.) It could also be cheaper than that! What can you joyfully afford to pay? (p.s. I always ask what your ideal budget will be, and I'm open to payment plans!)

Another way to look at this is...what stage of business am I in? Is this the BEST NEXT STEP that will help me grow my tree into a fruiting, shade-providing plant? If so, you can always set your budget with what's realistic, and add to the design or content later once you have more cash flow! Your website doesn't have to be perfect before it starts working for you.

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