



22 Benefits of a Website for Businesses



In an era of social media, sometimes business owners may think that having a website is unnecessary, but that couldn't be further away from the truth.

It is relatively easy to create a social media profile such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, or LinkedIn. However, it is incredibly important to have a “home base” from which all your social accounts can link back. As a matter of fact: VeriSign found that 84% of surveyed customers said they believed a business with a website is more credible than one with only a social media page.

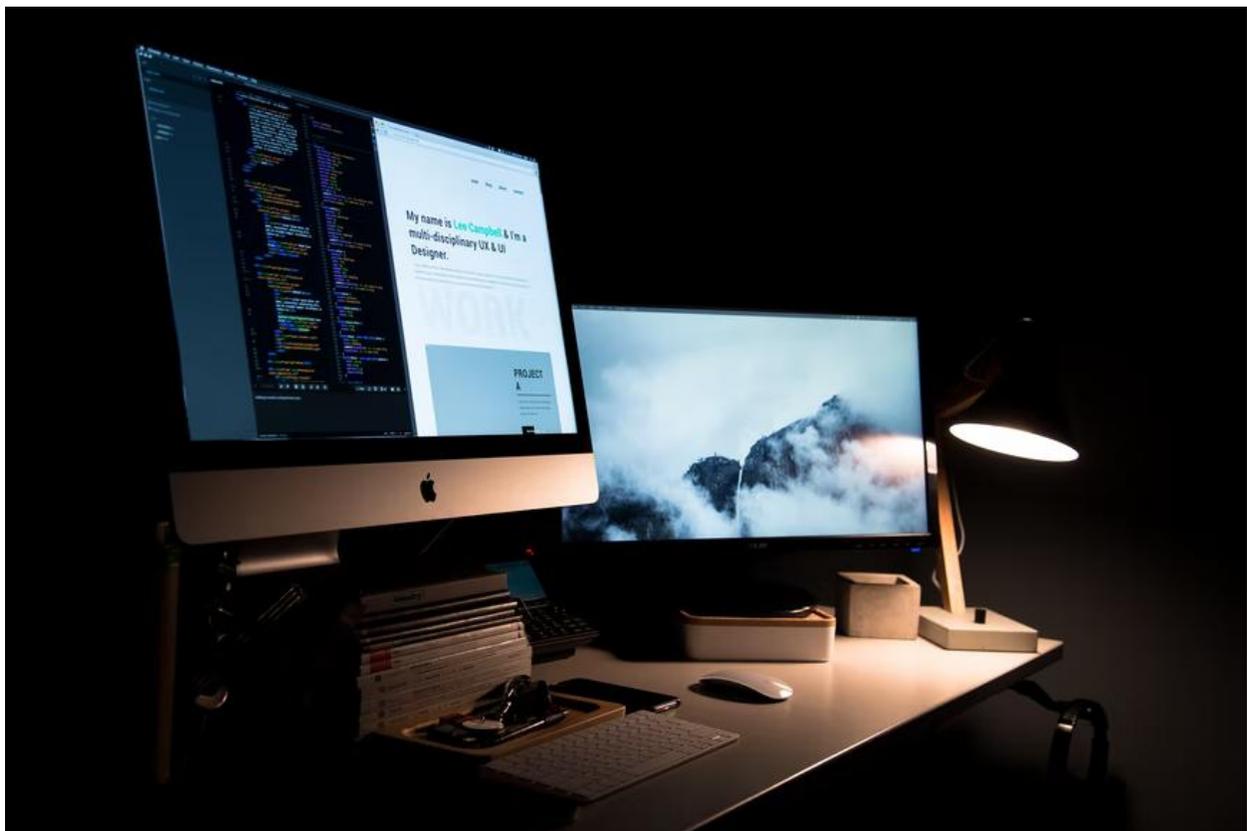
It was also found that over 40% of businesses in 2016 did not have a website.

Thus, merely having a website could put you a step ahead of your competition. A site is one more way to be driving more customers, revenue, and overall value to your business.

Top Ways A Website Benefits A Company

Here is twenty-two of the top benefits of having a website for your small business, along with some ideas on how to get the most out of it:

Look Professional



Rather than just being the “corner shop” down the street, having a website (especially a well-made one) gives the impression that you are serious, and ready to do business with all kinds of customers. It lends to the credibility mentioned in the survey result above.

Become An Information Resource

If your business is in something of a niche industry, having a website is an excellent opportunity to build your reputation as an authority in your field.



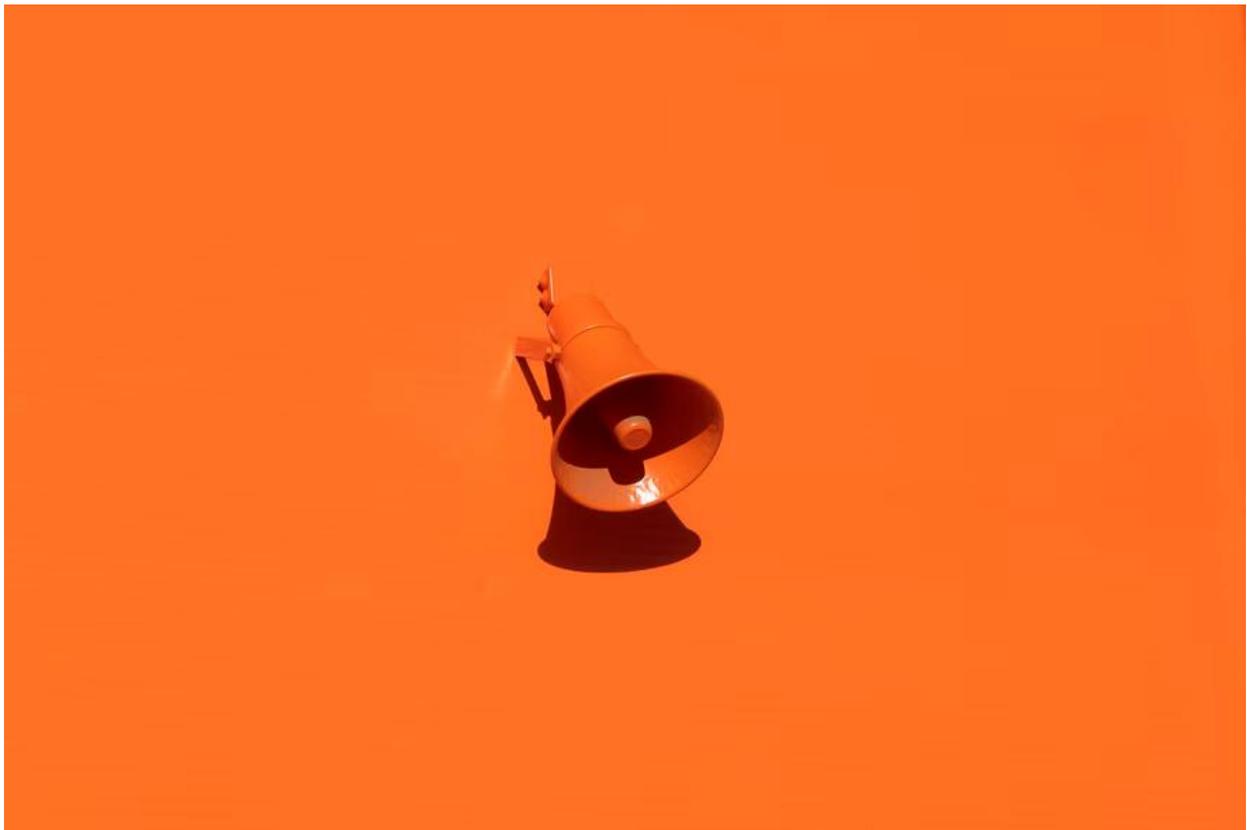
Create a blog section on your site with informative articles that take advantage of your experience. Potential customers doing web searches on common problems related to your industry will be more likely to find you – and after they read your blog articles, they'll see how helpful you can be for them.

According to one survey, 61% of consumers reported that a blog influenced their decision to make a purchase. Even if those who read these blog posts don't become customers right away, you've spread the name of your business without spending a dime on traditional advertising.

Whenever possible, mention in your blog posts your services and a description. For example, if you are a mechanic and your blogs include multiple mentions of “affordable car checkups,” anyone searching that phrase has a higher likelihood of discovering your website.

Own Your Name

Creating a site and buying a domain name (www.businessexample.com) helps stake your claim to your business’s name, and is a quick and easy way to improve your brand identity.



You can also get a unique business email that will add to that sense of branding as well (yourname@businessexample.com). In a 2015 VeriSign survey, 65% of customers said they regard a company-branded email is more credible than a business using a

generic email account. Many website creation companies will include custom email addresses as part of their offerings.

Improve SEO Rankings



When you search online through sites like Google, Bing, or Yahoo you will see a list of websites with answers to your request. There are SEO (Search Engine Optimization) tactics that you can apply to your company website to improve its rankings on those search engines.

Not having a website makes it a lot more difficult for your company to rank and gain free traffic and sales from search engines.



Increase Leads From Online



Gaining visitors to your website is good, but gaining customers is even better! With a well-optimized website, you get your potential leads to call, sign up, or purchase a product from your company. You can turn your website into a leading salesperson for your company.

Develop A Mailing List

Once you have a website built, add a form for people to sign up for your mailing list. You now have an easily accessed database of potential customers to advertise to. According to one study, email marketing can be up to 40 times more effective in acquiring new customers than social media.

Save Money on Printing

Paper catalogs and brochures can still be helpful in point-of-sale situations, but what if item information changes? It is much easier to have all relevant info on your website, where it will be much cheaper to edit and revise.



A combination of print and web marketing materials will likely be the most cost-effective way forward.

These savings can apply to marketing costs as well. A traditional full-page ad in a smaller regional newspaper can cost around \$1000 or more. Running a website can only cost a few hundred dollars a year.



Be Where Your Customers Are. They're On The Web.

The research appears to be convincing. The data shows that the web is almost everywhere.

- According to a 2015 study: about 43% of the entire planet's population, over 3 billion people, have internet access.
- In the US: a study from March 2018 found that only 11% of Americans **do not** use the internet. That means that most Americans have internet access, across all demographics (including income).

Even having a fundamental website is helpful. For many people, if they can't find it online, it doesn't exist as far as they are concerned.



Being on the web means being able to reach people where they are. That includes smartphones:

- Another study from 2015 found that 64% of American adults own a smartphone.

- In a 2013 study, about half of smartphone owners were using their devices to shop online.

Most websites these days can automatically alter themselves to fit both smartphones and desktop computers. If most of your customers seem to always have a smartphone in their hand, then it is a good idea to be able to reach them directly.

Tell Your Story

Having a webpage on your site dedicated to a section like “Company History” is a way to humanize your business. Research has shown that “feeling good” about a brand or business has the potential to increase purchases.



TECHNOLOGIES

Here is where being a small business can be an immediate strength. Run a family business started by mom or dad? Been around for decades? Let people know about it, and build their trust.

Displaying a sense of creativity and personality can be an advantage not available to a large, committee-run company.

Create A New Selling Opportunity via Mail-Order & eCommerce

If your business sells products that can be delivered by mail-order, consider investing in an online shopping and checkout section of your website.



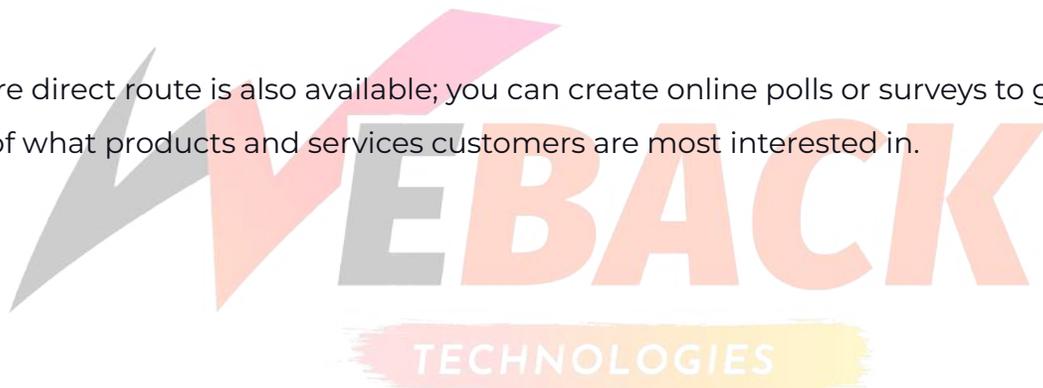
Some companies will build this section for you. You may be able to reach an entirely new set of customers who do not live directly near your retail locations. Depending on the nature of your business, you may have the entire planet as potential customers.

Get Data

You might already have an idea of what the average foot traffic is like in a brick-and-mortar location, but having a website can help give you an idea of the broader reach of your business. If you have different web pages dedicated to different products or services you provide, you can use web visitor data to find which is drawing the most attention.



A more direct route is also available; you can create online polls or surveys to get an idea of what products and services customers are most interested in.



Easy Access to Product Info and Customer Service

Working with your staff and product distributors, you can provide as much detail on products and services as you want. Email forms and contact info can help even a small business build out a more professionally-styled customer service system.



A recent development is semi-automated chatbots that can be placed on a website, performing the same essential function an operator would on a major company 1-800 customer service phone number. Customer service is now available for your clients at any time.

More Informed Customers

Following the above: less time will be spent by staff explaining the basics of a product or service to inquiring customers. If they are not at your store, you can

directly refer them to your website if they have any additional questions. Those customers who like to “kick the tires” before purchasing will be able to do as much advance reading on product info as they want.

A 24/7/365 Showroom, For Everything

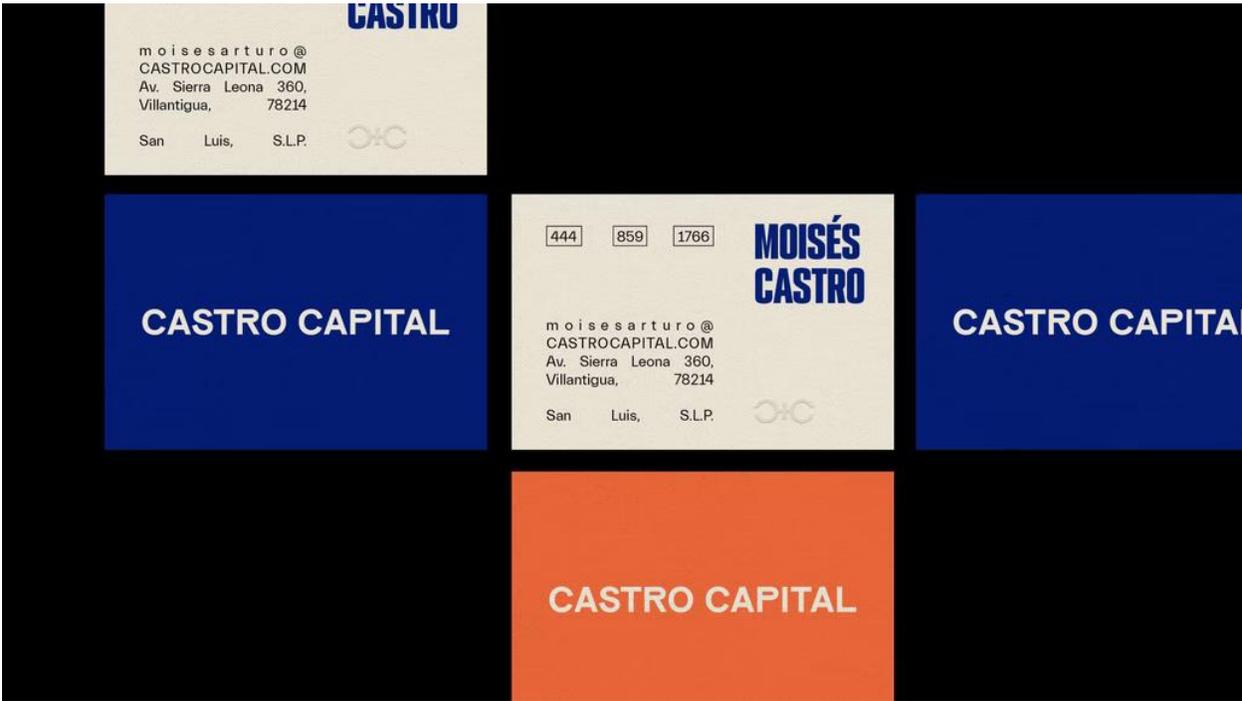
If you have a business that has limited floor space for your products, your problems can be solved with a website. You have virtually unlimited space to list all your products in as much detail as you want, and potential customers can read up on them at any time. Working with manufacturers and distributors, you can include high-quality photo galleries for products.



Your virtual showroom never has to close either. A 2013 study found mobile device owners, especially those with tablets (such as iPads), tended to make purchases late at night (from 9 pm onwards).

Leave an Extra Impression: Traditional Branding + Your Website

Place your website address on all your existing promotional material (business cards, brochures, etc.). You could see a boost in sales. For example: even if someone who picked up a piece of product literature isn't planning to buy it right away, you have planted a seed.



When they get serious about making a purchase, your material (with your website) is right there under their noses. Your site is likely where they'll now start their product research in earnest. When you combine traditional promotional materials with the added resource of your website, your business is more likely to “stick” in customers' minds.



Help Train Staff

If you've taken the time to build out a website with detailed info about products and services, you now have an information resource that is available for you to use internally. You can direct new employees to specific web pages and give them the "homework" of reading up on the products they will be selling.

Create Return Business By Always Being "Findable"

Business cards and brochures can sometimes be lost. Harder to lose? A bookmark in a customer's web browser. This "permanency" can also assist in word of mouth, customer-to-customer referrals (more details on this further below)

Attract New Staff

Create a "Careers" or "Job Opportunities" webpage on your site. You'll be able to get potential job candidates to come to you, rather than spending time trying to recruit employees or spending money placing listings on job websites.

Easy To Create

Unlike in the early days of the internet, you do not need to know computer code or HTML to make an impressive-looking website. For a very modest investment, [web design companies](#) are a "one-stop-shop" that can handle all the technical details for you. Most have a variety of customizable templates to choose from. Building a website is now very easy — and affordable.

Promote Your Brick and Mortar Locations

This might seem counterintuitive, but having a website may help increase foot traffic at your brick-and-mortar locations. Having basic info like store locations, addresses,

hours, and phone numbers on your website creates a data footprint that will be picked up by search engines.



The next time someone looks for your store online, they are then more likely to be greeted by search results that include your store details. This is especially important for potential customers using smartphones. Even if they are “on the go,” they can search your business, find your address, and quickly input it into their GPS software.

Quicker Referrals

Here is an example of how having a website for your small business can lead to quick referrals. If your business comes up in a conversation between a former customer and a friend of theirs, what is the first thing they will likely try to do? They will search the business on the web. If you have a website up and running, they are very likely to

find you rapidly. This builds upon what was discussed earlier regarding improving your brand identity. Having your business on the web can help lead to growth.

Create An Online Portfolio: Awards, Reviews, and Testimonials

Has your company won an industry award? Make sure it is mentioned on your website.



If you have happy customers, take advantage of it. You can utilize positive customer reviews and testimonials directly on your website. You can even create a dedicated webpage section to showcase a “portfolio” of your work (with photos if applicable), along with reviews. Building a groundswell of positive reviews that are easy to find on your business’s website is yet another way to distinguish you from your competition.