

# Bland to Brilliant: 50 Things Your Website Needs to Attract More Clients



Your website is your storefront. In many cases it provides a prospect's first impression of your company. You know what they say about first impressions; you can only make one and it better count. The good news is that keeping in mind a few fundamentals and making a few simple tweaks to your website can take it from bland to brilliant. You can create a website that attracts visitors, converts clients, and helps you build a prosperous and exciting business.

## 1. Invitation To Friend/Follow On Social Media

Social media is more than a trend or a tactic that you can use to build an audience. It's as essential for most industries as a website itself. And merely having a social media "presence" isn't enough; you have to let people know you're active on social media by inviting them to interact.

There are many ways to accomplish this; one of the simplest is to extend an invitation – "Follow me on Facebook," for example, and include a link to your page.

## 2. Professional Quality Logo/Header

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The world of Internet marketing is vast and competitive. While you can create your own blog header, you should probably leave it to the professionals unless you happen to be a design whiz. Make an investment in your brand and your business by creating a strong and relevant header and logo to represent your business.

## **3. Easy To Navigate**

Make sure your visitors can find their way around your website quickly and easily. If you're uncertain about how to accomplish this, then study websites that you visit often. Notice how they guide you through the site. Do they provide relevant and easy to recognize navigation tabs? Does the flow of the site seem logical? Is there a search function so you can head directly to the page or information you're looking for?

## **4. Interaction / Comments**

Does your website invite visitors to comment on your articles and blog posts? One of the best ways to not only measure engagement, but to also create it, is to take a look at the level of interaction on your site. With WordPress you can turn comments on and off and you can allow comments for a specific period of time.

Some business owners choose to not allow comments, but if you don't then you may be selling your visitors short. Engage them in conversation and invite interaction and comments. You'll not only learn a lot about your audience, you'll help build a loyal community of customers.

Another option is to include Facebook comments. That way the conversation on your blog is continued on Facebook, where more people are likely to see and interact.

## **5. Social Bookmarking**

Social bookmarking not only adds value to your visitors and prospects, it also helps boost your traffic and brand awareness. By adding a social bookmarking function to your site, your visitors can bookmark using the bookmarking service of their choice. There are several top quality WordPress plugins that make social bookmarking easy. You can add buttons for the primary sites like Reddit and Pinterest. When someone bookmarks your site it's added to their account, where other users can browse and share. Be sure you're featuring the bookmarking sites that appeal most to your audience.

## **6. Fresh and Catchy Content**

The single most important thing you can do to transform from bland to brilliant is to create the best content possible. Fresh content means that your content is recent and it's topical.

You're not creating content about something that happened five years ago or even five months ago. You're creating content about what's going on right now. And catchy content varies depending on your niche and your audience.

The most important thing to remember when contemplating what makes something catchy is what voice and style you want to communicate to your readers. Are you serious? Funny? Controversial? What makes your content interesting, different, and valuable to your reader?

## **7. Archives With Clearly Distinguishable Keywords**

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This function is particularly important if you have a blog or other WordPress based website. Make finding information easy for your visitors by creating archives. Archives are essentially directories for old content.

No one wants to search through page after page of old content just to find something they're looking for. They want to be able to find what they need with a few clicks of their mouse. Use keywords that accurately describe the subject of the content to organize your archives.

## **8. Search Field**

It doesn't matter what the foundation is for your website – Joomla or WordPress or anything in between – it is important to make it fully usable by anyone who visits. One of the simple tools you can use to make this happen is a simple search field. It was briefly mentioned in Item #3 above, where navigation was discussed. There are different search tools you can use.

For example, Custom Search Plugin is a WordPress plugin that allows you to create custom searches. Maybe you want people to be able to search for quotes or tips on your site. You can use this tool to add functionality to your website and to help separate your business site from your competition.

## **9. Inquiry Form**

What do you want people to do when they're at your site and they have a question? You might already have a FAQ page (hopefully you do), but what if the answer to a visitor's question isn't on that page? Ideally, you want your visitor to be able to reach out and ask their question. This keeps them engaged and connected to your business.

To make this happen, it has to be easy for them to contact you. One of the simplest ways to accomplish this is to have a contact form or an inquiry form on your site. They enter their email address, subject line, and ask their question. You or your customer service assistant receives the message and can promptly respond.

## **10. FAQ Page**

FAQ stands for Frequently Asked Questions. Including an FAQ page on your website helps make it more user friendly. Create a list of the most common questions you receive and turn it into a separate page on your site. Make sure that like all your other valuable pages, this FAQ page is easy to find and read. As you receive more questions, you can add to the page.

Also, consider occasionally linking to other important internal pages. This can accomplish two things. It can help keep your visitor on your website longer. And it can help boost the rankings for the page you're linking to.

When you're creating your FAQ content remember to make it valuable and easy to understand, and don't forget to include your unique voice in the content. If you're witty when you create blog posts then be witty when you create your FAQ page. Consistency helps strengthen your brand.

## **11. List Of Awards Earned and/or Recognitions**

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For example, "Best of the Web" winners proudly display their award logo right on the landing page of their sites.

If you haven't won any awards or received any relevant recognitions, that's okay. You're certainly not alone. Consider including a campaign to win an award in your business planning. Get involved in your industry and get acknowledged.

## 12. **Media Page**

Do you have a media page? A media page is designed to help provide the media with the essential information they need. Approach it with the belief that the media will come looking for you and will want to learn more about your business. Here are just a few of the elements to include on your media page:

- Company Mission and History
- Product List
- Company Bios
- Company News and Press Releases
- Brochures, Logos, Images

## 13. **Competition – Get People Involved**

Competition has the tendency to ignite a fire of attention and sales. There are many ways you can use competition to add fun and flare to your business. For example, you might use it to build awareness of your Facebook page.

For example, anyone who "likes" your page could be automatically entered into a drawing to win a prize. Another type of competition gets your prospects involved and contributing, so you might have them share a story that's relevant to your niche and readers can vote on whose is the best story. They could create videos too.

## 14. **Top Quality Free Downloads**

Freebies are appreciated by just about everyone. However, they can't be the average run of the mill freebies. Your free content needs to provide unique value to each prospect. It should solve a problem in an organized and efficient manner. Some of the best freebie downloads are simple.

For example, you might create a calendar, checklist, or even a downloadable worksheet for your prospects to fill out. Remember to brand your free downloads and use them to gently drive traffic to a sales page or the next item in your sales funnel.

## 15. **Relationships With Relevant Industry Professionals**

Relationships are what build business. You have relationships with your customers and prospects, your vendors, contractors and much more. Each relationship is an opportunity to leverage, grow, and prosper. Relationships with relevant industry professionals can be significant.

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For example, imagine if you have a pet blog and you forge a relationship with Cesar Millan (the “Dog Whisperer”) who links to your site or mentions you on Facebook. That would be huge for your business. And you don’t have to forge relationships with industry celebrities to make an impact. Connecting with others builds your community, one person at a time.

## 16. **Contributor Content**

Let other people create content for you. Each guest blogger, interview, or contributing author brings their audience with them. You’ll gain traffic and followers. You’ll also gain credibility by providing your prospects with a variety of valuable content.

## 17. **Community Involvement**

What are you doing to make the world a better place? Getting involved in your community is great for business. It not only promotes you locally, it provides you with content to share online as well. And you can invite your prospects to get involved in your community causes.

For example, if you have a pet related business you might get involved in a fundraiser for your local humane society and invite others to donate or get involved themselves.

## 18. **A Newsletter**

Email marketing is still one of the most powerful means to connect with your prospects, build relationships and make sales. However, your email newsletter has to be valuable. Make sure it provides different value than your website content. And separate that content so that newsletter subscribers receive unique value.

## 19. **Membership Option**

Have you ever considered offering a membership for your business? Members receive exclusive content, products or services, or promotions. You can charge for the membership or offer it for free. The choice depends largely on your audience, niche, and goals. Consider offering a membership option for your site to help broaden your offerings and set your website apart from your competition.

## 20. **Events**

Hosting events is a great way to not only attract attention to your business but get people involved with your business – events creates relationships. Consider hosting regular events and adding a promotional banner on your site to generate interest and attendance. You can host regular monthly webinars, chats, and other events to educate and promote at the same time.

## 21. **Optimized Sign Up Offer**

How do you motivate people to sign up for your newsletter? A great sign up offer can do the trick. There are many options to consider. You can give away a free report or ebook. You can provide a free online tutorial, video series, or access to behind the scenes audio recordings.

Create a fabulous offer to motivate subscribers and publish that offer in a prominent location on your website. Experiment to see what type of opt-in form works best. Some people have great luck with pop-ups, while others find that the

prominent location on your website. Experiment to see what type of opt-in form works best. Some people have great luck with pop-ups, while others find that the upper right hand corner of their website works best.

## 22. **Mobile App**

There are more than a billion smartphone users around the world. And according to Smart Insights, global mobile traffic now represents roughly 51% of all Internet traffic. You can capitalize on this growing trend by creating a mobile application for your business and promoting it on your website. Offer it for free or charge a fee and include it in your product catalog.

At the very least – be sure your website looks great and is useable on mobile. If you don't, you run the risk of losing readers **and** dropping in the search rankings.

## 23. **Testimonials**

Testimonials are money in the bank. They're mini sales pitches made on your behalf by a satisfied customer. Who better to promote you and sell your services than an unbiased customer? Use these testimonials wisely and place them strategically on your website.

## 24. **Social Media Widgets**

You're active on social media right? You can add social media functionality into your website. Social media widgets can invite people to join you on your chosen sites. Social media widgets can also display your activity on your favorite sites. For example, if you have a Pinterest account you can add a Pinterest widget to your site and display your latest pins.

## 25. **Newsfeed**

Use newsfeeds to display the latest industry news. Help keep people coming back to your site for information and to provide them with many levels of value.

## 26. **Webinars**

You can take your website up a level by offering webinars and using the tool to provide teaching opportunities to your prospects and customers. You can even use material from the webinars as the foundation for new content on your website.

## 27. **Great Headlines for Everything**

Headlines have an important role to play, and the more compelling and relevant they are the better. They'll pull your prospect to your content. Practice writing headlines. Test headlines to determine what your prospects respond to.

## 28. **Exceptionally Effective Calls To Action**

Include a call to action in every single piece of content you publish on your website – even if you merely want someone to stay on your site and read some more. Tell your visitors what to do next and help guide them through your site step by step.

## 29. **Have You Written A Book?**

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If you've written a book then list it on your website. Promote it and use it to help establish you as a credible resource.

### 30. **Have You Been Featured On The News?**

If you've had the opportunity to be featured on the news then share the logo of that show on your website. Imagine how powerful "As Seen on CNN" could be to grow your business.

### 31. **Do You Have Credentials?**

What are your credentials? What makes you an exceptional source of information, services or products? Include your credentials on your website in the form of a biography or on your "About" page.

### 32. **Clear Brand**

What's your brand? Is it strong and apparent on your website? You can use your colors, logo, header, buttons, graphics, and the voice of your content to help build and establish your brand.

### 33. **Obvious Target Market**

Who is your target market, and when they visit your site is it obvious that you're talking to them? Your target market are the people who your products and services are designed to help. They're the people whose problems you solve.

If you're unsure who your target market is, then it's time to conduct some research. Take a look both at the demographics and psychographics of your customers. What do they have in common? Create an ideal prospect and then craft your website to appeal to that ideal prospect.

### 34. **About Page**

Your "About" page can include a number of pieces of information. Consider including information about your company's vision and mission. You can also include a bio or staff, although those are often best left to a separate page. You might include the company history and your purpose.

### 35. **Contact Page**

The contact page is simple enough yet it is very important. It should include your contact information even if it's already been published elsewhere on your site. Include name, phone numbers, email addresses and physical address. Also consider including any social media links on this page.

### 36. **Video And Welcome Audio**

Video and audio have become primary means of communication online. YouTube, Vimeo and other social video sites have changed the way we interact online. People enjoy being able to put a face with a business. They also like to hear your voice. Consider including both video and audio content on your site. You might even include a simple welcome message embedded into your landing page and/or sales page.

### 37. **A Way For People To Give Money**

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Are you passionate about a cause? There are many ways you can integrate your cause into your business website. Taking this step not only helps raise money for something you believe in, it can help build your business.

A simple plug-in to help people click and donate, or a link to a cause you believe in, helps identify your business as a socially responsible one. More and more consumers are choosing socially aware businesses.

Additionally, if you have environmentally friendly practices then take time to identify those on your website. Sustainability is not just a buzzword; it's an approach that consumers respond to.

### **38. USP**

USP stands for unique selling proposition. It's what makes you different. How do you separate yourself from your competition? What do you do better or differently from them? Integrate your USP into your voice, branding, and content online.

### **39. RSS Feed**

RSS is a means of syndicating your content. It allows others to subscribe to your site and automatically receive new content and/or blog posts in their email inbox or via their favorite reader like Feedly. It's ideal if you can offer both reader RSS and email RSS so that your visitors have a choice.

### **40. New Products and/or Services**

One of the best ways to make your business website stand out from your competition and really take hold is to create a steady stream of top quality products or services. Create a launch plan that provides you with the ability to talk about new products or services often, to discuss pending launches, and to offer promotions. It keeps things exciting and of course it helps your bottom line.

### **41. SEO**

SEO is search engine optimization. It's the strategy and toolbox of tactics that drive traffic to your website. There are many tactics to embrace including linking, keywords, content, social media and more.

### **42. Analytics**

Analytics will not only help you fine tune your SEO strategy, it'll help you build stronger relationships, better understand your clients and prospects, and it will help you create highly targeted content. Analytics is essentially a program that helps track every single visitor activity on your website.

Google offers a free version of analytics software that is easy to use. You embed the code into your blog or website and then you can track your website activity. You can see which pages receive the most visits, where your visitors come from and much more. Analytics is an essential tool for any serious business owner.

### **43. Relevant and Strong Outbound Links**

Many people are frightened of outbound links. They're worried that they will be sending their visitors away. The key to good outbound links is to link to websites that are complimentary and that you have a relationship with.

For example, if you have a dog training blog you might link to your favorite dog



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For example, if you have a dog training blog you might link to your favorite dog toys website or your favorite dog breed information site. Choose relevant sites that aren't in direct competition with you. These outbound links should also only be with professionals that you have a connection with. Ideally they'll also help promote you by linking to your site or by promoting you on social media.

#### **44. Controversial Content – Share Your Opinion**

Some blogs seem to thrive on controversy. Others avoid it like the plague. There is a happy medium. Consider adding the occasional opinion piece. Surely you have strong opinions about matters in your industry, and chances are your prospects and customers do too. By sharing your opinion in a professional and interesting way, you engage conversation and can create a lot of traffic and interest for your site.

#### **45. Pictures**

Do your prospects and customers know what you look like? Add a picture to your website and show them. Make it a professional image that represents you and your brand. If you have a team of employees or even contractors that your clients may interact with frequently then consider adding photos of them on your "About" page or contact page.

#### **46. Promotional Offer**

Ideally you'll always have something going on, something that you can promote. You don't need to have a fire sale every other week; in fact, that's generally not a great idea. However, a relevant and valuable promotion can create interest for your company. There are many opportunities for promotions including new product launches, sales, and holidays.

#### **47. Referral or Affiliate Program**

Word of mouth marketing is one of the best forms of marketing because it doesn't come from you. It comes from satisfied customers. Consider creating a referral program for your business. You can reward referrals with money, discounts or add ones.

You might also consider creating an affiliate program. An affiliate program pays others a commission based on sales they send your way. It requires some additional legwork because you'll want to provide them with materials to be successful, but it can pay off generously.

#### **48. Security**

Make sure your customers' information is protected by an appropriate level of technology. Using a secure shopping cart and payment system. Make sure your customers know they're protected by sharing your security protocol and policies. If you have SSL (Secure Socket Layer), then tell them you have it by displaying the logo.

#### **49. Fast Load Times**

Invest in a good webhost and make sure the graphics you're uploading aren't so large they slow down load times. People are impatient and generally won't wait more than a few seconds for a site to load.

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## 50. **Visual Interest**

With good design elements and attractive and relevant graphics strategically placed throughout, you'll create a website that is beautiful to look at as well as useful. Work with a designer to get an attractive and balanced site.

There you have it! 50 ways you can improve your website and make it stand out from your competition. Start with a few of these changes and gradually implement more of them as can. Each step you take helps your business grow, provides value to your visitors and prospects, and attracts more people to you and your wonderful Internet based business.