



Web Design & Marketing For Local Business

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The book cover has a light blue background. At the top, the title "28 THINGS AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS OWNERS" is written in large, bold, dark blue capital letters. To the right of the title is an illustration of a kangaroo standing on a laptop screen, with the Australian flag as the background. Below the title, the subtitle "Should Know to Maximise their Business Exposure Online" is written in bold black text. At the bottom of the cover, there is a photograph of a man in a dark suit and white shirt, shouting into a large megaphone. The Ozwebworx logo is positioned in the bottom right corner of the cover area.

Compliments of Ozwebworx

Introduction

Why should your brick and mortar business bother being on the internet?

My first question is "how's the Yellow Pages working for you these days ?

Are you still paying hundreds , if not thousands, to have your business listed in the Yellow Pages because you believe that is what you, as a business owner, should do to get new customers /clients ?

It is my opinion, the Yellow Pages behemoth era has come , not coming, to a close. They [Yellow Pages] are trying to catch up with their online listing offer. But the truth is most people under 60 years of age are 'Googling' for the products and services they are wanting to buy and the Yellow Pages experience is,, more often than not, failing the "10 second satisfaction" test. Meaning that you usually have between 3 and 10 seconds to grab the attention of shoppers landing at your website ... to then have the opportunity to turn them into customers.

Yellow Pages have too many steps for customers to get the information they are searching for.

1. Going to Yellow Pages site.
2. Searching within Yellow Pages.
3. Clicking the link to the business information. Most times there isn't much more information than a phone number and address and one of the main reasons people 'google' for businesses is that they want to know more about the goods, services, pricing, trading times etc. before they take further steps. Consumers are now looking online first to see if you are a 'good fit' for them, usually before they step out their front door.

If you do have a Yellow Pages listing and you have a website make sure your web address is within your Yellow Pages online information as, depending on some variables, Yellow Pages for your search terms, industry, may be on the Google page #1 and it can frustrate online potential customers if all there is is an address and phone number, to them it has just been a waste of time.

** Update : Yellow Pages now have an App for your smartphone which is definitely a step in the right direction but I'm guessing international tourists aren't going to be downloading it when they visit Australia.

Googling is now in the dictionary. Here's an excerpt from dictionary. com

Google

[**goo-guh** l] [Show IPA](#) **noun, verb, Goo-gled, Goo-gling.**

noun *Trademark.*

1.

brand [name](#) of a leading Internet search engine, founded in 1998.

verb (used with object)

2.

(*often lowercase*) to search the Internet for information about (a person, topic, etc.): *We googled the new applicant to check her background.*

verb (used without object)

3.

(*often lowercase*) to use a search [engine](#) such as Google to find information, a Web site address, etc., on the Internet.

Origin: 1998; after mathematical term [googol](#)

And the majority of those **searches are from mobile devices**. In fact, there are now more mobile phones than people on the planet ! Kind of scary but a fact none-the-less. Another thing to consider is that Google is now penalising web sites which don't have a **mobile alternative**. Google is in the business of **giving their customers the best search experience possible**. So when someone is googling and using a mobile device Google will place your link further down the page ranking if you don't have a site that is mobile friendly..... so you could be basically invisible. page 3+, which is essentially, the black hole of the search engine.

Consumers are now comparing businesses' services and goods before they even leave their house. They get directions using either a GPS or most likely a Google map that is on the website of the business that they wish to visit.

The key things that should be on your website



You should have an alternative mobile optimised website , in other words, Fat Finger Friendly. Mobile sites are not (should not) be a complete version of your main website, but with the most important or relevant information and function and with a link to your main site if they so choose to visit.

Due to the great increase in the use of mobile devices most web sites built these days are now what is known as 'responsive', meaning that when someone visits your website, it automatically recognises if they are using a mobile device and adjust the lay-out to suit.

These web sites are fine for simple sites but for places like restaurants where there are menus it is wiser to have a dedicated mobile site. These are totally separate websites created with ease of use on a small screen and functionality as its main focus and design to suit the particular business / company needs.

Ideally your mobile site should have at least these features :



Large 'Tap to Call' button. These are easily seen & used by your customer. It stands out and is large enough for fingers not to accidentally hit a wrong link, which causes frustration. You have approximately 3 - 10 seconds to grab their attention and frustrating them could send them to your competitors.





Large icons on the home page linking to your mobile pages i.e.. Menus, Location, contact.



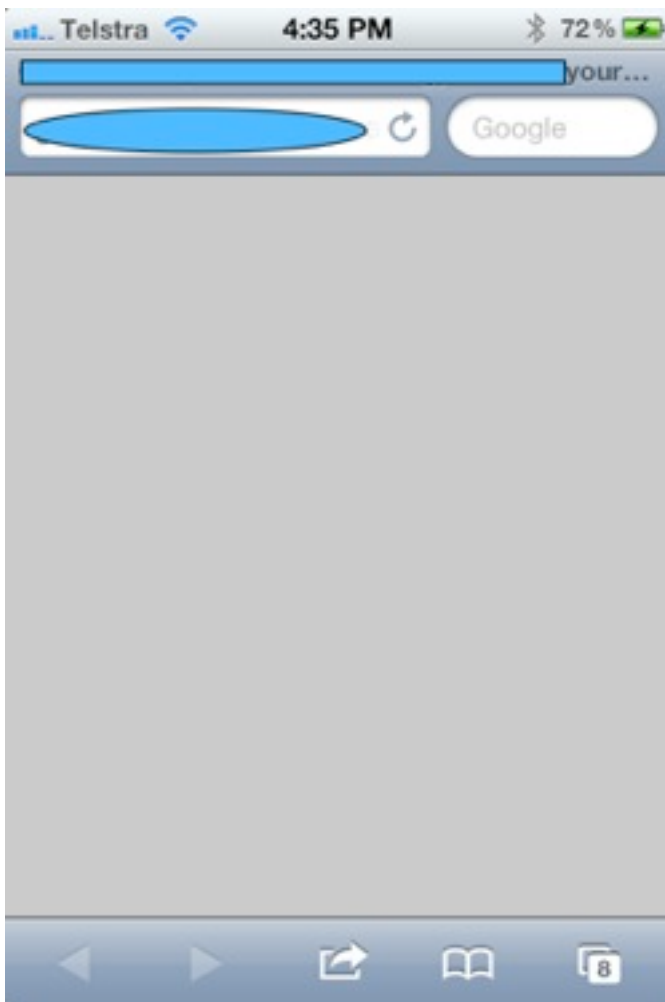
Your mobile site should **not be stuffed with all your information from your main website**. If your customers require all the information you have to offer then they can tap the link which takes them directly to your main site.



- On your Location page, a Google Map with input bars to **give them directions** from where they currently are to where you are.

-  A contact page with at least an email form. Always answer these messages in a timely manner, preferably within 12 hours. Places like restaurants will need to check their emails every hour or two or have a system, like [Awayfind](#), in place where they are notified on their mobile phone the moment an email from their website form is sent.
-  Do not use the what is known as 'Adobe Flash' (which is a favoured animation program), in the design. If you do, some people on an Apple mobile device (it will work on a desktop / laptop) will only see a grey screen....

Like so.....



The image above actually belongs to a computer sales and repair shop. You see , they specialise in computer hardware, not web design and marketing.....



Your website should be easy to read and pleasant to look at but don't compromise function for prettiness. Bottom line is **you have a website to assist you in making money.**

In the same way, *I* would never get *me* to fix or replace your computer motherboard. It's kinda' like going to a proctologist to get your tonsils removed, they're both doctors, right?But different disciplines of medicine.

Hints if you don't already have a website for your business:



First work out what you what your website to **do**. Do you want to sell direct from your site ? If so, then you will want to have an e-commerce site with a shopping cart and a site that is secure, you've probably noticed that some websites you've visited have a URL (Universal Resource Locator or web address) starting with this - **https://** . This means that you are on a secure site and your sensitive information, like credit card details, are protected.



Will you need a lot of images ? Will they need editing to make them web friendly ?



How many pages will you need ? Home page, Location, Contact, Products, Services, Menus



Do you want to create a mailing list? (you should).



Will you have links to a Facebook page ? Do you have a Facebook **Business page** ? (you should).



Will you require regular or frequent changes to your site? Like adding new items, removing sold items, changing menus etc ? If so, can you do this yourself or will you need someone to do it for you? You may need to budget for this.



Do you want video on your site? (Google loves video)



Will you require an online booking system, say for a B&B or restaurant?



Do you want to interact with your customers or clients like having a blog or chat room?



Do you have a budget for a website? A good way to know how much to budget for is to know your Customer Lifetime Value. For your convenience you may use the Ozwebworx free CLV calculator at <http://ozwebworx.com.au/clv> . Once you know this value then you will know how many customers it will take to cover the cost of your website.

Things your website should have or do



Your website is a great way to show people who you are, your style, your story. So having an 'About' page is the spot to rant about yourself and your business, not the home page. people searching for goods and services are basically interested in what you can do **for them.**



If appropriate have a FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) page. If you are asked the same questions over and over having a FAQ page can save you and your staff a lot of time and money by **answering a mountainous amount of questions** in a hands off mode which leaves you more time to answer and deal with unique queries or challenges.



Have an email opt-in box to create and grow a mailing list.



Give directions to your place of business by having a 'Location' page with a Google map and input boxes for customers to get directions from where they currently are, at home, on the road.



Make sure you never have an old footer (bottom of the page) date i.e. It's 2013 and the date you have on your site 2010. This tells people that not much action happens on your web site and therefore your business must be the same, not very popular. When I visit a site in 2013 and the footer date is 2011, I move on to the next business site.



Use email addresses with your website domain i.e. bill@ yoursite.com au / sales@ your site .com. **Never use free email addresses like Hotmail and Yahoo** on your site or business cards, it does not look professional and people may wonder why you use a what's known as a 'throw-away' (free) email account. That

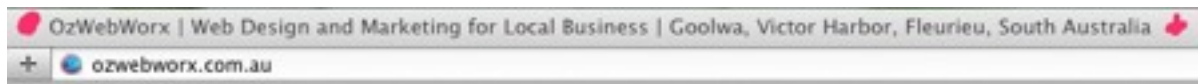
being said, it is a good idea to have some free email addresses for certain situations, but I will cover that in a future report. I do, however, recommend Gmail.com for free email addresses, again Gmail has so many useful functions and options that I will cover that in a future report.



When choosing a domain name having your place, suburb as part of it can help with your search engine (Google) ranking. For example: smithautomechanicsgoolwa .com .au . Another thing to consider when you are choosing a domain name is to work out if you are going global or strictly operating in Australia. If global then I would choose a .com (no .au) Having both can be an advantage with one domain redirecting to the other, thereby getting all traffic where people have *guessed* your domain name.



Make full use of the webpage title bar (at the top of the web page.) [see image below] Have your business name and anything else that may be useful for the search engines i.e. Smith Auto Mechanics | Goolwa | Toyota Specialists.



Use keywords and phrases (have this list ready for your web designer) List any words your prospective customers may use to find your goods and services i.e. mechanic goolwa, auto air conditioner specialist, fleurieu auto mechanic, ... create your list of words, each word or phrase followed by a comma and a space before the next word or phrase. Write as many as you can think of and variations of the ones you have already written. Remember to use layman terms not ones that you and your industry use.

Always remember you are writing them for your prospective customers so make it as easy as possible for them.



You should also have a Terms of Service page, if applicable and a Privacy Policy page or statement, especially on any forms that are collecting personal information, like name, address and email addresses.

I hope you have found this free report, regarding local business online, helpful.

If you have a few moments I would love to have your feedback and any subjects on the web and business you would like to know about and I can cover it in future reports.

Please go to: <http://ozwebworx.com.au/feedback>

Cheers

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jenny Moffett'.

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