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# Business guide to marketing online



FROM HERE WE  
CAN GO ANYWHERE.

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# What is this guide about?

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# What is online marketing?

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**As consumers increasingly move online to shop, companies need to look at how they best communicate the value of their products and services in the digital world.**

The Internet allows companies with even the most modest budgets to communicate with customers more comprehensively and personally than ever. Doing so can give companies a much better idea of who their customers are, what they want and how best to deliver goods and services to them.

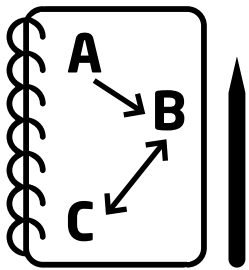
There are, without doubt, pitfalls. So, this guide will show you simple ways to assess your marketing needs, and create and put in place the right online marketing strategy for your company.

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# Online Marketing Tips

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## 1\_PLANNING



### Relevant links

[Click here for the government's business website toolbox](#)

The most important thing to do when marketing online is to start with a plan. Think about what you want your plan to achieve, who will carry it out and how much you want to spend.

A marketing plan does not need to be complicated or expensive, but it should be flexible. If an element in the plan hasn't worked, be prepared to try something new. It should be considered a work in progress, so don't be afraid to tweak it as necessary.

There are several areas an online marketing plan needs to consider. That is not to say that you need to invest resources in all of them, but understanding how each element works will help you to develop the best plan for your company. [The government's business website](#) has a toolbox to help you develop a plan.

## 2\_\_WEBSITE



Websites offer unique and cost-effective ways of marketing and selling a company's products and services. A company's website is a 24-hour-a-day storefront, sales team and help desk. It should include:

- Contact details;
- Unique Selling Point (What makes your company better and different?);
- Detail of your products and services;
- Testimonials;
- Good quality, relevant images;
- Tips and guides can also be helpful.

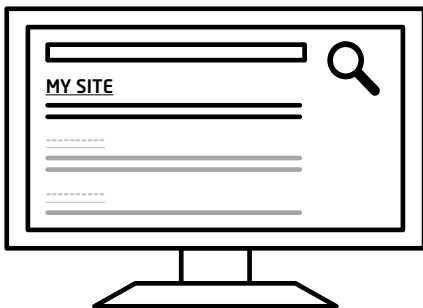
It may also feature a company blog and more general information of use to customers. But a one-page website may be all you need to get started. We have more information on how to do that [here](#).

### Relevant links

[Click here to learn how to get started with a one page website.](#)

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## 2\_\_ONLINE SEARCH



Online Search is a way of advertising your company website in the form of results on search engines such as Google. In an ideal world, your company's name would appear high on a list of results from searches conducted by all your potential customers. Google looks for websites that are 'search friendly' by matching the most relevant websites to the phrases people use in their searches. The more 'relevant' your website is to people's searches, the higher Google ranks it in searches. [Google offers free advice on how to do this here.](#)

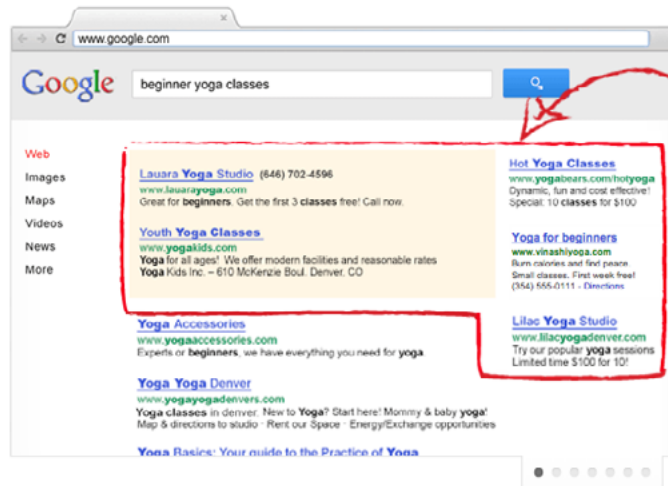
### Relevant links

[Click here to get data, tools and diagnostics for a Google-friendly site.](#)

### 3\_\_SEARCH ENGINE MARKETING



Programs such as [Google Adwords](#) allow your company to place advertising next to search results. These paid advertisements give companies more control over where, when and how often their listings appear.



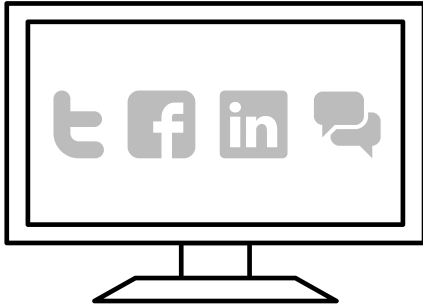
### 4\_\_ONLINE LISTINGS



Local listings allow companies to target customers in specific locations, such as countries, regions or towns. The listings appear when someone searches online for a product or service in a named location. For example, the search “plumber Masterton .nz” will bring up advertised listings, the most relevant (free) results and maps showing the location of plumbers in Masterton.

New Zealand has several directories, including [Yellow](#) (the searchable online version of the Yellow Pages), [finda](#), [NZS.com](#), [findit](#) and [hotfrog](#). [Google](#) allows companies to display important information in the [paid listings](#), such as an address, contact details, opening hours and a business description.

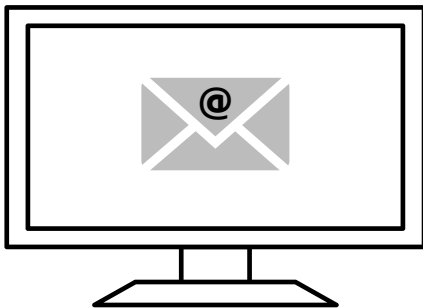
## 5\_\_SOCIAL MEDIA



Social media sites, such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter, are increasingly being used to promote businesses. Many companies also use it to talk with their customers. Social Media, if used correctly, is a great way to promote goods and services through friends' recommendations, to get feedback and to spread the word about a company's new product features and offerings.

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## 6\_\_EMAIL



Many businesses find email marketing a very cost-effective way to communicate with new and existing customers and to attract people to a company website. There are numerous online services that help companies design and manage email campaigns. Some New Zealand companies offering these services include boltmail, Simple Mail and SmartMail Pro. Overseas sites include Mailchimp, SmartMail and Zoho.

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## 7\_\_DISPLAY ADVERTISING



This is a form of advertising that features some combination of images, words, logos and other information. It has migrated from use in traditional printed media (newspapers, magazines, billboards and posters) to the digital world, where ads feature on websites (particularly news and auction websites), and in text form on emails and texts.

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# Essential steps

- 1\_ Set up a company website & email
- 2\_ Generate useful website content
- 3\_ Be mobile friendly
- 4\_ Be found easily online
- 5\_ Build links
- 6\_ Social media
- 7\_ Advertising





[To find out more about this, click here](#)

## 1\_\_SET UP A COMPANY WEBSITE & EMAIL

If your company doesn't have a website, this should be the first step. Research shows having your own domain name for website and email is an essential part of doing business for even the smallest companies. It's where you manage your brand online and is an ideal place to tell customers why they should choose your products and services. Setting up a domain name (and website and email) is simple, quick and need not be expensive.

As Google says:

**'Organic or word-of-mouth buzz is what helps build your site's reputation with both users and Google, and it rarely comes without quality content.'**

[To find out more about good quality web content, click here](#)

## 2\_\_CREATE USEFUL WEBSITE CONTENT

People will visit your website if the content is useful and interesting to them. The more relevant the content is to people seeking goods and services you provide, the more likely they are to share that information around through social media.

Customers are more likely to return to websites that are regularly updated and that contain good quality content. This should include:

- Contact details labelled clearly and prominently. Make sure your main contact phone number is on your front page, if not every page.
- Your company's unique selling point — what is it that makes your company and its goods and services better than anyone else?
- Details about products and services your company offers. Include opening hours, delivery details and, if appropriate, your costs;
- Testimonials. These reinforce your unique selling point and give customers confidence in you;
- High quality and relevant imagery. These can reinforce your brand quicker than any words.
- Tips and Guides on how to make the most of your products or services.

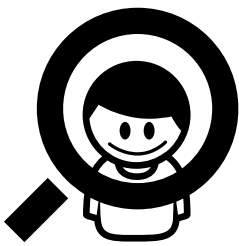
**Don't forget to review your content regularly.** Out-of-date information can put off potential customers. If you lack confidence that people in your company can create the content you need, freelance content writers can do this for you.



### 3\_\_BE MOBILE FRIENDLY

Research shows that almost everyone shops online, increasingly with smartphones and tablets. So it makes sense not only to have a website, but to have one that caters to these devices. Research also shows that people won't stay on websites that aren't designed with these devices in mind. **Nearly three quarters (73%)\* of consumers say they'd leave a website that did not work on mobile devices for one that does. More than half (53%)\* of consumers say they're more likely to buy from mobile-focused websites.** So, if you are looking at getting a website, make sure it is optimised for all devices or risk being missed by the very people looking for you.

\*2014 .nz Colmar Brunton survey



### 4\_\_BE FOUND EASILY

Structure your site to be found easily by people searching for it. This means writing content using the words and phrases that people use when searching for your goods and services. Use everyday words anyone can understand rather than jargon familiar to your industry and no-one else.

There are paid services that offer to help your website get ranked higher in Google searches using 'search engine optimisation' (or SEO). However, your first step should be to look at Google's comprehensive advice on doing this yourself and what it looks for in a good company website.



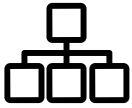
**A word of caution:** While you can pay for services that will place links to your site, it may be preferable to seek links yourself from trade associations, industry bodies and business partners. It is worth remembering that you will only be helping your customers if you provide links to reputable, trusted sites.

### 5\_\_BUILD LINKS

Providing links to other websites may seem counter productive. Why offer people a way to leave your site? One of the internet's greatest strengths is it lets people gather huge amounts of information from numerous sources very quickly. Links to information your customers would be interested in is a useful service. And it's one that websites being linked to appreciate, too, often prompting them to put up links back to your site and further boosting your site's audience. Search engines such as Google favour sites with relevant links, ranking them higher in search results than sites with fewer, or less relevant links.

## 6\_\_WEBSITE TIPS

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### A\_Keep it simple

**Once you have decided what you want your website to do, stick to that plan.** Don't get too elaborate and end up confusing visitors. Simple, well thought out websites can be the most elegant and memorable.

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### B\_Set targets

**Include specific objectives, such as timing and measurements of success** (sales and sales leads developed, and number of visitors to your website for example). Keeping track of how your website or campaign is going is straightforward if you use tools such as [Google Analytics](#).

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### C\_Review

**Mistakes and dated information on your website can have a serious effect on the number of visitors it receives.** Google Analytics can help to see whether visitors are buying after they visit your site or leaving straight away.

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# Online Promotion and Marketing

## 1\_ Social Media 2\_ Advertising

Developing a digital marketing plan is essential for any company looking to promote itself in the digital world. It needs to set down clear goals such as increased sales, more leads, raising your profile and improving service, and it must look realistically at budget and resources.

Understanding your audience is vital. Talk to your customers and potential customers - ask what they want, what their purchasing habits are, where they go online and if they are active on social media. The answers to these questions will help you form the basis of a solid and workable marketing plan. For example, if social media is popular among your customer base, then it may be wise to allocate resources to boost your social media presence.

### **Scale**

Marketing budgets for many Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) are often far from lavish. The temptation is to find the cheapest options. But cheaper is not always best when it comes to marketing the brand you have worked hard to build. It pays to think about what Return On Investment (ROI) your company will get from its campaign. Working out how much profit you make per sale will indicate how much to spend on online advertising, such the Pay Per Click (PPC) model.

### **Objectives**

Ask yourself what each element of your campaign is designed to do and allocate budget accordingly. Your website maybe primarily to provide product and company information, or it may be for generating sales leads.

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## Communicating with your customers online

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### 1\_\_SOCIAL MEDIA

This is where your company can communicate with its customers online. Social media can provide great feedback from the public about your business. It pays to understand the different forms of social media and to have a plan on how you use them. Importantly, be clear on the resources and time needed to do this well.

#### Choose the right platforms for your business

What works for one company may not work for all. Maintaining a profile on social media can take up lots of time. So think about how much time you or your staff can dedicate to this before you launch your company's social media profile.

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#### A\_Facebook

Decide whether your customer base is likely to engage with you through the world's most popular social media network. It can be a great, low-cost place to promote products, brands and place competitions, develop sales leads and build a community around your brand. But if your target audience is not on Facebook, or is predominantly other businesses, you might want to leave it alone.

**Sales\_**You can also sell through Facebook, which also offers tools that show when people who have viewed adverts go on to buy what was on offer.

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#### B\_Twitter

This ultra-brief publishing forum (up to 140 characters per Tweet message) can be a boon for businesses that want to stay in instant touch with what their customers are thinking. Twitter has the potential to soak up the most time of any social media if you want to raise the company profile and then keep it front of mind for people. So, assess your resources against what you think the benefits would be for your company.

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#### C\_Linkedin

The social network website for professionals. This can be a great way to utilise your existing networks to spread the word about your products and services. It has also become a useful business resource as more discussion groups of LinkedIn users form around specific topics. At the very least, it is a good place to put the company profile.



## D\_Google +

This is the software giant Google's own social network that is available to anyone with a Google account (using your own domain based email or gmail address). A big plus for companies is that it integrates with all other Google software (email, documents, calendars). It can also help boost search rankings for companies that have Google+ business pages. Like Facebook, it can be a good place to promote your products and services, as well as engage with customers.

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## YouTube

The home of the world's video content is also a great place to showcase your products and services. Videos housed on YouTube featuring, for example, new products and how to use them, are easily embedded in your company website for any visitor to see.

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### **Have a plan**

Think about who your audience is in each social media channel, how you want your company to be seen, and the potential benefits and and commitment required before you begin your company's social media campaign.

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### **Ask why customers would want to follow you**

Adding Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn buttons allows people to follow you on those sites. But people need good reasons to want to do that, such as a competition, special offers, advice, or a combination of these.

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## Paying to promote your business

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## 2\_\_ADVERTISING

Be clear about your goals and budget. Here is a list of questions to help to judge the return on investment for an advertising campaign:

- Who are you targeting? Think about who your audience is.
  - Where do your customers spend their online time?
  - What are you trying to achieve in terms of sales inquiries? Customer numbers? Page impressions?
  - What is the message you want to get across?
  - Develop a clear brief and supporting text and/or images for the campaign;
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### Google Adwords

Google's advertising model allows users to create paid ads with words, phrases and images that will appear in Google search results. The most well-used phrases cost the most and deliver the best results, i.e. rank a company higher in the advertising part of search results.

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### Display advertising

These sit prominently on a website page that should be appropriate to your brand and advertising message. They're essentially an online version of paid adverts in newspapers and are priced according to the popularity of the website. (Common examples of sites that feature these adverts are news media and auction websites). To get started, find a site you would be interested in advertising on, and make contact or find the advertising rates published on the site.

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### Facebook, LinkedIn

The benefit of paying for ads on social media is they are targeted at people who have in some way signalled an interest in your area of business (and hopefully your specific goods or services).

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# About .nz



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**.nz is operated by .nz Registry Services (NZRS\*), the wholesale provider of .nz domain names to a retail channel of registrars who offer .nz domain names to the public.**

If you would like more information on our role and activities then please contact **[info@getyourselfonline.co.nz](mailto:info@getyourselfonline.co.nz)**

If you would like more information about getting online with .nz then please visit **[www.getyourselfonline.co.nz](http://www.getyourselfonline.co.nz)**

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The .nz domain name market is regulated by the Domain Name Commission Limited (DNCL). For more information about DNCL please visit **[www.dnc.org.nz](http://www.dnc.org.nz)**

*\* New Zealand Domain Name Registry Services Ltd*

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## Credits

**P8** Shopping Cart icon designed by Gabriela Rodríguez from the Noun Project

**P8** Search icon designed by Javier Cabezas from the Noun Project

**P10** Chart designed by Trent Kuhn from the Noun Project