



TOOLS, TIPS, AND BEST PRACTICES FOR SUCCESS

DIY Website Checklist

MANDY WALLACE



Contents

MUST HAVE PAGES | 2

Create these pages first for the greatest impact.

GOOD TO HAVE PAGES | 6

Create these pages next for increased return and credibility.

IMPORTANT ASSETS | 8

Increase your email signups and sales (or other conversions) with these assets.

TOOLS & RESOURCES | 9

Powerful resources to get your website up & running and looking good.

*Hey, nice
to see you.*

SEND YOUR QUESTIONS TO
MANDY@MANDYWALLACE.COM

A QUICK NOTE

This guide covers the best practices and intuitive design principles that'll get your site visitors clicking through and engaged with your story.

Here, intuitive design means organizing your site and page flow so everything is where visitors naturally expect it to be—without you having to tell them.

Follow these tips for a successful website that's easy to navigate, helps your organization meet its biggest goals, and converts your visitors into passionate fans.

Must Haves

*These are the basics every site needs if you want it to be successful.
Focus your energy here first for the greatest impact.*

LOGICAL ORGANIZATION

Keep it simple. Put the most important information at the top (or on the Homepage). Pages should flow out from the Homepage and Main Menu from most to least important.

NAVIGATION

Keep it simple. List only the most important pages in the Main Menu.

Logical flow is important. To help, group subpages as drop-down options from the Main Menu items. For example, your About page should feature in the Main Menu. But your Mission and Staff pages should not. Instead, these can appear as drop-down options when you hover or click on 'About' in the Main Menu.

HOMEPAGE

What's the one, most important thing you want your visitors to do when they land on your site? Focus the Homepage around that.

Too many websites throw everything on the Homepage hoping to increase engagement, but conflicting messages more often overwhelm. The result? Visitors tune out. So focus your Homepage on just one or two goals.

Your best bet? Email signups. Once they're in, they're yours.

ABOUT PAGE

The About page isn't really about you. It's about what's in it for your visitors. What do you offer THEM? What do THEY get out of your work and presence in their community? Focus on this and watch their engagement with and enthusiasm for your business or organization soar.

After you show visitors what's in it for them, THEN go into your business or organization's story or mission. But make sure to tell your story in a compelling way that gets visitors excited to be a part of it. A good writer can help you here. And if budget is a concern, your Homepage and About pages are where you should invest first.

About pages see some of the highest traffic on a site. Use the opportunity to promote your most important offerings (hint: link to them using compelling calls to action, or CTAs).

And definitely include a way for visitors to sign up for your newsletter here. See the newsletter signup entry below for tips on increasing your newsletter signups.

NEWSLETTER SIGNUP PAGE

Email marketing offers a tremendous return. For what is a relatively small investment compared to most marketing endeavors (you mostly just pay for your email servicer), it's often a guaranteed 2-10% conversion rate. That means 2-10% of the people on your email list will buy what you're promoting. So focus on that email list!

Include ways to sign up for your email newsletter list on your Homepage, About page, after every blog post, and offer the option when anyone leaves a comment on a post or page.

It's also a good idea to have a dedicated signup page you link to in your main navigation (it's that important!). Just make sure you offer something enticing in exchange for their email address.

Include a clear, compelling CTA. Nobody wakes up in the morning and says, 'Gee, I'd love to sign up for a newsletter today.'" Try something like "Get Free Updates in Your Inbox" or "Download Our Free Guide to XYZ Now" instead.

If the above wasn't clear enough. It's best to offer something in exchange for that email address. Offer something useful visitors can download. And then set up your email servicer to automatically send it out at every signup.

BLOG PAGE

Unless your site acts only as a bookmark for your business (That's okay if it's all you can manage! It's definitely better than nothing!), then you need a blog.

You heard right. Content is king. Every post you publish is an opportunity to rank in the search engines (which means more visitors to your site) and more opportunity to engage your visitors while they're there. So write. More. Blog posts.

A blog is also an easy way to stay relevant and fresh with news and upcoming events.

CONTACT PAGE

Include a form with spaces for the visitor to enter their name, email address, and message.

Remember, the more form options you include on your form, the fewer people are going to use it. Ask for only what you need to make a connection. You can always build on it later.

If you're a brick and mortar or service based business, include address and phone number too.

Skip the maps. Most people have navigation in their cars or on their phones. And if not, they're already online if they're looking at your site. They can open a new tab and drop your address into Google Maps if they really want to. Including a map on your site just makes it look outdated, visually cluttered, and takes up space.

Up next: those optional (but great to have) pages.

Good to Have

Focus your energy here after you've covered the basics. Pages like these will increase your credibility and make your site more useful to visitors.

PRESS PAGE

Mentioned in the press? Tell everyone about it! Keep a running list of press mentions here. And you can always share them via links in posts on your blog and in your newsletter too.

PROJECT SHOWCASE OR PORTFOLIO PAGES

Portfolio of work? Events you put on in the community? Social events you've organized? This is where to showcase it.

Create dedicated pages for each project or event, then link to them from the main Project Showcase or Portfolio page.

Many Wordpress themes offer pre-built portfolio pages. This is a great place to use one. As above, you'll create dedicated pages for each project where you'll share photos and details about the event—then link to those from the main Project or Portfolio page. This makes it easy to see everything at a glance.

UPCOMING EVENTS PAGE

Skip the calendar. They're clunky. And the moment you miss an update (it happens to everyone), the empty calendar makes your organization look inactive or not on your game.

Instead, organize this page portfolio style. List events by date with a link to each event's dedicated page. Share images and details about the event on its dedicated page. That way visitors can find what they're looking for on the Events page at a glance.

MEMBERSHIP PAGE

If you operate on a membership or subscription basis, you need a dedicated landing page to convince visitors to sign up.

Tell visitors what's in it for them if they become members (benefits, bragging rights, your eternal love and undying devotion?). Show them all the options. And include compelling CTAs (remember those?) to drive conversions.

Landing pages do much of the convincing for you. They walk visitors through all the benefits and potential objections they need addressed before they'll buy in.

It's a big job that takes technical knowledge in copywriting and design if it's going to convert visitors into members at high rates,

So hire a landing page pro if you can. The \$2k+ investment for a good one is likely to provide a high return with no extra work from you. Or try [Leadpages.com](https://www.leadpages.com) if the budget is an issue.

Bonus! You can use this page again and again. Link to it in your Main Menu and in membership drive email campaigns.

Next up: important assets to boost engagement.

Important Assets

This is where the good stuff is—the final stretch. Once you get here and create these final assets, you'll see conversions and engagement like never before.

LEAD MAGNETS

Lead magnets are valuable freebies you give away in exchange for a site visitor's email address. Ebooks, quiz results, free consultations, directories, guides—anything your audience would want or find valuable.

Write one, design it well, and set up your email servicer to send it automatically when a visitor subscribes. That means high conversion rates that run automatically with no extra work for you.

EMAIL CAMPAIGNS

These are the emails you send to your email list.

Email campaigns are powerful marketing tools. We talked about the 2-10% conversion rate you can expect from email marketing before. That means 2-10% of the people on your email list will buy your offering (or join or subscribe or, or, or).

That doesn't mean you can just email out a boring description about foot cream and get a return. You have to build a list of people interested in what you offer, and then write to them in a way that gets them excited about it all over again.

This takes technical skill in copywriting, so hire a copywriter for the greatest return on investment. Or google some DIY copywriting tips to get you started if the budget is an issue.

Tools + Resources

Powerful resources to get your website looking professional, running well, wowing visitors, and (most importantly) done.

[Wordpress](#) for content management (to run and update your site). It's easy to use, easy to update, easy to customize. And you'll find uncounted pre-designed themes to choose from. Be careful though. Some themes don't work on mobile (a major no-no now that most web traffic is mobile). And some will hurt your search rankings (which means a lot of work for little return).

[Genesis Framework](#) for pre-designed Wordpress themes. They're gorgeous, inexpensive, highly customizable even for newbies, and come with integrations that automate your workload.

[Canva](#) for designing assets. Easy to use and free.

[Unsplash](#) for free, copyright-free stock photos.

[Leadpages](#) for inexpensive landing pages that convert.

[Mailchimp](#), [Aweber](#), or [Convertkit](#) are all inexpensive, automated, and easy-to-use email servicers. All will deliver your lead magnet and introductory email campaign to new subscribers on autopilot. There are more expensive options. Most of them aren't worth it.

[InMotion](#) for inexpensive web hosting that Wordpress works well (and fast) on. They also have great customer service. You can download Wordpress to your site there in just a few clicks.

[PayPal](#) for subscription and autopay services.

[Gumroad](#) for delivering digital assets for free, a fee, or donation.



NEED HELP WITH YOUR SITE?

Reach out to mandy@mandywallace.com

Copywriting, business writing, email campaigns, email services and subscription form setups, case studies / success stories, press releases, Wordpress site setups, SEO-friendly blog posts, and other compelling content that's sure to convert.