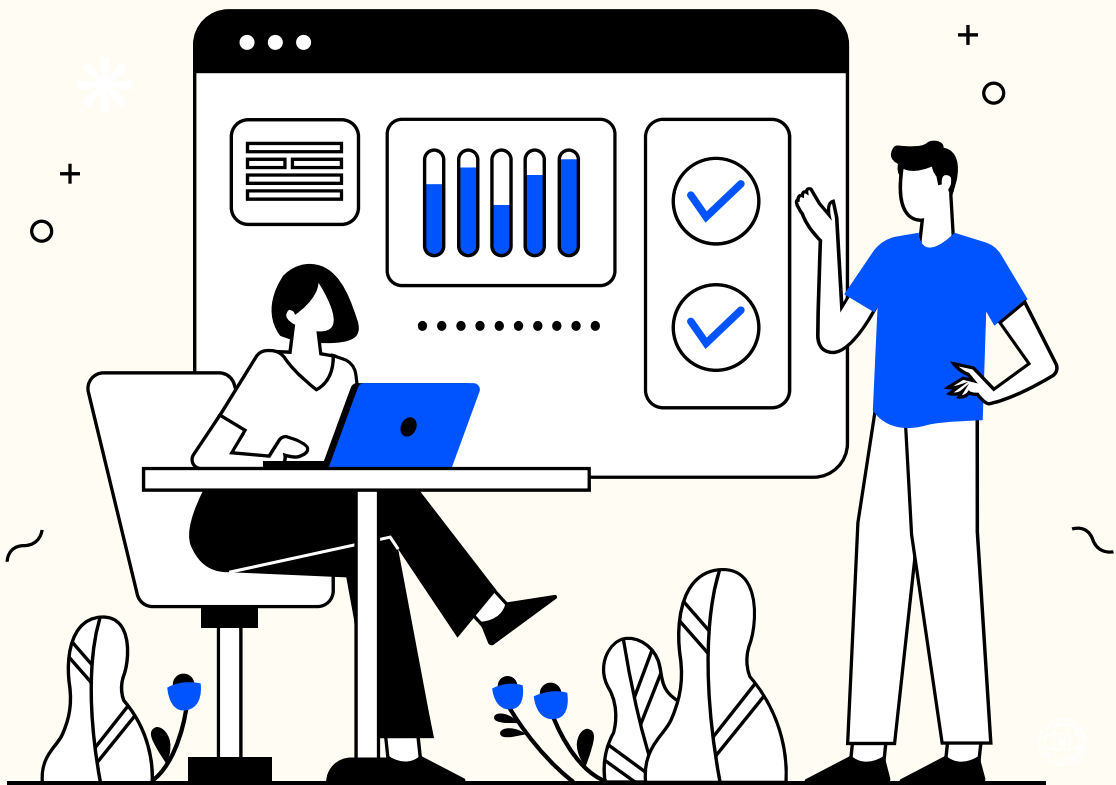


BEFORE YOU BUILD



**10 Things to Know Before
Launching Your Next Website**

Okey Chigbu

Are you a small business owner, a personal brand, or doing anything that requires exposure online?

Then pay attention to this. We are in an age and time when having a website for your business or personal brand is no longer an option but a **necessity**.

No matter the size of your business, you need an online presence that you can use to show the world what you are doing and one you can have full control and ownership of.

Using platforms like Facebook, Instagram, etc is good, but the problem is that you do not have full control of those platforms because they can change their policy anytime.

I am sure you must have the statement, 'don't build your business on rented platforms'.

These social media platforms are those rented platforms. But with a website, you have total and full control of what happens there. You decide what to do and when to do it.

NOW, SOME OF THE REASONS WHY YOU NEED TO HAVE YOUR OWN WEBSITE INCLUDE;

- It makes you look like a big brand and gives you credibility even while operating small.
- It allows you to run your business round the clock as purchases can be made at any time of the day.
- Your business can be known and seen by anyone in any part of the world, so you are not limited by location.
- A website can save you time and money, and provide answers to your customer's most frequently asked questions.
- With a website, you can implement better digital marketing campaigns with a low budget.

There are many other reasons why you need to have a website for your business, but these are the most important and foundational reasons.

To achieve these results listed above, there are many things you need to know before you embark on setting up your own website so you can achieve the maximum benefit of having one in the first place.

Because, building a website is like building a house, and actually your website is like having your office online.

So, it requires proper planning and implementation of the right strategies and systems to achieve the right result.

Some of the things mentioned below may look or sound technical and you mustn't know them in detail but you should have a knowledge of their existence so you can communicate your goals and visions well with your developer or designer.

There are 10 things that needs to be taken into consideration before you should begin building a website.

If you already have a website, this information will help you to realize why your website isn't as successful as it could be.

Either way, by just reviewing the following steps, you will be able to save yourself tons of time, money, and frustration in trying to make your website work for you as it should.

Now let's go straight to those 10 important things.

Okey Chigbu
Chief Solutionist



YOUR PRIMARY GOALS - KNOW YOUR OBJECTIVES



Before you commence building your website, you must be VERY clear about what you want to achieve with it. Don't desire to own a website because everyone is building one. Many people build websites for different reasons. So you must be very clear about your end goal.

Ask yourself, am I building this website to attract more leads (get more contact details of prospects), create brand awareness (inform people of our services), make sales (get people to buy our product or service), attract potential customers or investors, get people to call us, get people to sign up, get people to donate to a cause etc.

Once you are able to answer any of these questions and possibly more, you have properly laid a good foundation for building a successful website.



Knowing how your website is to be built will determine the future and sustainability of your website because there are many ways it can be built.

A website can be built either by using a Content Management System or developed by writing series of codes from ground up. Each have its own pros and cons.

Building with Content Management Systems(CMS) like Wordpress, Joomla, Drupal or drag and drop platforms like Wix, Squarespace are more affordable and faster to build, it's easy to manage(update content) by you the owner.

But coding from ground up requires that every piece of code required to run the website is written from scratch.

This option is mostly suitable for very very complex projects that CMS's cannot achieve and it takes time to complete and requires a huge budget.

If you are not building a very complex web project, always go for a CMS or drag and drop type of websites so you can have your website up and running in no time and its easy to manage and maintain.

Also ensure your website is responsive i.e it should load or show properly on any device.

3 DOMAIN NAME AND HOSTING



Choosing the right domain name and hosting is something you must not play with.

Your domain name is the address of your business on the internet and your hosting is like the land housing your business.

You must choose one carefully and also ensure they are purchased from reputable domain registrars and hosting companies that have good up-time that ensures your website is always available online.

You must understand domain name extensions and what they stand for to know which one to go for e.g, we have .com, .org, .net, and country based domains like .com.ng, .ng, .org.ng, .co.uk etc.

Country based domains are good if your major target market or audience is your country or your business is serving mainly your country.

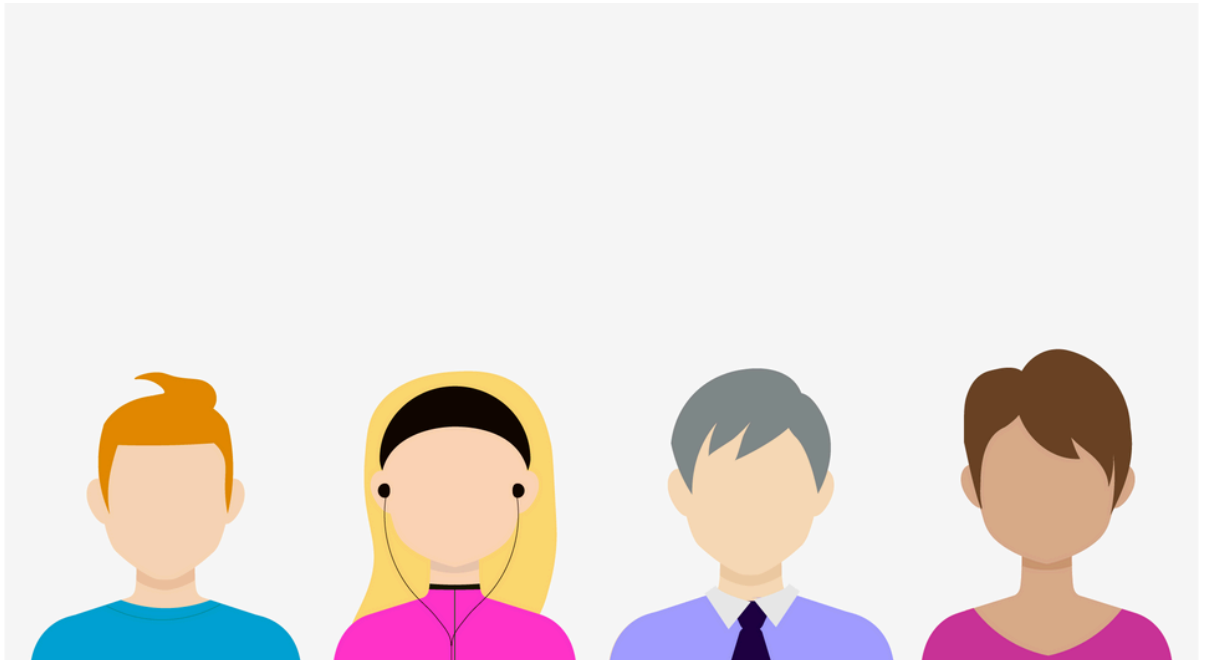
This doesn't mean your domain won't be found outside your country but Google will give it preference when people are searching in your country.

Let your domain name be short and memorable because it's representing your brand on the internet.

Your hosting server must be equipped with features of your desired website needs.

"Your domain name is your identity, choose carefully"

YOUR CUSTOMER AND THEIR NEEDS



For you to get the expected result from your website, it is important you know who your target audience or customer is.

Doing a basic customer avatar will help so you can understand their needs, age, demography, pain points etc. Understand what your customer will want to experience or expect from your website and how they will interact with it.

For example a church website will have a different user journey from a personal brand website or ecommerce website or even a corporate website.

So your website must be built to meet the needs of your target audience.

5

YOUR BRANDING



Mentioning branding here doesn't mean you should go about thinking about a logo, or other branding materials, first.

No, what we are talking about here is defining your story. Knowing your 'WHY' for doing the business or service. Your message and value proposition.

After this, you can then think about logo, color, your font so that they will be consistent with your brand image and also on every page of your website.

The images to use on your website should be ones that represent your brand so well.

It is better if you take professional photographs of your products or services or get photos from stock photo websites.

But the downside of this is that you will be using the same picture everyone is using, although you can re-brand those pictures to represent your brand well and make you stand out.

Please don't use images from Google if you do not have a copyright license to them.

Your branding also includes having a professional email attached to your domain so you can send emails professionally.

Don't use Gmail or Yahoo to send professional emails, you won't be taken seriously.

YOUR BUDGET



Like i said earlier, building a website is like building a house.

So many factors determine what the cost of building a house is, same with building websites.

The functionalities and features, domain, hosting, setup fees, design/development cost etc are what determines the total cost or rather total investment.

Yes, should you see your website as an investment to the growth of your business.

Even though there may be packages indicating the cost of a website, these are for fixed types of designs where you get what is contained in that package, but for a custom design you need to get a quote from the designer or developer.

The bottom line is, there is no fixed cost for a website, what you are willing to invest is what you will get.

PROMOTION/MARKETING PLAN



Yes, after building that beautiful website and launching it, It doesn't end there.

Your beautiful website needs to be seen, else it will just be one signpost sitting somewhere on the internet but only seen by those who come across it.

You remember how you only see a signpost and then once you pass across it, you won't see it again.

Don't allow your website to be such. You need to have a promotion plan to tell the world about your website.

One quick way is to tell your friends through your social media platforms, you can also embed your website link on your product materials, email, etc.

But still, only those who see those materials will know about your website.

You can fast-track and expand the reach by having a promotional budget for faster results using a strategy like Search Engine Optimization(SEO), where you directly inform Google and other search engines about your website so that when people are searching for or 'googling' your type of business, they will see you and will want to transact business with you. You can also use Google My Business to attract local visitors.

You can also use paid advertising where you pay Google or Facebook or other platforms to help you tell more people about your website using their paid advertising platforms.

This method yields much faster results than SEO.

*“Marketing is telling the world you’re a rock star.
Content Marketing is showing the world you are
one.” - Robert Rose*



As you have always heard, 'content is king'.

Without content, your website will just be a layout of blocks that doesn't tell any message.

Content is those things you want your audience to see on your website that will make them pay attention to what you are saying.

They can be text, audio, video, graphics, etc. You are to provide them yourself or you can engage a copywriter or content creator to handle it for you.

Your designer can offer this service in most cases as well.

Your content must be well optimized i.e. meeting the needs of search engines and also easy to read by your audience so they can find what they are looking for fast.

YOUR WEBSITE CREDENTIALS



You are wondering, what are credentials again on websites?

The reason is that many have lost ownership of their website because of not putting this into consideration.

Yes, credentials are the confidential and security details about your website that if it's not protected or handled with care, it can expose your website to attack or loss of access.

If your website designer is the one that purchased your hosting space, ensure you get the login details to the hosting space which in most cases is the cpanel or the full hosting account if you purchased a separate hosting.

Another credential you need to get is your website admin details especially if your website was built with a CMS.

Although on a personal agreement, you can leave these details with your designer/developer depending on the trust level you have, but just know that they are confidential details that you own.

I suggest you also have a copy of it so you won't be at the mercy of your designer if anything goes wrong.

10 MAINTENANCE AND SUPPORT PLAN



Congratulations, your website has been built and launched. Everything is working pretty well, you are achieving the goals and objectives you listed out on step one.

But hey, you must know that your website is made up of software or a combination of codes.

So with every software out there, there will be a need for updates, maintenance, security and backup.

Just as your physical office requires maintenance cost, your website will also require such cost.

Ensure you have a plan and budget for all these maintenance services so your website will continue to function optimally and be secured from attacks or bugs and also be available and accessible always. You can as well learn how to carry it out yourself and implement the right practices.

You made it.....



Thank you for taking the time to read through it.

Now you have known all the essential things you need to know to build or have a functional website.

You are now ready to own a world-class website.

But the question in your mind now is how will I go about it?

There are two routes you can take to own a website.

There is an easy way and the hard way.

You can either go to Youtube, watch some tutorials and attempt to build one yourself. This is the hard way.

But because you are busy and want to concentrate on the other aspects of your business, you don't want to take this route.

The best and most profitable way is to engage the services of experts like us to build a functional website for you.

We help businesses, organizations and personal brands build a functional website.

Our goal is to help you build one that you will be happy with.

So, get in touch today and let us kick-start your website project.

Chat with us now on Whatsapp or call +2348166349134

Send us an email at info@donaldigital.com

Visit our website at www.donaldigital.com.