

supported and informed at all stages of the sales funnel. We can't cover the basic concepts of content marketing in this article but you can [read more about content marketing here](#).

From a search engine perspective having an updated news section is a very good idea as it means that the content of your website is constantly being refreshed and remains dynamic as opposed to stale and stagnant. Read more on our blog: [How an out of date website can hurt a business](#)

2. Site not optimised for search engines



Web developers are generally good at one thing - that's right – developing websites! However, websites are a vital marketing tool for businesses so it's a good idea to pick out a web company that has experience and a proven track record in online marketing.

If you don't do this it's a bit like paying for a TV advert to be produced but not having air time.

The first step in online marketing is keyword research. It's vital to know the keywords that people type into search engines such as Google. Once the keyword research is done your web pages should be optimised for the juiciest keywords so that you can attract as many natural search visitors as possible. There is simply no point guessing and optimising your site's pages for keywords that people don't search for. Worst still, however, is when no effort at all is made to optimise web pages.

So what does optimisation of your web pages consist of? There are many factors but perhaps the most important are the page title, page description and headings of your web pages. The page title and page description sit within the coding behind your web pages but actually appear in search engine results – they are referred to as off-page optimisation and need to be hand crafted for each page and must reflect keyword research. The headings on your web pages are part of what is referred to as on-page optimisation.

There are many pitfalls to avoid so it may be wise to get help from savvy online marketers. Read more about [search engine optimisation here](#).



3. Social media – is it just for kids?

Social media has been with us for such a short time and there is still a tendency for UK businesses to think it's "just for kids".

There have been two recent, massive shifts in how people make buying decisions in the UK.

The first shift in buying decisions isn't too hard to grasp. The advent of the internet has meant that most people buy or make decisions about what to buy online.

The second shift in buying decisions is that people form opinions about your products and services based on what is shared about you online on websites, blogs and all social media platforms. It's not just what you say about yourself on social media – it's what others say about you.

If you don't have social media accounts set up or if you do have them but don't actively contribute then you are missing out on business.

Like it or not if a competitor appears to be smarter and more reliable than you based on what's shared online then they will get the enquiries you don't. Full stop.

Your website and social media need to work hand in hand to strengthen your brand and drive enquiries to you.

Visitors to your website will expect you to be able to navigate to your social media accounts so your social media accounts must be prominently displayed on each page in the top banner. Spend the time to make your Facebook and Twitter reflect your website and company branding. Make sure there are links from your social media accounts to your website.



Read more about [the importance of social media here](#)

4. Why you need *Calls to Action*

Your website should contain multiple calls to action; these are buttons or text on a website that prompts the user to click, or call to continue down a conversion funnel. Your contact numbers need to be at least at the top and bottom of each web page and also within the words on the web pages.

You do what you do every day in your business but for your customers and prospects this may be the first time they have used your products and services. Make things easy by spelling out what they need to do next. Instead of...

"Contact us for more information"

Say...

"Telephone John Smith on 01234 567890 for a free, no obligation discussion on how Blue Widgets can save your business time and money"

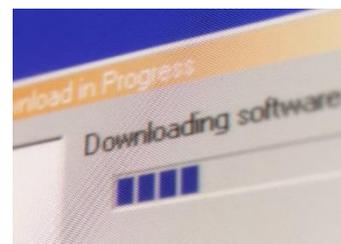
It's worth bearing in mind that a fair proportion may visit your website out of hours. How are these visitors able to make contact with you? One answer is to add forms to your web pages such as "arrange a call back" or "ask a question".



Your visitors fill out the fields on the form, press a button to submit and you receive the enquiry in the form of an email. These are hot leads.

5. Choice of web software

On the face of it the choice of software might not appear to be a problem as the assumption can be that any established web development software on the market in the UK has to work or it wouldn't survive commercially. However, web development software can be very limiting indeed.



Companies sometimes opt for web based development software as it can be obtained for a modest cost or sometimes is free. Many UK organisations don't think ahead to the next website and find themselves tied into the web based software and the only way out is a complete knock down and rebuild which will usually wipe out any initial software cost savings.

There is a lot of "open source" web development software which can be very attractive. The basic software is free but there are usually many add-on packages which are available at a premium. It's worth remembering that any add-on packages are only as good as the coder who developed them so they could be prone to bugs.

Unfortunately hackers are attracted to open source platforms like bees are attracted to the notorious honey pot. If a hacker cracks one platform they can potentially reach thousands and thousands of websites and wreak havoc. If you use open source you should at least have a robust password with a mixture of lower case text, upper case text and numbers.

Although initially it can prove to be more costly, businesses should consider having their websites developed using common programmes such as Dreamweaver. If you and your web developer choose to part company most other web companies will be able to work with the Dreamweaver files and pick up where the old developer left off. Read more about [choice of web software here](#).

6. Analytics

"If you can't measure it you can't manage it", as the saying goes.

Looking at your website's vital statistics must be done as often as possible – at least once a week.



Google Analytics is a free powerful tool that is a must have for all websites. Unfortunately many websites don't have analytics despite the fact that all their developers needed to do was to add an invisible line of code to each web page.

Analytics show how people got to your website and what their behaviour was when they got there so it is an incredible health check for your site.

The applications for analytics are almost endless but here are some of the key ones:

- If you have an Ecommerce site you need to know which keywords convert into sales the most so that you can concentrate your resources in these areas
- Find out which page of your website is the most commonly exited – finding out why and where people leave your website is vital
- Discover the keywords people type into search engines to get to your site

- Determine how long people spend on each page

Even though a web presence is crucial UK businesses must be sure it doesn't look like they've just dropped some photos and text on their web pages and called it a day. Be mindful of the 6 Reasons for failure and keep your site clean, informative, up to date and focus on the customer.

Related articles:

- [15 reasons to use professional web developer](#)
- [Your website is your shop window](#)