



This report will help you attract new customers online, and make your website sing!

1. Why do I need a Website Strategy?

The most common mistake that I see is neglecting the importance of creating a clear web strategy for their business - Clare Lancaster, WomeninBusiness.com.au

What is a website strategy? Well, it's a plan that defines:

- **who your audience is** (fairly narrowly)
- **how you're going to attract them** (i.e. certain channels)
- how you will **get their attention** (think SEO, webinars, freebies, and ads)
- what kind of **ongoing communication methods you're integrating** (e.g. email news, blog, Facebook)
- and **the way you'll offer your products** to them.

Will you tell them a little -- but not too much -- as you want them to contact you to discuss options? Or will you try to cover off objections in the main copy and FAQs (frequently asked questions) and save some work time?

In your strategy, consider a way to GIVE before you get back... Giving a piece of your knowledge, perhaps a PDF report or a competition prize, or a promotional item with your name on it, can lead to sales down the track. What's going to make your name stick in their mind?

2. Why do Niche Websites need Professional Writing... called Copywriting?

If you were selling a commodity (like cereal), you'd need just a basic website and sensible content, since people know what they are buying. For anything else, especially something that is **little understood** you will need plenty of informative and comprehensive text.

Rather than the website being written by someone who understands the product (like yourself or your team), you'll need to contract a writer who does not know all the ins and outs... why?

Because then the copywriter can ask the questions just like any normal prospective customer, that otherwise you might have overlooked. In answering those 'hidden' questions and objections in the target market's mind, the copywriter weaves a convincing answer into her copy (the website's words).

The second reason that you will benefit from a copywriter is the **Call to Action**. Most small businesses or online niche sites do not make it obvious what the reader should DO next, and WHY they should do it. Not having been trained in the art of persuasion online, they neglect to **ENTICE the prospect** with what he or she has been after all along, at a price that seems **remarkably low**.

3. Why is it a Mistake just to focus on Search Engine Optimisation?

Forgive me for closing the door after the horse has bolted, but is SEO (or doing a million tasks in order to get new Google and Bing searchers to your site) even *possible* for your business?

If you are a national business who wants to rank #1 for Best Hotel, Travel Online, Kids Clothing, Toy store, or any other generic highly-competitive term - then you better get yourself a time machine, because that is the only way you are going to achieve this mighty feat.

If you have a nice niche (an inch wide and a mile deep), then good Google rankings may well be possible, but is it *everything*?

Remember, you have limits... limits on cash I should think, and limits on your time. Seek to do what you can within those limits and within your overall website strategy (remaining practical and doable).

This could be getting someone to **write monthly articles** with a nice byline and back-link to varied pages on your website. Ensure they are written well enough to attract new followers. Followers may well become good prospects and then customers.

Or it could be **commenting on forums** that have a mighty following, with varying back-links to your site. (Don't get caught up in this strategy though - it is not a high value task).

Primarily though, focus on the **quality of content** on your own website. Post to your blog regularly, with a nice variety of **keywords** dotted among the copy and headings. (NOTE: Google with the Penguin update has continued its march against poor quality sites and it can better tell a well-written site from a poorly written one).

4. What Else is a Good Marketing Alternative to the Google Problem?

Social Media has also come into play as a PRIME source of new leads to a well set-up niche business. Done right, it helps build a buzz.

B2B - you may focus on channels like 'LinkedIn' (check out Groups), Google+ community, and sites like BizzBuzz that use business vouchers to attract new clients. **SavvySME.com.au** is like LinkedIn was, before all the braggers went overboard in the groups. You could also write for reputable sites like **Flying Solo** (www.flyingsolo.com.au) or **Dynamic Small Business Network** (<http://www.dsbn.com.au>).

B2C - consumers are more easily targeted on Facebook through a range of Friends/Subscribes, Ads, and Group posts. If possible get a social media person to post helpful Status Updates and Tweets to draw people in.... like flies to the honey pot.

Plus, don't forget the outlets of Publicity, Press Releases online, Email newsletters, Joint Ventures with like-target businesses, encouraging referrals with vouchers, and many more. (Plus 50 more tactics in my new book "**Power Marketing**").

5. Should I Get Another Website Just for Mobile Platforms?

Stop in the name of pity's sake. You are not contemplating spending thousands getting a website that is mobile compatible and of fluid design, in addition to your present site? Or just throwing your hands up and saying "it's all too hard!"

True, it is very hard to keep up with advancing technology. Too many in the website development business are stuck in their favourite tech medium. Meanwhile, the world has moved on.... and making a website "mobile friendly", known as Responsive Design, does not need to be expensive nor does it take hours of hand coding by trained monkeys.

While you are getting your website customised in WordPress, a popular content management (CMS) platform (or any other platform), just ask your HONEST designer for a "responsive design". Why?

If you are an expert in a niche where people want to look it up on-the-go, it's especially important to get your website looking and acting right on smartphones and tablets. Scratch that, it's important for every business online. Responsive themes do this best.

For the savvy web designer, it's a small matter of choosing the right theme, or else paying a small fee for a special plug-in (that's a small application that connects with the backend). This way sometimes doesn't work with an older site though.

Then they will run tests to ensure it looks good and works on most modern devices and browsers. While this is not instantaneous and problems do happen, it should all be priced into your wonderful website design package at reasonable cost... And that's it, really.

"All shopping increasingly takes place within an e-commerce ecosystem that includes not just online and offline, but mobiles, tablets and TVs too. Hence, all commerce is being affected by e-commerce..." - TrendWatching.com

6. I'm Just a Micro Business, So Should I Do it All Myself?

I hear the words, "I'm just getting my nephew to make me a website" and I hear the death knell. I think if you want success in business, you've got to wear the right clothes to meetings, right? And if you want success in the online business world, where people are used to clear, functional, uncluttered websites, then your website needs to wear its best suit.

You either need an expert adviser to point out the gaping holes in your website presence - or a website designer who keeps up with technology and who takes care of modernising and updating your website every 3-4 years in consultation with you. For example, a typical 2007-09 website is fixed width, not compatible with tablets/mobiles, not socially connected, no blog.

You don't want to put heaps of work into a niche website that goes to waste. A WordPress CMS, being easy to get started with, is often the target for hackers (security measures can prevent this). Outsourcing your website design to India can also be a problem; if you don't know them, you could be held to ransom before your website is released.

7. Should I have a Corporate-style Web Presence, or one with Niche Products, or both?

Many of us are becoming experts in our niche. One of our goals is creating and selling digitally downloadable products, so that we don't need to rely on consulting or other one-to-one.

Or perhaps you start off by selling "something niche" in a store - but then realise the potential down the track. You decide to offer more types of related courses and you now want a forum and community feel, however this does not fit the online store/shopping cart model that you spent thousands developing. For this reason, try to plan a structure that will adapt to your changing needs.

See www.RenovationRight.com.au, designed by *Red Planet Design*, for an example of a seller of real life courses. Of course, the owner also has a standard website for his building business. Also see <http://www.DataTalent.com.au>, the news hub/company site, which encourages interaction by niche professionals in the data and BI field.

Building for Growth

This is where a CMS website built in WordPress (a flexible solution), on an updated Theme, can grow and change with you. A new banner image is a lot less costly to produce than a whole new website. Being the biggest CMS in the world, it is always being updated and plug-ins (increasing the functionality) are constantly being created.

Plugins, e.g. forums and web forms, are easily adjusted to your changing needs. (Pay for a Theme that is continually updated or pay for a designer who has a WooThemes or Genesis framework so that the Theme does not break).

Perhaps a Branded Portal would offer Brand You the ultimate flexibility.

At the planning stage, don't leave any possible use for your site untapped. Consider that a SEO-friendly niche website can:

- ❖ **Bring you new customers** via search engines, referral partners, social sharing, and online advertising,
- ❖ **Be a helpful portal for present customers** by building community (articles, forums, Facebook, directory, and freebies by email), and
- ❖ **Be a sales portal** for ebooks, products, services, workshops, advertising others, and more.

Is the potential return on investment in your website and branding looking better now?

Brand You

Community Portal

Books

Articles

Advertising/
Partners

Services

Events

Successful Australian Startups

Need I remind you of local success stories: KidSpot.com.au (increasing growth through advertising, but started with just content) and Wotif.com.au (was just an idea to sell rooms, now a publicly owned corporation).

Don't stop reading now; I have to thank you yet.



Thank you for reading this report. Jennifer Lancaster, copywriter, editor and author of 'Power Marketing', based this report on her own knowledge of websites and marketing built up over the last six years (through Power of Words & Red Planet Design). I certainly hope it helps you in your online business decisions.

Contact Gino at Red Planet Design - your friendly Brisbane website design people for an online presence that meets your needs and attracts your market. <http://www.redplanetdesign.com.au>

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