

Success Summits

Taking high performers to the top -- in business & personal life

Website First Steps: Content & Idea Gathering

You may have started this already but this is where I always start with clients: gather and name (I call it content "bucketizing" although it's not a "real" word), then identify 2-3 competitor sites that you most want to be like when you grow up - this is essential stuff for the web developer.

- Gather & categorize: I've included ideas below to help you get started.
- Identify some competitor sites that you like so you can "borrow some ideas" like content categories (navigation link/categories) or pages. It's important to spend some time searching for competitor websites and learning from them. This is a critical component in the process. Your niche and elevator statement won't achieve perfection overnight – it's an evolution and there will be a few drafts.
- Begin gathering some pictures/graphics like "headshots" or in some instances, informal around the desk or office pictures may be appropriate.

Identify the categories or "buckets" of content and then begin to populate them. I always start with the bullets first and then craft the paragraphs and actual bullets later. It's always my strategy to start with as much as possible (brainstorm) and then sift through the details later. This two stage process always helps me considerably.



The pages sometimes have the same names you start with but not always – it's the content buckets that are important for now – we can change the page names easily.

A good website should be easily modified so that it always reflects the best, most current information available about your business.

YOURWEBSITE.COM and Other Things to Consider

If you're considering designing or redesigning a website, consider the following:

Providing a products and services resume helps filter out unproductive phone calls. Think in terms of "preselling" ... we want the site to sell the product before the prospect calls you.

Who will visit the site and what are they looking for?

Have you visited competitor websites to help you determine the features you need? For example, service providers commonly want features like "testimonials", "refer this site" and basics like a "contact me" page.

Is there any free "value-add" content you can include?

Below are some sample categories/pages and content points to consider. Use these pages as a worksheet and take some notes then you can send it back to me!!

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About us | Who I am

- Name(s)
- Title(s)
- Resume/CV highlights: enough to be confidence inspiring but not so much that client will lose interest reading it. Think “action” verbs.
- Tell your story – it should be interesting.

Mission (special purpose) | Guiding Principles

- I/We started this company because ...
- We saw a need in the industry for ...
- What is the problem in the world that you are solving?
- Who is your ideal client and what would they be looking for you to solve or say to them on an initial phone conversation (this will also be on the first page of the site)

Contact us

- Names, email addresses, phone numbers, fax, Skype ID.
- Perhaps a contact form that people can fill out online with their email address, phone, subject to make it easy to contact you. Some people like these. See Heather’s contact page for an example: <http://successsummits.com/contact.html>

First or Top Page

- Who is your ideal client and what would they be looking for you to solve or say to them on an initial phone conversation (this will also be on the first page of the site)
- People rarely get this right the first time. After you’ve had some conversations with your first clients, it usually changes considerably.

Resources

- Relevant industry, product or article links

Articles

- Have you written any articles we could put up?
- Have you been interviewed or quoted in any articles that are online?

Testimonials | Client Quotes

- Quote; person’s name, title, and company

Recent Client Projects

- May not always apply

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What We Do | Services & Capabilities

- May not always apply

Project Approach

- May not always apply

Meta-content & Keywords for Search Engines

This information is hidden on the pages but will help some search engines make connections with your content. People may see the “abstract/description” text when you come up in a search.

- **Abstract:** 10 words or so that summarize the business.
- **Description:** Less than 25 words summarizing the business.
- **Keywords:** 20-30 key words describing your business

Warmest regards,

Joel

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