

Make the most of your website...



If you are connected to superfast broadband, you can do a lot more with your website.

Maintaining the site by uploading large files, such as updated catalogues with pictures and video, will be much more efficient. And your customers, more and more of whom will now be using their own superfast broadband connection, will get a richer experience.

There are plenty of things you will need to think about. Many of your potential customers will still have standard broadband, and you need to make sure their experience doesn't suffer or you could lose their business. Others will be using phones and other devices to look at websites, and you will need to make sure they see quality key information quickly too.

Top 7 benefits

1 Video

Video can bring your products to life and open up new marketing opportunities, but make sure your use of video is optional ... for a user there is nothing worse than being stuck on a slow connection waiting for an unnecessary video to download.

2 Photos

With superfast broadband, uploading large numbers of photos will be a breeze, just make sure your photo sizes work for people on a range of different connections. If you want to take advantage of hi-res pictures, make them optional.

3 Maintenance

You will be able to keep your online catalogue up to date much more efficiently. With the benefits of superfast broadband, what used to take some businesses hours will now take minutes.

4 Content management for different channels

Make sure your web presence is structured intelligently. Web content uploaded once should be stored in one place and be available in a suitable format across all platforms – phones, iPads and computers.

5 Better communication through your website...

Many companies try and make sure that most of their business is channelled through the website – it makes for a more efficient operation. But good customer service will always lead to more sales, so you could try adding a live chat helpline / instant messaging service. Why not be really innovative and offer a video link? What better way of selling an 'emotional' purchase like a car, house or holiday!

6 ...and through Social Media

Social media can widen your communication channels further. Many businesses are using Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn to build relationships with customers – it's free and gives you another way of communicating, and YouTube is considered the world's second most popular search engine! Now it's faster for you to upload videos to social media.

7 Search Engine Optimisation

Use of video in your web marketing can help your search engine rankings, and it increases user engagement and interest which helps too. But make sure you don't throw away all the hard work you have undertaken to optimise your site with the right 'key phrases'

Use proper project management techniques to develop changes to your web presence and monitor results.



Top Tips

For many the web is an ideal place to develop in an 'Agile' way. Agile applies the principle of 'Build a little, sell a little, learn a little' in small iterative, measurable steps. You can apply this approach to both changes to the site and to the introduction of new products.

Think about your website and other online developments like social media and advertising strategically. How will investment in these increase sales, and how will you measure this?

Use a programme like Google Analytics to understand where your customers are coming from – which browsers and platforms, what 'key phrases' they are using and which pages they are landing on and navigating to.

Always check that your website works on as many platforms as possible – old versions of browsers as well as the latest up to date version that not everyone will use.

Usability is key for closing sales, so make sure your site works for a wide a range of users' abilities as possible – sometimes the latest technology can put people off, so assess usability properly.

Do a proper costs/benefits analysis for any larger investments so you can see whether it makes sense for you.

Apps for portable devices such as tablets and phones can deliver the most appropriate content in the best way. You will need to consider what is needed for Android, Apple and Mobile Windows devices, so be sure to understand the business case for investing in these.

If you host your own site, this will be easier over a superfast broadband connection. However, most businesses prefer to outsource hosting to larger companies with data centres that have robust back up, connectivity and security.

Security is as important as ever. Remember to make sure that any transactions are carried out securely, that any customer details collected are stored in a secure and protected way, and that all your antivirus software is up to date on the computer you use to manage your website as well as on the server hosting the website.

As more people get superfast broadband, websites need to respond more quickly, and those that are sent and displayed efficiently will have the competitive advantage.

Investigate how well your website is performing by checking your 'page load' speed. You can use Google Webmaster tools or the Firebug browser extension to do this. Aim for a page load of 1-3s and use these tools to optimise for mobile use too.

Video doesn't need to be expensive – informative self-made YouTube type videos can get the message across easily.

Online advertising will help drive relevant potential customers to your site, and tools such as Google Adwords provide excellent metrics to measure your ROI.

QR codes can drive more traffic to your site. There are many free QR code generators on the Internet and tracking code can be embedded to monitor usage and effectiveness.

Try and gather information from potential customers without putting them off – competitions are a good way of collecting emails and you can then use e-newsletters to drive people back to the website.

Further info

Superfast Business Cornwall is a fully funded service to support eligible businesses to understand, adopt and exploit digital technologies. The service offers all businesses in Cornwall access to guides, top tips, case studies, videos and more in its Technology Knowledge Bank at www.sfbcornwall.co.uk/knowledge-bank



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