

The Importance of Visibility Online

Imagine if your premises had no signage or displays on show...

How would people find you?
Or know where you are?
Or even what you do?

That is exactly what it is like online with no presence.

The majority of us are now living in a digital world. In 2019, online sales accounted for 19% of all retail sales (Statista, 2020), making it very clear it is no longer possible for businesses to rely solely on traditional methods of selling.

Your business is not online, but your customers are.

Did you know that 97% of consumers are searching for local businesses online?

As well as this, they are posting reviews, asking for recommendations and advice and asking friends (or even strangers online) about their experiences with your products and services. It is great when people talk about your business but without an online presence, you will be unable to join the conversation.

Businesses need to adapt and innovate and ensuring you have a highly visible presence online is a sure way to help your brand stand out from your competitors and increase sales.

Online visibility can:

- Make it easier for potential customers to find you
- Make it easier to showcase your products and services
- Make it easier to build relationships with new and current customers
- Make it easier to sell and market your brand

But where do you exactly start?

Your Website

No matter how small your business is, you need a website that contains at least the fundamental information your customers – both existing and potential – need. This includes:

- Contact details
- Location(s)
- Opening times
- Item(s) for sales or services on offer

A basic website is pretty easy to set up using a website builder such as **WordPress**, **Wix** or **Squarespace** as they are relatively low cost for small businesses. They can also support you with the build of your website with templates, training tutorials and online agents.



- Highly customisable
- Search engine optimisation (SEO) plan
- Drag and drop editor

Pricing
£3 - £22 a month



SQUARESPACE

- Pre-built templates that can be personalised
- Built-in SEO tools
- Ability to integrate popular apps

Pricing
£10-£37 a month



WORDPRESS

- The most widely used content management system
- Extremely customisable design, features and functionalities
- You can incorporate third-party tools to create the website you need

Pricing
£3-£47 a month

Alternatively, if the idea of building a website seems quite daunting, utilising a local website design agency can help take the stress out of it and ensure your website is bespoke to your requirements (it also means you can concentrate on other aspects of your business!)

Social Media

Social media offers an easy and low-commitment way for potential customers to express interest in your business and your products. It can:

- Increase brand awareness
- Humanise your brand
- Increase website traffic
- Generate leads
- Boost sales
- Partner with influencers
- Promote content

There are many different social media platforms to choose from – Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, TikTok – and while it may seem like a good idea to be on all of them, it can be time-consuming and potentially even ineffective to try and use all of them. Ask your current customers what they use and stick to no more than three platforms.

Google My Business

Google My Business is a free tool that allows you to promote your business and your website on Google Search and Google Maps. It can help you connect with your customers, post updates (such as changes in opening times) and even show you how customers are interacting with your business on Google.

It complements your website by adding more visibility to your current business website and even allows you to collect reviews from customers – just make sure you respond to reviews (good or bad) professionally.

