



How to Create a Website

In the online world, your website effectively becomes your HQ...

It is your online storefront and the place people initially come to learn about you and your business.

Without one, it may raise suspicions for people searching for your company in Google or other search engines.

Why you need a website:

- Your customers expect it - Taking upon the previous point, your tech-savvy customers expect you to have a website to find more information about your business. As for you, your website can help you generate business, increase brand recall value, promote goodwill in front of customers and target audience, as well as deliver strong marketing messages. Think of it this way, your website delivers your marketing message 24 hours, 365 days in a year! Apart from e-commerce websites, most professional websites are information-oriented and try to solve visitors' pain points.
- It provides social proof - Customer behavior is driven mostly by what others have to say about your business. No matter, if your

brand is rated 5-star on review sites like FourSquare or Yelp, people expect to see your website to get more information about the brand. Since prospective buyers are already looking for you online, including customer testimonials on your site is a great way to impress potential buyers and provide social proof.

- You control the narrative - While it is difficult to control what people say about you, you can influence your brand perception by writing your own story on the website. A website is a far more efficient way than print ads or snail mail brochures when it comes to helping brands spread their message, vision, and mission. According to SEOTribunal, there are 5.6 billion searches on Google per day, and 63,000 searches per second on any given day. Imagine, with that kind of search volume, there might be someone online right now looking for your exact service. If you do not have a website, guess who will get the business? Not you! But that competitor next door, who has a great-looking search-optimized website.
- Your competitors all have company websites - Did you know that having a website gives you a fair chance to compete with the giants of your industry? When an optimized website is created, it can rank higher and be at the right place at the right time. Bidding for the right keywords can increase your website traffic and influence your consumer's journey, which typically begins with research, recommendations, and reviews. Having a prominent position in the search results page is one of the many ways to challenge your industry Goliaths. Therefore, if you do not dominate the Internet, you are giving your customers a reason to buy from the competition.
- Never put up the 'closed for business' sign again - Having a website means that your content is available to users anytime during the day, as per their convenience. So, whether someone visits your website in the dead of the night or during the day, in some way you are always interacting with them, and can say goodbye to that 'closed for business' sign. Being accessible at all times supports marketing and increases sales dramatically, and this is especially true for e-commerce companies. It also is a step towards effective customer service and relationship building, especially if you have AI-powered chatbots enabled on your

website that can solve basic problems of your customers when they need it the most.

- You will show up in Google search results - In the digital transformation era, creating a website on free tools such as WordPress.com does not cost a lot of money, but provides more bang for your buck. A search engine optimized website lets you be in front of thousands of more potential consumers without spending much. It can help you reach a wider target audience for promoting your services or products. The content on the website also influences buying decisions and commercial transactions, no matter which industry you are in.
- Showcase your art, products, and services - It cannot be stressed enough that a website is the first interaction of your target audience with your brand. How you position your business is totally in your control. Add to it, you can not only display your offerings with features but also provide short video tutorials or downloadable PDF instructions. You can also highlight your awards, testimonials and all the features that can alleviate your visitors' pain points. This increases the average time your customers spend on the website and perhaps influence their decision to contact you.

A dedicated website offers many advantages over channels like Facebook and Instagram, allowing your business to showcase all the brand elements the way you want.

Let us start with the purpose of your website. What are the goals for it? Will it be an online store to sell your artwork? Is it going to be a portfolio to showcase your art? Maybe you need a "resume" online to provide credibility to art dealers or for licensing. It could also include a blog to share your knowledge or behind the scenes of your work.

Now you need a domain name. This may sound obvious, but it is worth mentioning – make it relevant. It should match what visitors

will be expecting when they visit your site. You also want to keep it as short as possible and hopefully memorable. You might also want to avoid numbers if you can. But most important is you want to make sure no one else is using that name.

A few sites to help you with that:

www.name.com

www.namecheap.com

<https://domains.google/>

And also BlueHost, GoDaddy, and Squarespace.

Now that you have a name you can choose a website hosting and get a custom email. There are lots of great options. Be sure to look for free domain name with SSL, custom emails, good bandwidth, and great customer service.

Some great Website hosting for artists are: Wix, Squarespace, Shopify, GoDaddy, and Bluehost. I am a Bluehost affiliate and can help with all things Bluehost.

Now that you are ready to build, you need to think about your design and structure. You want to keep your design clean and simple. It will stand the test of time. Having a light or white background allows for your artwork to pop. And less is more with website design. Choose colors that you like or are in your brand and or logo. You want to use colors to be complementary. Also, you will need super high quality photo of your art preferably with watermarks or you will need to set up your site with no right click. You want your image to be professional. You will want to keep consistent style and format with all the pages on your site. Your site should also be perfectly responsive. That means that it will adapt to any device.

Using a Website Builder has many Pros:

- It is easy to use
- You do not need additional software
- You can start without technical knowledge
- Updates and security aspects are handled by the website builder
- Predefined templates you can adapt

The Cons of using a website builder:

- You cannot always add extra features
- Not always flexible
- Showcase your artwork and products
- Not designed for complicated websites
- Creativity depends on the template
- There can be additional costs

Using hosting company and with WordPress has many pros:

- You can choose the hosting company.
- Great for multi-language websites.
- Technical flexibility: you can access the whole source code (if you know what you are doing).
- You can get more features with plugins.

The Cons:

- No personal technical support.
- Creative freedom depends on the template.
- It can have additional costs for the plugins.
- You may need a programmer to make small aesthetic changes.

Wix

Design and build your own high-quality websites. Whether you are promoting your business, showcasing your work, opening your store or starting a blog—you can do it all with the Wix website builder. They have tons of great templates with great online stores. Very responsive and that is optimized for search engines. Templates are somewhat flexible but are not totally customizable.

Shopify

Create an ecommerce website backed by powerful tools that help you find customers, drive sales, and manage your day-to-day. They are built for an online store. Shopify also has good customer service for you as a business. It is a one-stop shop to start and run your store. If you are needing a portfolio site, Shopify may not be the solution. It is extremely limited in the customization of their themes.

GoDaddy

GoDaddy have many templates with integrated tools to help. Caution – not all the help and tools are free. But with that said you can create a beautiful site that you and your customers will love.

ArtStorefronts

Art Storefronts is the all-in-One art business solution for photographers and artists. They have beautiful art gallery themes with online stores. They provide tons of tools and helpful tutorials. You can also get a marketing plan with ongoing consultation. It is a great starting point. Although you are still limited with themes and customization of your site.

BlueHost

I am a BlueHost Affiliate

A BlueHost WordPress site allows for the most versatile custom website. As in GoDaddy – BlueHost also offers website themes that you can plug and go. They include easy step-by-step set up with 24/7 lifetime support. It allows for WordPress total design freedom. Optimize with design freedom, marketing tools, insightful analytics and scalable growth. At BlueHost, you can customize your website to your heart's content with true design flexibility. No other builder lets you create and modify with such boundless creativity.

Opt for a web hosting service that is credible with a strong reputation. Choose a service provider that can accommodate changes quickly and economically. This will come handy especially when your business expands, downsizes, or has other important updates.

Each of the artist ecommerce shops in this list were included for their ease of navigating and purchasing, high level of professionalism, and careful branding and attention to detail. All of them do a great job. Your website does not have to be ultra-slick with fancy responsive images and background videos, but the design and features should make it clear that you care about the customer's experience and that you really

do want to make the sale and promote your art in a professional manner. If your ecommerce shop is thoughtfully designed, customers can focus less on trying to figure out how to make a purchase and more on which piece they want to buy first!

Ready, Set, Go!

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