

Let me tell you a few reasons why you need a website.

Like many small business owners, you may believe your business cannot benefit from having a website or that a website is not within your budget. Or maybe you think because you don't use a computer, neither do your potential customers. These are misconceptions.

Below are a list of reason why you really need a website:

1. YOUR SMALL BUSINESS WILL GAIN CREDIBILITY

Today, more and more consumers use the internet to search for the products or services they need. Your small business will gain credibility by having a website. Without one, potential customers will go to your competitors that do.

2. A WEBSITE SAVES YOU MONEY

As a small business owner you probably think you can't afford a professional website, but you can't afford NOT to. Although the cost of designing a website varies, once it's up and running, a website for a small business generally costs under R 1400 a month and, in some cases, as little as R 180. Compared with the cost of a newspaper ad, when you consider the potential market you can reach with a website, it is a very cost effective way to promote your business.

3. IT WILL ENABLE YOU TO KEEP YOUR CUSTOMERS INFORMED

Think of your website as being your online brochure or catalogue. It is much easier and quicker to update information about your products and services on your website than in print material, making it an effective way of letting your customers know about the arrival of new products, upcoming events, special promotions, or any new services you now offer. Unlike print ads which quickly become outdated, your website can provide current information and news.

4. It IS ALWAYS ACCESSABLE, WELL UNLESS YOU DECIDE TO TAKE IT DOWN!

A website is available to both your regular and potential customers 24 HOURS A DA, 7 DAYS A WEEK, 365 DAYS A YEAR, providing them with the convenience of reviewing your products and services when your store or office is closed. With today's busy lifestyles, this is a great selling point when making a purchase decision.

5. A WEBSITE MAKES IT POSSIBLE TO TARGET A WIDER MARKET.

Whether you provide products or services, your website will provide an alternative location to sell them. As a retailer, a website (eCommerce) is a great place to sell your products to a wider market; even services can be made available globally. Don't think you'll be able to sell your products or services online? Don't forget, even cars and houses sell online!

6. IT PROVIDES A MEDIUM ON WHICH TO SHOWCASE YOUR WORK

No matter what type of business you're in, a website is a great place to showcase your work. By including a portfolio or image gallery, as well as testimonials about your work, you can demonstrate what makes your business unique.

7. A WEBSITE SAVES YOU TIME

Providing information to your customers takes time, whether it's on the phone, face-to-face, in a brochure, or in emails. With an online catalogue you can provide lots of information about your products and services. Once your website is up and running, it is available to your customers indefinitely, saving you time. And what is time? Time is money!

8. IT IMPROVES CUSTOMER SERVICE

Maybe you sell environmentally friendly products and would like to share tips on how to recycle, or perhaps you're an accountant and want to give your clients advice on how to simplify their bookkeeping practices. By including a FAQ page, adding articles or uploading newsletters to answer all your customers' questions you can keep them up-to-date. What better way to provide them with value added service than by sharing information on your website!