Fire Your Webmaster!

Create your own WordPress site
and save yourself a fortune

Alun Richards

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Also by

Alun Richards

The Seven Critical Website Mistakes: *Website Mistakes People Unwittingly Make, and How To Solve Them*

Note

Chapter One of '*Fire Your Webmaster!*'

now includes the whole of

'The Seven Critical Website Mistakes'

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Introduction

Why Have a Website?

To be in business today, you must have a website. To not have one is unthinkable.

If you don't have a website, how on earth do you promote your products and services, take leads and generate sales?

And if your website doesn't perform those three critical functions, it's just costing you money rather than generating money for you.

Of course, you could get a webmaster to build and maintain your website. But I have news for you. Webmasters are going the way of the dinosaurs. The book you're holding in your hand will allow you to Fire You Webmaster!

Fire Your Webmaster!

So why should you fire your webmaster?

Because by doing so you get more autonomy, more control and more flexibility. You get to be the master of your own destiny. And you get a website on your own terms at vastly less cost.

Look, so many webmasters have just been ‘taking the mick’ for the last few years. They charged high fees because they understood obscure programming languages.

We overlooked their many faults.

- Their inability to communicate with ordinary mortals.
- Their eye-watering fees for simple changes to one paragraph of text on your website.
- The fact that every time you wanted to get hold of them, they were off snowboarding.

No more!

Now you can fire your webmaster and keep the change.

You’ll have a website on your terms. One that you can create and maintain yourself. A website that has at least as much functionality than one designed by a webmaster.

Remember in the dark old days, before word processors, when typing pools existed? (If you don’t, ask your Dad.) No one has had their reports created by a typing pool since the early 1980s. With easy to use word pressing packages, everyone produces their reports themselves.

In the same way, you don't need to rely on a webmaster, as there are easy to use tools to build and maintain our own websites.

Bad Webmasters

There are two particularly bad types of webmaster.

One is the die-hard techie.

This webmaster understands technology inside out. Your site will be full of it. The latest technology - not necessarily in the service of your business, but cutting-edge technology all the same.

The die-hard techie loves and understands technology but is less good with people and communicating with them. This results in misunderstandings with you. These webmasters are often very difficult to deal with.

The second is the graphic designer.

He (webmasters are nearly all male) creates stunning looking sites with lovely layout, great colour combinations and superb graphics. Unfortunately, as a graphic designer, he knows nothing about marketing. So his sites do not have the means to take leads or actively sell products.

Both of these webmasters produce websites that are only maintainable by the webmaster themselves. This means you are painted into a corner. You cannot update the site and must rely on paying high fees every time you need a small change to your site.

Both webmasters, because of their backgrounds, do not understand the marketing concepts needed to produce a website that truly supports your business.

Both webmasters will produce websites that cost you money rather than generate money.

It's time for all that to stop.

Why This Book is Important

In this book, I share with you the closely-guarded tools, techniques and strategies that I use to build websites myself and for my clients.

By following the recommendations in this book, you will have a website that you control yourself. You build it – it's easy, and I'll show you how. You maintain it and save yourself a fortune! You benefit from having a modern, great-looking, functional website that takes leads, sells your products and effectively promotes you.

Fire Your Webmaster, and read on!

Chapter One

The Seven Critical Website Mistakes

Why Understand the Critical Problems?

In my many years of creating websites for clients, I have seen a number of problems that come up again and again. They are the problems that have the biggest negative impact on people. They are the fundamental problems that you need to get resolved to build a website that works for you.

Any one of these problems can frustrate your chances of being successful online.

If you avoid them in the first place, you have a much better chance of succeeding with your website.

1. Website Not Oriented to Your Market
2. Having a Brochure Website
3. Wrong Hosting
4. Wrong Registrar
5. Wrong Domain Name
6. Wrong Technology Choices
7. Poor Look and Feel

Let's explore them one by one.

Website Not Oriented to Your Market

Let's start with the biggest problem of all - a website not oriented to your target market. With some of the website problems I'm discussing, we can change an aspect of the technology used, or a service supplier and resolve the problem.

Not so with this problem. If your website is not oriented to your target market, it's best to take a deep breath, accept the fact and begin planning a website that does appeal to your market.

The sad fact is that if you try to appeal to everyone you will appeal to no-one. Appealing to no-one means you get no site visitors. And this means no list sign-ups and no eyeballs to see the products and services you offer.

So it pays to get clear from the start what it is you offer, and to whom, and to orient your website around that.

What is Your Niche?

In order to be successful in business – any business – you must be crystal clear about exactly who your market niche is.

And your website must reflect this.

It must provide information that your target market want. It must use their unique language. They must feel that it's written for them, or they will go elsewhere.

Your website must be oriented to your target market.

The risk is that if it's not specifically oriented to your target market, your website won't appeal to anyone.

What does Your Market Want?

Your website must offer what your target market uniquely want.

If you know your target market well, you must be aware of their top 3-5 problems. Every market has a set of problems that the members of the market come across again and again.

In recognising what these are, not only do you gain credibility in that market, but you develop rapport with its members instantly.

How do You Know What Your Market Want?

You know what your market want by asking them! More about this later, but there are several effective online means to get information from your market, as well as the more traditional offline ways of getting information.

If you're not sure what your market wants, then the first step is to find out. This will save you perhaps weeks of lost time in developing the wrong product, supplying it via the wrong media or offering it at the wrong price.

Does Your Website Deliver It?

Finally, you must ask yourself whether your website delivers what your target market wants. Not what they need – what they want.

Need and want are two fundamentally different things. You may know precisely what your market need, but there's no point in offering it if they do not want it.

So does your website offer what your target market actually wants, in the format they want, at a price that they can afford?

If you offer solutions to your market's key problems, then you will be a person much in demand. If you don't, your website may need some changes.

Having a Brochure Website

What is a brochure website and why should you care?

Definition of a Brochure Site

A brochure site looks just like an online brochure. Often it can look great – typically with well-taken pictures, but with a brochure site there is no interaction with your prospect.

Problems with a Brochure Site

Although it can place you in a good light, a brochure site's lack of interaction with your prospects means that it does not collect leads and it does not sell your offerings.

These are the fundamentals of business – attracting prospects and converting them to paying customers.

It's been possible to do both of these online for years now, and there is no earthly reason why your website should not do both.

Does not take leads

What do I mean by not taking leads?

A lead is a prospect who may want to do business with you. They haven't done business with you yet, but they are part of your target market, you know what their biggest problems are, and you have a solution that you can sell to them.

The most common way to collect leads is to capture your prospect's name and email address via a form on your site.

Once you capture a prospect's details, they are stored securely in an online database. These databases have mechanisms to send emails to your collection of leads, to build the relationship with them, and to make offers to them.

You've probably seen an email capture form on several websites, and have probably signed up to several people's online databases.

It's now straightforward for your website to interact with prospects in this way. You need to have an account with an autoresponder.

E.g. Aweber (http://alunrecommends.com/aweber or http://1clickshoppingcart.com)

The building and maintenance of your online database of prospects is a vital part of your business and we'll return to this several times in this book.

Does Not Sell Your Offerings

The second critical function that your website must perform is it must sell your products or services.

I've mentioned that in having a target market, you must understand the biggest problems experienced by that market.

If you're then able to offer your solutions to those problems at an attractive cost from your website, then you have the basis of a business.

Offering products

Any number of products can be offered from your website. These can range from entry-level products right up to tailored courses.

- PDF tips booklets
- Downloadable eBooks
- Books
- CDs
- DVDs
- Home study courses
- Teleseminar or webinar courses
- Physical seminars and workshops
- Mentoring programmes

All of these products and more can be offered from your website. You can take your customer's payment online via

credit card or debit card and ensure that either downloads or physical products are supplied to your new customer.

Offering Services From Your Website

Selling services from your website is similar to selling products. But it's not enough to just passively post a contact number for people to book your services. This simply does not engage people sufficiently.

Intangibility of a service

With a service, there's nothing to see or feel – there's nothing that the prospect can see, that they are going to get. This lack of physical evidence can dissuade people from buying a service from you – they simply don't have any proof of the existence of your service. You therefore must make an intangible service more tangible and real to your prospects. Here's how you can make an intangible service more tangible.

- Provision of a supporting physical product
- Provision of information
- An opportunity to interact
- A description of your service

So ask yourself, what could I provide to make my service appear more tangible? These days it's possible to add value to a service easily at little cost.

Here are some ideas:

- Downloadable plan that the customer can use.
- A physical workbook that's sent out to them.
- A PDF with instructions for preparing for your service.
- A survey about their possible problems and suggested solutions.
- An audio where you explain the first few steps of your programme.
- A pre-recorded teleseminar or webinar.
- An online video with pre-service exercises.
- An image of your service in a box

Any and all of these strategies can be used to make your service more tangible. The more costly your service, the more of these you want to use.

So what could you offer?