VALHALLA
CREATIVE DESIGN

Website Must Have Checklist

For small businesses that want to make it big

Plan The Customer Journey

Easy to navigate site structure no more than three levels deep (think three clicks or less!).

Plan out the primary objective (the customer action) for the site. Is it actionable from the homepage?

Plan out the primary objective (the customer action) for each page. For example to contact you, download an eBook, get a free quote or buy a product, etc.

Do you have set goal pages (eg a contact us page with a submittable form, etc)?

Is the primary action you want the visitor to follow clear on all pages?

Is there an obvious path for the user to follow throughout site with clear calls to action (CTA' s) leading users to perform primary / secondary goal/s on every page (No dead ends!).

Keep it simple. Don't confuse your visitor by asking for too many things. Are you focussing on your main goal?

Get The Right Style

Is the site clean and aesthetically appealing? Have you asked people you trust for feedback?

Professionally designed logo (preferably on top left hand side of website) that represents company values and brand and speaks directly to your target audience.

Are the colors used harmonious and logically related? Tip: studies show that more colours are better than just 1-2 colours when it comes to websites (Just steer clear of rainbow coloured WordArt, ugh!).

Good use of banner images with your key messages and calls to action (don't just load up on pretty pictures). Are they clickable to your goal page, and do they tie in with your primary objective?

Produce The Right Content

Have you outlined a clear statement of purpose for the site? It must be clear within a few seconds without reading too much text.

Compelling headlines aimed at solving the user's problems and pains. (Tip: don't talk about yourself, talk about how you can help solve their problems. You are the bandaid!)

Well written, brief but informative copy that appeals to your target audience and is in line with your brand values (don't be afraid to let your personality shine through and stand out from your competitors).

Is text broken into small, readable chunks? Highlighted using headings, sub-headings and bullets or list features where appropriate to assist in skimming?

Does the content include all of the information prospects need or might want about a topic? Does it answer all of their questions?

Keep it simple. Don't confuse your visitor by asking for too many things. Are you focussing on your main goal?

Build Your Credibility & Trust

Great, results-focused testimonials (text or video) to build trust.

Award logos, association member logos or other factors to help build trust and credibility.

Case studies or success stories to help tell your story and cement your quality of work.

Video on home page? Video is 50 times more likely to be ranked over text and can help improve your ranking. (Tip: Use your keywords in your video title and take the time to learn about YouTube marketing.)

A well-written 'About Us' page that talks about the benefits to the user. Avoid rabbiting on about the fact you were established in 1956 and have a nice looking building. Remember, it's about them, not you.

Do you have a company style guide? Get the 'big business' look with a consistent style throughout your website and letterheads, etc. This style guide doesn't have to be fancy, just know what your preferred font are, etc, and stick to it.

Consistent use of terms Eg. 'Homepage' or 'Home Page'.

Consistent style treatment of bulleted lists.

Consistent capitalisation, especially for main headings.

Correct spelling and grammar.

All phone numbers and email addresses are correct.

Ensure there's no placeholder text still on site, nothing looks more unprofessional!

Capture Those Leads

Opt-in email newsletter functionality (where opt-in's are automatically added so you don't have to worry).

Really compelling signup text to entice people to subscribe (Tip: People are super busy these days - tell them what's in it for them.)

Multiple signup options throughout the site's content gently guiding them to join your list.

Valuable content you can use as lead bait, eg. 'Sign up to receive this free eBook valued at $97!'

Write professional and branded auto-response success pages and auto-response emails. These are the messages displayed or sent to people once they convert on your site. Eg. When an action is taken like 'Request a Quote', what are you telling people after they complete the form? Use this as an opportunity to further connect with them by asking them to join you over at Facebook for example.

Phone number top right hand corner of site, or somewhere above the fold.

Easy to find contact details or an obvious link to contact page on EVERY page.

A quick enquiry form on home page (if site design allows).

Website search function.

Social media links.

Social media sharing buttons on all your content, products, articles and blogs.

Boost Your Ranking

Important keyword rich content above the fold.

1-2 Keywords or keyphrases allocated for each page.

Unique Title Tag & Meta Description with keywords uploaded for each page. (Tip: Your Meta Description is your call to action on Google's SERP results. It's what can get people to click so make it interesting!)

Natural use of keywords throughout content, H1 headings and body copy. (Tip: Always include your keyword or keyphrase in your H1 heading. NB: Don't repeat your keyword over and over, Google doesn't like it!

Your keywords used in links to other pages on site Eg. Instead of 'Click Here' link text should read 'View Packages for Dog Grooming Ballarat'

Image 'alt' tags in place on all significant images.

Create an XML Sitemap

Make Sure Everything Is Working

Test that all links (internal and external) are valid and work correctly.

Check all forms including contact enquiry, eBook downloads, blog comments, quote request etc.

Check your auto-response success pages.

Check your auto-response emails.

Check what the site looks like on a mobile device.

Ensure all clickable images and CTA buttons are linked correctly.

Ensure your logo links back to your homepage.

Post Launch Marketing

Submit your site to search engines (otherwise it may take a couple of weeks to be seen).

Decide if utilising social media sites would be worthwhile for your business.
There's Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram, Flickr, Stumbledupon, Foursquare, Tumblr, etc but you need to ensure your target audience is actually frequenting these sites before you invest time and effort into them.

Create a profile on Yelp

Setup a profile on Google+ Local (if you do business on a local level)

Approach industry websites to guest blog for them to gain valuable leads and links back to your site. This can have dramaticimpact on your Offpage SEO efforts if done correctly and can bring valuable traffic to your site.

Create a Pay-Per-Click (PPC) / Google Adwords campaign to drive traffic.

Add your new website links to your company email signatures.