

# A Beginners Guide To Web Strategy



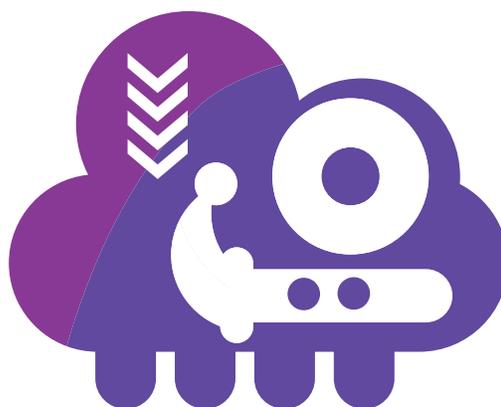
*A **web strategy** is a long term strategic [...] plan indicating how to create and develop a company's online presence adhering to the [...] development strategy. A web strategy is created by a highly skilled business professional, the web strategist, who is knowledgeable in online trends, business, design, user experience and technology concept and principles.*

*Source Wikipedia*

## Baby Steps...

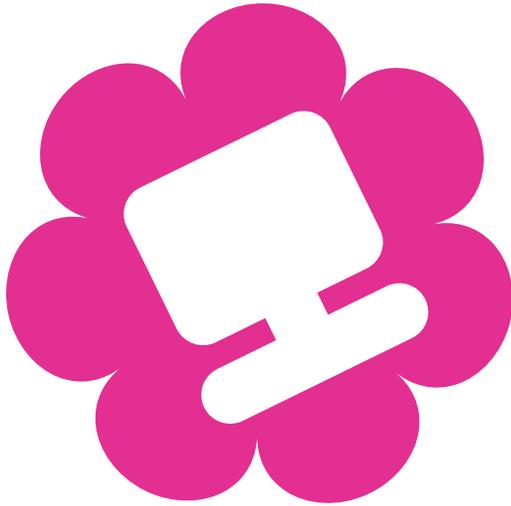
“Web strategy” is a very broad term... In fact, it is probably too broad a term for this beginners guide! So we'll pair it back and take it step-by-step.

Supposing you are looking for a website or are trying to build a web presence for your business in some form... Once you bring part or all of your business online, there is no point in allowing your website to sit there like deaf mute hermit, out in the cyber-wilderness! Customers, users or your key target audiences, are all waiting for you to reach out to them!



Online strategy is about building a web presence, and these are the basic elements:

- Your Website
- Social Networks (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, etc...)
- Other websites (You may have microsites or old websites)
- Email marketing
- Online Advertising
- Blogs
- Forums
- Other...



## Your Website

Your website should be the core component of your online strategy and should act as the hub which binds the other elements into a unified approach.

Your website has to be easily navigable and readable, optimised for the devices it is commonly being viewed on, optimised for search engines ( structural SEO ), active,

up-to-date & accurate, displaying of key calls-toaction prominently ( including email sign-up, enquiry form and/or phone number ), displaying active social media integration, etc...

Avoid verbose language or busy, text-heavy pages – use considered images to get your message out and social media plug-ins to keep your website dynamic – as opposed to static. If your business is simple then keep it simple.

The most important metric online ( behind your profit margin ) for understanding the success of your web strategy is the number of people visiting your website. This is also the place where you can gather the most accurate data on user behaviour and develop an understanding of what they are interested in and responding to.

## Social Media

The relevance and importance of different social media platforms varies from case-to-case. If your business is selling to other businesses, then maybe a Twitter/LinkedIn lead generation strategy is more appropriate. If you are engaging consumers directly, maybe Twitter/Facebook is more appropriate. Many business do not use these platforms to direct-sell. In fact, it can

often be very counter-productive to directly sell to consumer in an environment where they haven't come to buy anything. You may be hidden or your content marked as spam.

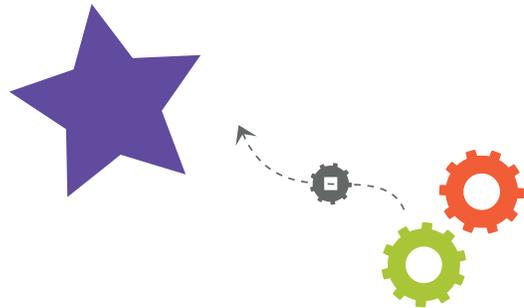
But that in no way invalidates the use of social media platforms. This merely means that you must engage in the conversation, build your visibility and online community, and then use the platforms for customer support and enquiries. Think of social media in terms of community management rather than sales, and study the use by successful business. Think your business is too boring for this kind of strategy? I mean, who wants to connect with a vegetable shop on Facebook, right?

Well check [these guys](#) out then. It is all about becoming comfortable building a personality for your business. Post regularly and frequently, at least every day, but avoid clunking a lot of posts together. You'll either filly up a readers feed and dilute your message or get marked as spam, which will reduce your visibility for later posts. Post interesting or entertaining content, and measure & evaluate the level of engagement and feedback for different types of content. Most of the platforms offer simple analytics tools to help you in this task. You may like to try out a Social CRM & Analytics tool like [Sprout Social](#), which offers a thirty day free trial.



## Other Websites

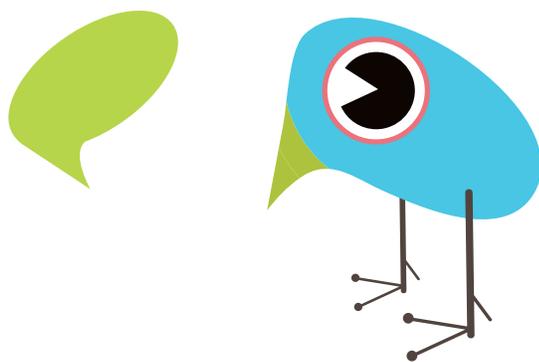
Google ranks websites for search engine authority. Websites build up authority over time and this means that some old website under another domain may have higher authority for some key words that are important for you. Link to your new website or even redirect so as to leverage this authority.



Other websites in your field, including blogs and forums, carry weight in to search engines for your field, and it is important to become part of the conversation in these places to build out a link building strategy. But the best way of getting links around other websites is to create compelling useful content that other users simply want to share and promote. This is called “Organic SEO”.

## Email Marketing

E-Newsletters are a fast and affordable solution for get your latest offer or promotion cross to thousands at the touch of a button. But first you need to gather emails. Businesses often offer something in return for an email address, like a discount voucher, or they provide useful information about a subject that gives a user/lead a good reason to stay connected.



Once an email list is built, using email marketing software, like ours at Enhance, allows you to send bulk emails and gives you the flexibility to send them whenever you need to cost effectively.

This service includes Powerful, attractive reports on every aspect of each campaign where you can drill down in each report for more detail. You can export campaign reports and campaign, subscriber, client and account level reporting.

Measurement, as with all web marketing activity, is at the core of email marketing. A useful technique is to test out a number of different variations on content and layout and drip feed these emails out using A/B split-testing ( i.e. testing which email is more successful between two variations ) before sending out the largest number of emails in order to minimise the amount of times you end up in spam boxes.

If possible, try to categorise different contacts by demographics or type using a form on your website beside the email submit field or else using data gathered through a Facebook login.

Our Email Marketing Manager offers you:

- Easy administration of your email list.
- Total customised control of the emails you send.
- Complete analysis of the success of your email campaign at the touch of a button.

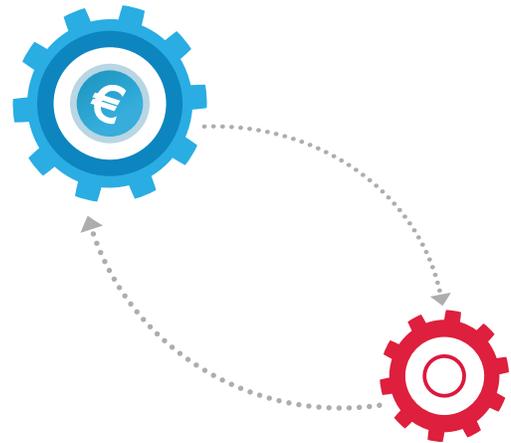
## Online Advertising

The most popular online advertising tool platform is Google Adwords. This allows you to target users typing specific keywords into Google's search engine and measure the "click-through rate" ( how many people are clicking on your link ) and you only pay for the actually "clicks", not the amount of times you appear on a user's screen.

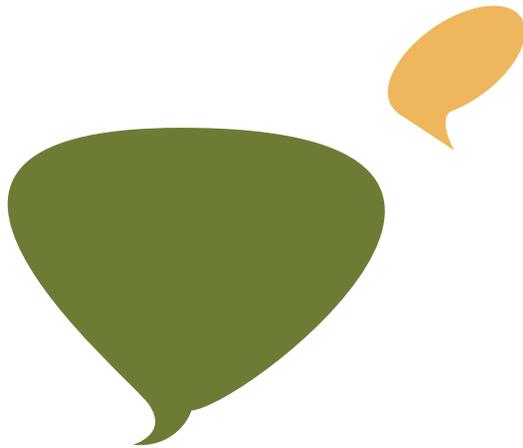
You also set your maximum weekly/ monthly budget so you never worry about over-spending.

You can then use Google Analytics tool to measure what users who typed in specific keywords did, on average, when they reached your website. This allows you to maximise your ROI and tailor your advertising campaign based upon real data. Google also spreads your advert around different affiliate websites, so you can see which sites are bringing you the most traffic. Google automatically targets your ads to the most relevant sites and page placements based on a given page's content and your chosen keywords.

Both by appearing above search results and in website banner advertising, Google advertising serves more purposes than the pure ROI. At Enhance, we recommend that any website owner who wishes to build up an organic SEO strategy put a limited budget into Google Adwords in order to understand what key words and websites are driving most of the correct traffic (as opposed to keywords with high click-through but also high bounce rate – or the number of people immediately leaving your website). This provides you with key insights for your content marketing strategy through a small sample set of potential customers or users.



## Blogs



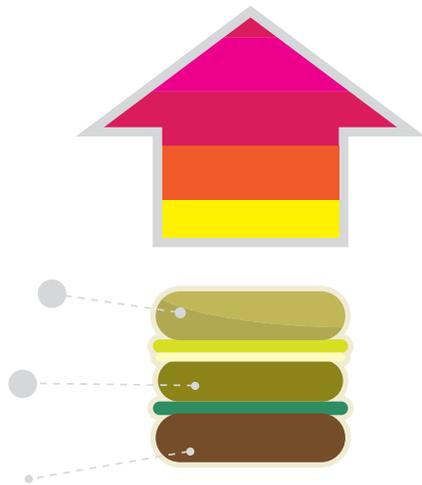
Whether it is your own or that of another, blogs are an integral part of the internet and how people communicate online. They are places of [usually] more considered and detailed conversation than most social media activity, and popular blogs are hugely influential. They can fulfil very specific niches and are often written by experts in narrow fields or subject matters that normal journalism can't compete with.

They can have local, national or international reach. If you are importing/selling/producing wine, it can be hugely beneficial to be reviewed in the blog of a popular wine connoisseur. Even if the review is negative, a search engine will read it as a positive endorsement because blog has a high authority number for the keywords surrounding wine.

Writing your own interesting blog content brings life and flavour to what can otherwise become a static website. This increases customer/user engagement improves organic SEO if done attentively. We cover the subject more deeply in our white paper on Content Marketing.

For a great example of blog writing, check out one of the most successful business blogs in the world by [37signals](#) in the US.





## Sustained Measured Strategy...

In order that time and money is not wasted and ROI is maximised, it is absolutely key that measurement is at the highest priority. It is only through measurement and testing that we learn about what works and doesn't work online. There is a lot of misinformation online about web marketing and measurement shows us what works and doesn't.

In web strategy, there is typically a lag between your marketing activities and the

result. There are many tools online to measure the growth and proliferation of your company/organisation message. Facebook has some simple analytics tools, and Google analytics is your friend. It is also important to measure your off-site search engine optimisation – using little techniques to learn about where people are linking to your website from around the web and using this data to build out your communications strategy. But there is nothing worse, from a web marketing perspective, than an inactive blog or Facebook page. To a user/prospective customer, this is saying that the business is inactive. Worse than inactive, inaccurate out of date information can actually be damaging to your business.

But remember, the slow steady sustained development of a web strategy is built upon both your skills and the growth of your online community. When your activities seem tedious and unrewarding you could be on the cusp of a tipping point, where organic viral growth takes effect or you become so familiar with the process that they become habitual and learning new techniques becomes enjoyable.

## Where to Start...

Defining an online strategy can be a daunting task, we can help with this process, our 15 plus years of experience in the industry means we can bring a high level of knowledge and understanding to bear to offer, real, meaningful support. We back this up with a set of metrics which will help define the current situation and offer practical steps to develop, implement and then measure the Strategy.