

BEFORE YOU BUILD YOUR WEBSITE

The Website Planning Checklist : 8 essential decisions to make before you choose your theme, write your pages or start building.

Create your website with clarity, purpose and room to grow.

Before You Begin

A successful website doesn't begin with colours, fonts, themes or plugins.

It begins with **clarity**.

Who are you trying to reach? What do they need? What do you want your website to accomplish? And what should someone do after arriving there?

You don't need to have every answer perfectly figured out.

Use this checklist to capture what you know today. You can refine it as your business grows.

1. Get Clear on Who Your Website Is For

Before deciding what your website should say, think about the person you want it to speak to.

Who is my ideal visitor or client?

What problem, need or desire brings them to my website?

What are they hoping to accomplish?

What words might they use to describe that problem or goal?

What would make them think, "Yes! This is exactly what I was looking for"?

My clarity statement

The person I most want my website to help is:

2. Define Your Website's Main Goal

Your website may accomplish several things, but one goal should usually take priority.

What is the most important action you want a visitor to take?

- ☐ Book a discovery call or consultation
- ☐ Join my email list
- ☐ Purchase a product or service
- ☐ Enroll in a course or program
- ☐ Register for an event or workshop
- ☐ Contact me
- ☐ Visit my shop
- ☐ Read or explore my content
- ☐ Other: _____

My website's primary goal is:

If my website accomplished ONE thing really well, I would want it to:

3. Clarify Your Message

Someone arriving on your website should quickly understand three things:

Who is this for? What can I find here? Why should I stay?

Try completing this simple statement:

I help...

I help _____

who want to _____

by providing _____

Now say it naturally, in the language you would actually use when speaking with a potential client.

My simple website message:

Quick check: Would someone unfamiliar with my business understand this without needing an explanation?

- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ Not quite—I need to simplify it.
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4. Identify Your Main Offer

Your website needs somewhere meaningful to lead people.

What are you primarily inviting visitors to discover, purchase or experience?

- ☐ A service
- ☐ Consulting or coaching
- ☐ A course or program
- ☐ Products
- ☐ Membership
- ☐ Events or workshops
- ☐ Content/resources
- ☐ Something else: _____

My primary offer is:

The result or benefit someone receives from it is:

Where will visitors learn more about it?

5. Choose Your Essential Pages

You don't need a huge website to begin.

Start with the pages that help visitors understand who you are, what you offer and what to do next.

My website may need:

- ☐ Home
- ☐ About
- ☐ Services / Work With Me
- ☐ Products / Shop

- ☐ Courses / Programs
- ☐ Contact
- ☐ Blog / Resources
- ☐ Testimonials / Success Stories
- ☐ Free Resource / Email Sign-up
- ☐ Booking
- ☐ FAQ
- ☐ Privacy Policy
- ☐ Terms & Conditions
- ☐ Other: _____

The pages I need FIRST are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Remember: you can always add more later.

6. Gather What You Already Have

You probably have more website material than you think.

Content

- ☐ Short biography/introduction
- ☐ Service or product descriptions
- ☐ Testimonials/reviews
- ☐ Frequently asked questions
- ☐ Blog posts/articles
- ☐ Contact information
- ☐ Calls to action
- ☐ Free resource or lead magnet

Visuals & Brand

- ☐ Professional or friendly photo
- ☐ Logo
- ☐ Brand colours
- ☐ Fonts

- ☐ Product/service images
- ☐ Other useful photographs or graphics

Business Essentials

- ☐ Business-domain email address
- ☐ Social-media links
- ☐ Booking link
- ☐ Email marketing platform
- ☐ Payment/shop information
- ☐ Privacy/legal information

What do I still need to create or gather?

7. Make the Next Step Obvious

Don't make your visitor wonder:

“What am I supposed to do now?”

Decide on your primary call to action.

- ☐ Book a call
- ☐ Get the free guide
- ☐ Join my newsletter
- ☐ View my services
- ☐ Shop now
- ☐ Enroll now
- ☐ Register
- ☐ Contact me
- ☐ Other: _____

My primary call to action:

Now ask yourself:

- ☐ Is it easy to find?
- ☐ Is the wording clear?
- ☐ Does it appear on the pages where someone is likely to need it?
- ☐ Am I giving visitors too many competing choices?

8. Build Trust—and Build Something You Own

Your website isn't only about information.

It should help someone feel confident that **you understand their needs and can help them take the next step.**

Trust builders I can include:

- ☐ A welcoming photograph and introduction
- ☐ Testimonials or client feedback
- ☐ Relevant experience
- ☐ Credentials or certifications
- ☐ Case studies/results
- ☐ Media appearances or features
- ☐ Clear information about working with me
- ☐ FAQs
- ☐ Easy-to-find contact information
- ☐ A professional domain email address

And one more important question...

Social media can help people discover you—but your business shouldn't depend entirely on platforms you don't control.

Ask yourself:

- ☐ Do I own my domain name?
- ☐ Is my website an asset I control?
- ☐ Can I update my website myself—or easily have it updated?
- ☐ Am I building an email list I control?
- ☐ Does my website give people a reason to return?

One thing I can do to strengthen my digital home:

YOUR WEBSITE AT A GLANCE

Now bring everything together on one page.

My website is for:

I help them:

My primary offer is:

The #1 action I want visitors to take is:

My most important pages are:

My primary call to action is:

The feeling I want visitors to have when they arrive is:

The ONE thing I should work on first is:

One Last Thought Before You Build

Your website doesn't have to begin perfectly.

It needs to begin **with purpose**.

Start with the people you want to serve. Give them a clear message, an easy path to follow and a reason to trust you.

Then let your website evolve as your business evolves.

Build something useful. Build something meaningful. And build a digital home that belongs to you.

Janice Dugas

Online Visibility & Content Strategist

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Meet Janice !

Janice Dugas is an Online Visibility & Content Strategist who helps entrepreneurs build a stronger, more sustainable presence online.

For more than a decade, she has helped business owners improve their websites, content and online visibility, with a particular belief at the heart of her work:

Your website should be a digital home you own, control and can continue building as your business grows.

Through practical strategies for websites, SEO, content and email marketing, Janice helps entrepreneurs become easier to find, understand and trust online.

Continue your visibility journey at janicedugas.com

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