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# Praise

"Wow! This incredible no-nonsense guide, *Create a Successful Website*, takes you through all the steps in setting up an online business: from research and planning, to branding and content with e-commerce and revenue earning options. A must read!"

**Caroline Marsh, star of C4's Secret Millionaire**

"As an analogue entrepreneur in a digital age I'm fascinated by any book which can simplify the Internet - and more importantly how to make money from it. Having been exploited by some costly website developers in the past I'd highly recommend Paula's book as a way of empowering you to create your own site at a fraction of the cost."

**Rachel Elnaugh, entrepreneur and star of BBC TV's Dragon's Den [www.rachelelnaugh.com](http://www.rachelelnaugh.com)**

"My advice is that you must read this book cover to cover, before you even think about or attempt to create a website! It is rare to find someone who can combine technical language with business needs and common sense. The highlighted top tips from experts are brilliant as it's invaluable to get a different perspective from a range of industries - and you know these people have been there and done it successfully. This definitely gives the book a Wow Factor! Whether you need to start a website from scratch or brush up and tweak an existing site - read the book from cover to cover. There is something in it for everyone - from a simple hobby site, an online presence right up to a full throttle internet business."

**Claire Young, Finalist in BBC TV's The Apprentice**

"Paula Wynne's book, *Create a Successful Website*, is what small businesses need if they cannot afford a professional designer to do their website for them - and very few can. Good designers don't come cheap, but good design is vital. Her DIY approach could be the solution."

**Prue Leith, author of Choral Society, The Gardener, Leaving Patrick and Sisters**

"A must-read for anyone who wants to get on with an internet business."

**Anne Diamond, Journalist, Broadcaster and Health Campaigner**



"This book will fly! I read it in one sitting and learnt so much. What I love about *Create a Successful Website* is that it feels like you've got a friendly, clever, web-savvy mate just chatting you through the techie, hard bits of setting up a website and creating an online business. It's so clear and easy to understand. Paula has thought of everything, and the fact that she's been through the process the hard way, researching and creating her own websites herself, really shows.

"I'm in the process of setting up two websites, and there are so many things I didn't even know existed until I read the book. She's done the hard work for us. It's an absolute must-read for anyone new to this, I can't think of a better start for your website business."

**Fiona Wright, freelance journalist, features writer Woman and Home, co-founder of TestDriveAnyJob.com and JuniorLife.co.uk**

"Clear, easy-to-follow screen shots and instructions will guide you through each task from beginning to end."

**Julie Hearn, author of Rowan The Strange, Carnegie Medal Shortlist for 2010**

"Crammed with useful, proven and easy to implement tips, *Create a Successful Website* will be an indispensable asset on any business bookshelf. Paula has an engaging, friendly and accessible style and she writes from a position of knowledge that has quite clearly been acquired and honed over many years. Forget the complex and the theoretical; this is all about implementation and Paula makes it incredibly straightforward. What also gives this book the X factor is the stellar line up of excellent contributors, each one an expert within their own field. In the current economic climate, the need for good business books is greater than ever. Empowerment is all. *Create a Successful Website* really does deliver."

**Dee Blick FCIM, Financial Mail Marketing Columnist, BT blogger and author of Powerful Marketing on a Shoestring Budget for Small Businesses**

"*Create a Successful Website* is a book which proves that anyone with a passion in life can benefit hugely from owning a website to promote their interests. If you are thinking of setting up a web business, or even just a profitable blog or similar, this book sees you through from A-Z."

**Elisa Roche, Showbusiness Editor, The Daily Express**

"As an IT novice and a technophobe, Paula's book, *Create a Successful Website*, is written with the likes of me in mind. Without a web site now you really can't be taken seriously in business so this book will help you get there - the helping hand of a virtual professional!"

**Jo Haigh, Bestselling Author of *The Business Rules, An Entrepreneur's Guide, and Tales from the Glass Ceiling - A Survival Guide for Women in Business***

"Want to get started with an online business? Read Paula Wynne's *Create a Successful Website* - it's the best start up you can read."

**Korky Paul, Illustrator of *Winnie the Witch amongst many others***

"Paula's guide to setting up your own website makes the process straightforward and understandable. It's highly readable, even for the least techie person, and includes useful tips from other business people who have already gone down the same path. It's ideal if you're working from home and want a web presence without the expense of taking on a designer, or would like to understand what your designer is talking about!"

**Judy Heminsley, author of *Work from Home Wisdom***

"Anyone setting out to explore and conquer the web needs a practical step by step guide. Well here it is!"

**Clem Chambers, CEO of ADVFN.com and author of *The Armageddon Trade and The Twain Maxim***

"What a great read! An easy to follow guide to creating a successful website and achieving an online presence. Paula's writing style keeps you wanting to read more."

**Lisa Ibbotson, Director and Founder of *Women on Their Way***

"What a fantastic, straightforward and honest book. I'll be recommending it to anyone wanting to get started with creating a successful website."

**Jackie Brennan, Founder of *FreshIdeas Events***

"Learning how to create a website can be an exhausting task; following this step-by-step guide will most definitely help you succeed."

**Debbie Bird, Editor of *Babyworld***

"*Create A Successful Website* is a very intelligent book, well crafted and easy to understand. The depth of content is outstanding; this is a one stop shop for knowledge."

**Paul Handley, *Iconic Gifts*, [www.iconicgifts.com](http://www.iconicgifts.com)**

# Acknowledgements

Thank you for picking up this book and I hope you enjoy reading it. By the end, you will have a fantastic blueprint for your website, from preparation and planning, to branding and choosing a website right through to e-commerce and revenue earning.

Firstly, I want to thank Debbie Jenkins and Joe Gregory from Lean Marketing Press for believing in my proposal and giving me the chance to bring my book to life. Also, thanks to the team at Secure Trading ([www.securetrading.com](http://www.securetrading.com)) for reading the E-commerce section and checking all the facts.

I would like to say an extra special thanks to all the experts who have given up their time to offer you their best advice in setting up an online business.

- Jo Haigh
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- Carrie Longton
- Debbie Bird
- Clare Medden

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My Partner, Ken: you're a constant source of words, wit, smiles, laughter and strength.

My Son, Kent: you have lived through my dream and I encourage you and Jane, Jack, Caydon, Cameron and Tanna and all your cousins to pursue your dreams with every ounce of energy and to always reach for the sky.

My Mom: you have always believed in me, a Mother's love sustains, builds and grows.

Three people who are no longer with me, but I know they look down proudly: Penrose, Granny and Daddy.

For my brothers and sisters and everyone in my family: for every dream we've ever dared to dream.

# Foreword

My advice is that you must read this book cover to cover, before you even think about or attempt to create a website!

Being a passionate entrepreneur myself I know of the temptation to dive off into a frenzy of creativity, plans and urgency to get online, but mistakes can easily happen – costing precious time and money.

Since appearing on the BBC1 series *The Apprentice* I've set up four successful websites and learnt key lessons along the way. I wish I'd discovered Paula's wisdom beforehand; I would have saved myself crucial start up budget.

Even though I consider myself slightly young and hip (I am a cool 31 years old) technically I'm useless. There are countless gadgets and endless jargon that I don't understand. As a commercial person it frustrates me not to understand everything. Unfortunately, when it comes to web design and programme structure, I'm at a loss. This leaves one in a vulnerable position. It is easy for folks to sell you an 'all singing all dancing wizzie website' which costs you big bucks – when actually you may be able to do it all for free or a fraction of the cost, as shown in this book.

It is rare to find someone who can combine technical language with business needs and common sense. This book could be called "Help, I need a website" and will answer all your start up questions before you plunge into the unknown.

Aside from good straight forward guidance and online knowledge this book is an ideal step-by-step plan. It will make you think about your brand and take small steps to being a big player one day.

The highlighted top tips from experts are brilliant as it's invaluable to get a different perspective from a range of industries – and you know these people have been there and done it successfully. Just think of the resource you will have with the knowledge and skill of these experts right at your fingertips. Imagine you had to pay for their time! Well, you don't as here they offer you all the help and guidance you need to create your own successful website. This definitely gives the book a Wow Factor!

Whether you need to start a website from scratch or brush up and tweak an existing site - read the book from cover to cover. There is something in it for everyone - from a simple hobby site, an online presence right up to a full throttle internet business.

Technology doesn't stand still and you need to be on top of your game. We're an online nation and to be successful your website needs to do the business. This book will be your handy toolkit to show you how to create a successful website.

Best wishes for your website!

**Claire Young**

## **More About Claire**

Claire Young, 31, is the straight talking, no-nonsense sales woman who infuriated and then won over 11 million viewers to reach the final in series 4 of BBC1's The Apprentice (2008).

Since then she has worked non-stop setting up numerous business ventures and is passionate about entrepreneurship and enterprise. Claire works regularly 'hands on' with young people delivering enterprise days in schools. She has also set up a social enterprise called [www.girlsoutloud.org.uk](http://www.girlsoutloud.org.uk), which works with 13-18 year girls helping to raise their aspirations.

One of her ventures is School Speakers, [www.schoolspeakers.co.uk](http://www.schoolspeakers.co.uk), launched 2010, which provides external speakers and workshops for schools.

She has become a regular presenter for GMTV; discusses business, employment and redundancy issues on Sky News and ITN; has become an established public speaker; and is now writing her own book! Claire writes a weekly newspaper column and contributes to a number of magazines.

After she graduated from Bristol University Claire accelerated up the career ladder. Before entering The Apprentice she worked in marketing for beauty giants L'Oreal, Colgate Palmolive and global health and beauty group, AS Watson.



Claire is passionate about working with young people, helping them to take off the blinkers and think big! Now a successful entrepreneur herself, she has a non-business background and hopes her story will motivate others; with hard work, drive and determination anything is possible.

She works with a number of organisations such as Aim Higher, Enterprise Village, Young Chamber of Commerce, National Apprenticeships, UK Youth, National Enterprise Academy, The Prince's Trust and Flying Start. On a personal note, Claire has physically transformed from her Apprentice days shedding 3.8 stone through diet and exercise.

Read about Claire at [www.claireyoung.co.uk](http://www.claireyoung.co.uk)

# Who Should Read This Book

## **Everyone**

The world is moving so fast and getting smaller as the internet weaves an invisible social and business web around us. So this book is for everyone who wants to get online for personal and business reasons.

Do you want to start an online business and earn an extra income? Does your organisation or association need a web presence?

Or do you have a large, extended family scattered all over the world and want to start a project to keep everyone up to date with one website? Some topics specific to business may not interest you, but the info about how to do it yourself at hardly any cost will most certainly come in handy.

The book is also ideal for students (young and old) who want to slowly build up a profile or portfolio of their work. When I was freelancing, free blogs and easy do it yourself sites weren't around so now there's no excuse for anyone not to have an online presence.

Here's a quick list of who should read this book and why.

## **Artists and Creative People**

Talented artists should be selling their work online. My sister's hubby is extremely talented and instead of waiting around for galleries to notice his work she set up a site to sell his work to the world at large. It's a great way to show off a portfolio without dragging a bunch of heavy canvases around town. Give your local gallery the link and ask them to choose which pieces they want to exhibit, if not all of them. Email regional and national galleries as well. And make sure you optimise your speciality website with keywords, such as traditional oils or contemporary watercolours.

## **Associations**

There are countless associations that would benefit from getting online. A site with a few pages, either done with easy to use boxed software or a free blog site is the ideal tool to direct enquiries. Also, just being 'out there' gives people the ability to find your association when someone searches.

## **Actors and Sports Personalities**

All up and coming athletes, swimmers, runners and all sports people with an ambition to see their name in lights at future Olympics should get themselves online. A website is the ideal platform for showing off your skills as a talented sports person.

Potential sponsors will be far more impressed if you can prove your value to them. If you start building a following through your site, they are also more likely to sponsor you. Check out the topic of sponsorship where we discuss generating revenue.

Similarly, actors who want to attract casting agents and film producers should have an online profile. This also goes for Amateur Dramatic Students who want to 'break' into the industry.

## **Authors and Writers**

This is my personal favourite. Authors, writers and self published authors could do with a little peek into these pages to learn how to get visibility if they are not yet published. And if they are, they should be building a following where their readers are able to have some kind of personal contact with them.

Before I found a publisher for this book, I didn't have money for a grand site so I created a simple Wordpress blog with 'tabs' as my 'pages' to show off my writing material to potential publishers ([paulawynne.wordpress.com](http://paulawynne.wordpress.com)). This can be converted into a full website when the need arises. I encourage all writers to give it a go.

Whether you are an established author promoting your books to a wider audience or a new writer peddling manuscripts to publishers and agents, having your own site will take your profile to the next level.

Emerging and new writers need to create a readership, which will help them get published. It's a superb way of introducing agents and publishers to you and your material, and if you can create a 'platform' of followers, readers and interest groups, you will be more valuable to a publisher one day.

This is my story. I established a business 'platform', which leveraged my proposal to publishers and led to me being commissioned to write this book. I aim to do the same for my novels.



## **Book Clubs**

A simple little idea, such as a book club or reading group's website invites people to share a passion for similar interests. Post quick notices about past meetings or hook newcomers with enticing future reads. If you have a hankering for setting up *any* club, not just a book club, in your area, read on.

## **Churches**

Even God is online. The obvious group to welcome new people into the fold will be a local church. All sorts of information can be posted freely through a blog or easy to use site. Some people may have the odd occasion to find a local church service to give thanks, such as Christmas. In times of grief, people are naturally drawn to God so churches can reach out to their local community by sharing details of their services and events online.

## **New and Established Business**

Can I be so bold to say that it is a sin for any business, new or old, not to be online? I may be stretching my neck out here, but I look back at myself and crack a ruler over my own knuckles for all the time and business I lost by not getting online quicker. If only I had known how easy it was and that I could get it done free! I wish I'd had a book like this that showed me how to get online with quick, easy and, often free, advice.

This book is the perfect solution for you if you're thinking of setting up an online business or making the transition to get your current business online and growing it to 'the next level'.

Everyone has skills that could add a little extra income to the household. Whether it's a new full time business to replace your day job or a simple, small sideline business, you should read on.

Teach yourself how to create a successful website. Grab a coffee, put your feet up and snuggle down with this book and ample paper for scribbling notes. Or, you may prefer to have your laptop or PC handy to get more specific details into a Word or Excel document.

## **Career Hunters**

Use the web to enhance your career. HR experts believe that a strong online image can help job hunters to land their dream job. A web presence should be carefully managed to create an online reputation that employers will see.

## **Community Groups**

There is a wide diversity of cultural groups and communities that have been founded through an online presence. These communities work to welcome locals, share ethnic or cultural characteristics and discuss subjects affecting the people or community as a whole.

Some local communities may want to get online and maintain a 'localised' presence. Others may want to open their arms and build a larger following. Either way, common interests can also be discussed online in a virtual community where geography has no bounds.

## **eBay-ers**

If you currently run an eBay site then it is worth having your own site, not only to show your products, but to instil trust in your buyers.

Many eBay-ers now realise the value in having a site connected to their eBay account so they can get the benefit of both worlds. Many thousands of users run an eBay business as their primary source of income, while cottage industries earn a secondary income from eBay. If this is you, why not take your earnings to the next level and create a site for your products? Keep your eBay account and use it to drive traffic to your new site.

## **Film Makers**

Student and amateur film makers or indeed any film makers will get noticed and build credibility by setting up a web presence. Add all your film projects to your website and, with targeted optimisation, social interaction and publicity, your films will start to gain an audience of followers.

## Graduates and Students

All graduates and students should consider setting up an online presence now, while you are studying, especially if you know which career path you will take.

**FOR EXAMPLE:** as a budding web designer you can set up a site to contain images and a portfolio of the first sites you built. Not only will this be useful as a reminder of how far you have come, but blogging and building an optimised profile could help you to earn an income while studying. Plus, if you want to set up your own business one day, you will already have an established online presence.

Are you a fashion design student? How about showcasing a portfolio of your designs? They may not be well-known, but could earn a small income while at University and this could possibly become the foundation for a future fashion design business.

A word of warning, though; all students should be careful not to show drunken images of University life on your Facebook page. Many students upload all sorts of things without thinking or realising that future employers or potential clients may see their escapades as well!

## Hobby-ists

Keen hobby-ists are gearing up for the net. More and more people who make their own crafts are sharing their passion with browsers who find their websites. If you have a hobby that is worth showing off, why not consider creating a website for it and see where your hobby could take you?

You may have no intention of making money from it, but just think of all the other people who enjoy the same or similar hobby and how you could all help each other, trade secrets, swap tips and converse.

## Home Industry

If you bake cakes for your local area, maybe selling them in shops and pubs, have you considered setting up a website to show off what you do? Craft specialists would also gain by having an online presence to act as a 'shop window' for selling hand made products. There are so many

thousands of home industries, from cake making to specialist toy makers. They can all get online and work towards increasing visibility in a region.

## **Internet Entrepreneurs**

A dead-end job, no money, redundancies, failed dreams, a failed marriage, seeing family suffer, dropping out of college and all manner of things can 'grow' an entrepreneur and turn them into a success. Don't wait for something to change your life. Get up and change it now!

*"You are not born an entrepreneur, you grow into one."*

Unknown

## **Practitioners**

All practitioners and people offering health and beauty services should be online, especially those who feature a mobile service.

When I was having physiotherapy after a shoulder operation, I chatted away telling my therapist all about my site, what I was doing, how I was doing it and generally boring her, I thought, with all the daily routines. However, she was totally inspired by my chit chat and promptly went out and found someone to help her build a small site for her own business. This type of site may only be a few pages and could easily be done through a blog's free templates, which allow you to show page tabs so it looks like a 'proper' website. Practitioners can establish a local following by optimising their geographical regions.

## **Professionals and Freelancers**

All professionals, freelancers, experts and consultants should be building an online profile, not just with Social Media, but with your own website. It is a great way to capitalise on your expertise and generate new revenue streams for your freelance business. The same goes for anyone who wants to be head-hunted and climb the corporate ladder. Don't only show off a LinkedIn profile. With your own free website you can control the areas of your CV you want to feature with your own landing page. Get found by the best employers and outsourcers - or go one better and send your ideal boss an email with a link to your website. You will WOW their socks off!

## **Party Plan Agents**

There is a hive of micro home based businesses who work in the direct selling arena. If you're an agent or distributor running your own home business then show off your wares to local and regional customers and even run an online party booking service.

## **Retailers**

The web is an obvious place for a retailer to 'open' an all day 'shop window', so it is surprising to find out how many are still not online.

Even if you can't afford a fancy online shop to accommodate all your products, you should at least have a small site and provide contact details to encourage people to buy your items and re-order. It's better to have a small profile than none at all.

If you are starting a retail outlet online, you'll need a secure e-commerce shopping cart, product catalogue, web store admin tools and the all essential secure transaction protection. See the section about how to set up an online shop later. There's some exciting stuff in there!

## **Trades People**

People who specialise in a trade, such as Plumbers, Electricians and Carpet Fitters must get themselves online pretty damn quick. Just because a 'man-in-white-van' claims his place of work is out in the field, that's no reason why he can't shout about his service via a website. Most people 'Google' trade services and, with all the free and easy ways to get online, there's no better time.

## **A to Z**

No matter who you are or what your reasons are, if you need some assistance to get online, this book is for you. If you have no idea where to turn on a PC or you are 'old school' and a computer terrifies you then why not get a son, daughter, or even a grandchild involved? Show them this book, and ask them to help you get online. Maybe gift wrap it for them with a note inside asking for help. And they can get themselves online too!

## **Finally**

Throughout the book I may refer to the words 'your business' or 'your company', however this includes agencies, churches, associations, individuals, communities, practitioners and graduates.

If you class your website as a business and look at it that way, it will give you more focus to ensure its success. So when I say 'your business', this encompasses everyone else that I have mentioned here, even if you have more of a project than an actual business. Whatever you do, your venture will be referred to as your online business.

# Introductions

## **Introducing The Book**

This is not a developer's website guide nor does it teach HTML (hypertext markup language - the code used to write web pages). Instead, it provides an easy-to-follow roadmap for anyone setting up a website, an online shop, business or trade.

*Create A Successful Website* will guide you through the mine-field of website building, instant sites, online jargon and confusing technology. And it will teach you how to find the right avenue for your brilliant website concept!

This book will not show you how to make millions overnight or give you insider secrets to get rich schemes. None of that malarkey here! Instead, the book guides you step-by-step from research and planning your website right through to revenue options.

## **CHART YOUR SUCCESS**

The idea behind this book is to provide a down-to-earth way to answer the questions and concerns that new business 'Start Ups' face, and in particular we will focus on the DIY angle to save costs by doing lots of essential tasks in-house. More importantly, it will give your business an online blueprint from day one or even before you start.

What do I mean by online blueprint? Simple, an outline of your online presence, and all you have to do to achieve one. It will become your online strategy, enhance your business plan and act as the backbone to your online business or website concept. Your blueprint will also be a source of encouragement and inspiration to you as a fledging entrepreneur. Every step you take brings you closer to your dreams and ambitions, so looking back at what you've accomplished will spur you on to create more successes.

## **CHECKLISTS AND NOTES**

A quick scan or flick through the pages will show you daily checklists for each topic. They will guide you and ensure you have completed all your tasks. There is even a handy little tick box beside each item so you can cross them off your list.

### TIP WATCH

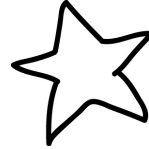
As well as quotes and examples, watch out for the following symbols that point to expert advice, hot tips and jargon busters.



**JARGON BUSTER**



**TOP TIP**



**EXPERT ADVICE**

### HOW TO USE THE DIY METHOD

The aim of this book is to fuel your passion and enthusiasm for your online presence, inspire you to become an authority and expert in your chosen sector and give you all the tools you need to create a successful website.

At the end of this book you will have a complete strategy for your website. Most of the hard work will be done and you will only need to implement the plan with finishing touches. After finishing the book you should have a workable plan which will excite you to continue on this journey you have set for yourself.

The book is broken down into bite size pieces with days instead of chapters. Each day gives you various topics and tasks with easy to follow steps and visuals - the quickest way to understand without having to dissect all the geeky jargon.

### WORK IT BABY, WORK IT

I can hear you already thinking: "How on earth am I going to stick to this daily schedule?"

Don't worry, you don't have to. It is only there to guide you. You may want to do a few days in one go or you may be compelled to race ahead and get it all done at once. Find what works best for you and stick to that formula. It goes without saying that you will also need bucket loads of energy, enthusiasm and motivation as well as tons of passion and determination!



## Introducing Me

As websites show the important 'About Us' page, I wanted to give you a little intro to me and the experiences that have led me to writing this book.

However, before I do that I wanted to firstly say THANK YOU for choosing this book.

### POTHOLE JOURNEY

At the end of this book, you will be fully equipped to avoid the potholes that many new start ups have stumbled upon along their way to creating a successful website .

Use this book as a guide to give you a good foundation in which to direct your new online business.

### DIY ACTIVIST

For 'privacy and permissions' reasons, I have used my own sites in examples and visuals. In some instances I have been able to use screenshots from our expert's sites. Use these illustrations to think laterally and keep your eyes peeled for similar cases when browsing the web.

I also wanted to assure you that this book is written by a user, a 'Do It Yourself' (DIY) Activist, or you could say a previous-beginner.

I love every minute of learning and I'm pleased to say that I am *still* learning. I want to get the message across that everyone - men and women, younger and older generations - should get online. So, with this book, I want to motivate and inspire others to reach out and get themselves online successfully!



## IN A NUTSHELL

The 'about me' used when I talk to groups of people at seminars or conferences goes along these lines:

"After a career as a publicist and marketer, Paula Wynne is now an award-winning businesswoman, an online entrepreneur, woman's ambassador and speaker.

"She aims to help others to work flexibly, as she has needed to do, and Remote Employment is her and her partner's vision for bringing a better quality work life to working parents across the UK. Their 'Home Working World' aims to connect home workers and home businesses across the globe and unite them in a supportive community. Paula is also the organiser of the unique and popular Remote Worker Awards and is a SEEDA Women's Enterprise Ambassador."

## BEHIND THE SCENES

In January 2008 I co-founded Remote Employment and have achieved success as an online entrepreneur.

### Google's No 1

In just over a year, Remote Employment became Google's No 1 both in the UK and Worldwide for our keywords, namely 'Flexible Jobs' and 'Home Based Jobs', which beats 192 million searches daily! We are proud to have forged our way through some of the most competitive keywords in the world in such a short time.

The screenshot shows the homepage of 'remote employment'. At the top, there's a navigation menu with links: Home, My Profile, Candidates, Recruiters, Freelancers, Home Business, Awards, News, Global Jobs. Below the menu, there's a 'Contact Us' button and a 'You are here Home' breadcrumb. The main content area is divided into several sections:

- Remote Employment is the place to find home based and flexible jobs.** A paragraph explaining the site's mission and a 'You Tube' icon.
- Remote working - it's the future!** Two buttons: 'Register here' and 'Post a job'.
- Job Search:** A search form with 'Advanced Search' and filters for Keywords (e.g. Marketing Consultant), Location (Any), Area (Any), Sector (Any), and Job Type (Contract / Interim / Freelancer, Full-time, Home Based, Office-home combo, Part-time, Flexible).
- Sector Links:** A table of links to various industry sectors.
- Featured Jobs:**
  - BT Business Total Broadband:** A circular graphic showing 'from £12.50 per month'.
  - Kleenze Distributors Wanted:** A listing for part-time or full-time home-based jobs.
  - Parents - Looking for an income working around your children?:** A listing for home-based jobs for parents.
  - Home Based Business Development Specialist:** A listing for business development roles.
  - Home Based Driving Instructor:** A listing for driving instructor roles.
- Arise:** A listing for virtual solutions.
- remote worker awards .com:** A listing for awards.
- How to start a home business:** A listing for business advice.
- Win a home based franchise worth £15k:** A listing for franchise opportunities.
- Start Your Own Website Win a website build:** A listing for website services.

## INTRODUCTIONS

### AWARD WINNING

Our company has won two Business Awards. Our first award was the BT Small Business Week 'Responsible Business Day' Award. Our second came shortly after, where I was awarded Karen Darby as my mentor!

Imagine having a serial entrepreneur and one of the UK's most successful businesswomen as a mentor! Read more about Karen at her website [www.karendarbydirect.com](http://www.karendarbydirect.com).

Remote Employment was also nominated as a Top 100 Company in the Barclays Trading Places Award. We are Runner Up in The Enterprise Challenge of the Enterprising Women Awards 2009 and Finalist in the Best Online Business in the Women on their Way Awards.



### LEARN FROM OUR MISTAKES, NOT YOURS

Many internet entrepreneurs toss out their first website and waste valuable time and money before they have a workable online solution.

#### **Ontrapment**

Online beginners don't have to fall into that trap anymore. With this book you'll have the tools and guidance you need to create a successful online presence.

A point that strikes me constantly when I talk at events, seminars and conferences, is that so many people are in the same shoes I was in not so long ago. This book will clear the path so you don't make the mistakes that I, and many other online entrepreneurs, have made .

#### **Outlaws**

To make matters worse, there are no rules or governing bodies to stop outlaws and cowboys charging for websites that will not perform in the rankings and thus quash new entrepreneurial dreams. This book will provide you with the tools to spot a fake from a genuine expert.

## Introducing Our Expert Panel

I have gathered together the 'crème-de-la-entrepreneurial-crème', who have generously agreed to share their business knowledge and online experience with you. Get to know them by checking out their biography and brief business summaries before you read their advice.

### **JO HAIGH, AUTHOR & HEAD OF CORPORATE FINANCE, MGR**

**BUSINESS:** *fds* Group and MGR

**WEBSITE:** [www.jo-haigh.com](http://www.jo-haigh.com)

**TYPE OF SITE:** Business Advisors

Jo Haigh is a Partner and Head of Corporate Finance for The ATF Group; a company based in London and Yorkshire, and a partner in the *fds* Group, a specialist training and development business.

Jo has a long list of Awards, Titles and Achievements, and she is a bestselling author.

Jo's first book, *The Business Rules*, published 2005 has been such a success that a foreign

rights deal has been confirmed with a publisher in China. Jo's second book, *An Entrepreneur's Guide*, and her third book, *Tales from the Glass Ceiling - A Survival Guide for Women in Business*, sold out of its first reprint after 5 days. It was also the best selling business book of the year 2008 selling over 500,000 copies.



Jo's Dos:

- ✓ Do make sure you have sufficient cash.
- ✓ Do take the best advice you can afford.
- ✓ Do know your market.

Jo's Don'ts:

- ✗ Don't go into Partnership or start a company without an approved Shareholder or Partnership Agreement in place.
- ✗ Don't assume because *you* love it, everyone else will.
- ✗ Don't be a pessimist or optimist – be a realist.

**KAREN HANTON, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, TOPTABLE**

**BUSINESS:** Toptable

**WEBSITE:** [www.toptable.com](http://www.toptable.com)

**TYPE OF SITE:** Restaurant booking service

From her initial training and career in HR, Karen has founded and developed a number of successful ventures over the past 15 years. Karen is widely known within the industry as a pioneer within new media, regularly lecturing on the subject and coaching young entrepreneurs. She has also received significant public recognition including the Financial Times/Moet Hennessy Extraordinary



Achievers Award, named as one of today's top 30 entrepreneurs in New Business Magazine and named one of the top 100 most influential people in the first decade of the internet in an NOP/e-consultancy poll. As the biggest online restaurant booking service in Europe, the website lists around 5,000 restaurants in 14 countries and gets 2.3 million visits a month. Karen has now sold Toptable in a £35million deal with US restaurant reservation service OpenTable Inc.

**Karen's Dos:**

- ✓ Do your research no matter how crude.
- ✓ Track progress and set yourself some KPI's (Key Performer Indicators).
- ✓ Give yourself a set time to 'prove' your model.
- ✓ Your site has to be compelling and useful, and this has to be immediately obvious when the person visits your site.

**Karen's Don'ts:**

- ✗ Don't front load your business with big fixed costs.
- ✗ Don't blindly carry on when it is obvious it isn't working.
- ✗ Don't try to reinvent the wheel. Most things have some similarities - take the smart course and save yourself time.
- ✗ Don't compete against millions of other sites and things like social networks which swallow huge amounts of potential consumer browsing time.

**POLLY GOWERS, FOUNDER, EVERYCLICK.COM**

**BUSINESS:** Everyclick

**WEBSITE:** [www.everyclick.com](http://www.everyclick.com)

**TYPE OF SITE:** Charity

Polly founded Everyclick.com, the website that enables consumers to give to any UK charity in the way that they want. Everyclick.com is a search engine that gives half of its revenue to charity. Its technology has been specifically created to provide a sustainable, no cost fundraising tool for all charities. It provides any internet user with a free and hassle-free way to raise money for the charity of their choice. Polly



was voted WEBA Ethical Entrepreneur of the Year 2007 and a Blackberry Woman in Technology Award winner in 2008. Everyclick.com was voted website of the Year 2008 and was nominated as a Media Tech 100 company 2009.

Polly's Dos:

- ✓ Plan.
- ✓ Plan.
- ✓ Execute.

Polly's Don'ts:

- ✗ Don't 'not' have a plan.
- ✗ Don't waste your time trying to sell advertising.

## INTRODUCTIONS

### MAX BENSON, MBE, CO-FOUNDER, EVERYWOMAN

**BUSINESS:** Everywoman

**WEBSITE:** [www.everywoman.com](http://www.everywoman.com)

**TYPE OF SITE:** Women's Networking Community

Max Benson MBE is co-founder of everywoman, one of the leading global brands for women in business. Everywoman understands what resources and support services women in business need in order to realise their business ambitions. She is one of the UK's leading advocates for women in business and female entrepreneurs, Max has first-hand experience of the challenges small



business owners encounter as they start and grow their ventures and has attracted the attention of corporate partners including IBM, NatWest and BT.

Max was appointed MBE in the 2009 New Year Honours, in recognition of her service to women's enterprise.

Max's Dos:

- ✓ Bring in technical expertise.
- ✓ Get it up. Don't wait to get your website perfect, it will always be a 'work in progress'.
- ✓ Complete your marketing mix; make sure all aspects are right.

Max's Don'ts:

- ✗ Don't fear technology, think of it as a tool to enable your vision not something to dread.
- ✗ Don't focus on every last small detail and try to get it correct, it's actually all about user experience not your personal bug bears. You'll never get it 100%.
- ✗ Don't worry about wrong turns and mistakes, the important thing is to just correct them and move on.

## CARRIE LONGTON, CO-FOUNDER, MUMSNET

**BUSINESS:** Mumsnet.com

**WEBSITE:** www.mumsnet.com

**TYPE OF SITE:** Parenting Community

Mumsnet was set up in January 2000 by Justine Roberts, a sports journalist, and Carrie Longton, a TV producer. Inspired by their antenatal class group as the best source of information on everything from sleep problems to choosing first shoes, Justine and Carrie wanted to build a much larger circle of parents sharing their know-how on the net. Mumsnet Towers is staffed by mums working flexibly part time. Their philosophy is simple: To make parents' lives easier by pooling knowledge and experience.



Carrie's Dos:

- ✓ Make sure your site is easy to navigate and works.
- ✓ Be prepared to adapt and evolve with changing technology.
- ✓ Find a niche that needs filling and fill it.
- ✓ Make sure you understand SEO ( Search Engine Optimisation) and use it.
- ✓ Encourage your users to help you market your site, make as much use as you can of positive feedback and the press.
- ✓ Make sure your idea is new, interesting, and useful and has a potential revenue stream.
- ✓ Ask advice from anyone who has been there before.
- ✓ Keep costs low to start with and expect to put in a lot of hours!

Carrie's Don'ts:

- ✗ Don't take on too many overheads before you know you can make a living.
- ✗ Don't give away too much equity early on.
- ✗ Don't lose control of your brand.
- ✗ Without having business expertise, don't be afraid to ask questions.
- ✗ Don't be afraid of employing good people who might know more than you!
- ✗ Don't skimp on childcare if you have a young family - you need all the help you can get.



**DEBBIE BIRD, EDITOR, BABYWORLD**

**BUSINESS:** Babyworld

**WEBSITE:** [www.babyworld.co.uk](http://www.babyworld.co.uk)

**TYPE OF SITE:** Baby Community

Debbie is the Editor of [babyworld.co.uk](http://babyworld.co.uk), the UK's leading online Parenting Magazine, and knows how essential advice sites are to new parents. She is responsible for the creation of all editorial content for the site, which currently has around 20,000 pages. She aims to develop and improve the site over the next year, updating the advice and positively moving the site into the next decade. Debbie was awarded



“Highly Commended” in the Home Worker Award Category in the Remote Home Workers Award 2009.

Debbie's Dos:

- ✓ Keep true to your core business. It is easy to think you can cover everything, yet you can risk diluting the main purpose of your site if you spread yourself too thinly.
- ✓ Keep your site up to date, but not dated. Be careful to post information that will not date you. Unless you are a news site where topics change and move all the time, be careful not to age yourself by putting dates and names on everything.
- ✓ Plan your website.
- ✓ Research your subject.
- ✓ Embrace the knowledge of those who have done it before.

Debbie Don'ts:

- ✗ Don't rush your website.
- ✗ Don't ignore search engine's requirements.
- ✗ Don't think search engines are the enemy, work with them.

**JON BUXTON, OPERATIONS DIRECTOR, BABYWORLD**

**BUSINESS:** Babyworld

**WEBSITE:** [www.babyworld.co.uk](http://www.babyworld.co.uk)

**TYPE OF SITE:** Baby Community

Jon joined Babyworld in July 1999, prior to which he was the Product Manager for the IT security cluster at Elsevier Advanced Technology. He has also held positions in Finance, Purchasing, Retailing, Customer Services and IT.

Jon has turned his hand to network administration, marketing, e-commerce, graphic design, customer service and operations - sometimes all on the same day.



Jon's Dos:

- ✓ There are no shortcuts. Get the basics right. There are no prizes for having the flashiest website around, particularly if it doesn't generate any traffic or revenue.
- ✓ Make sure your site is easy to read, easy on the eye, and is not full of typing errors as it reflects badly on you as a company (makes people think that you don't really care).
- ✓ Think about your audience. They are looking for a solution whether it is a product or some information or advice. Make sure your website provides them with that solution.
- ✓ Do plenty of research on the web. Work out which sites appeal to you and why. Talk to some potential customers and find out what they are looking for.

Jon's Don'ts:

- ✗ Don't spend thousands of pounds on marketing campaigns to drive traffic before making sure your website is constructed in a "Google friendly" way.
- ✗ Don't build your site and then think about SEO. Think about Search Engine Optimisation before you start designing and writing your website. Good SEO is much harder to achieve if you only think about it after you have built your site.

## CLARE MEDDEN, MEDDEN DESIGN

**BUSINESS:** Medden Website Design

**WEBSITE:** [www.medden.co.uk](http://www.medden.co.uk)

**TYPE OF SITE:** Website Developer

Clare Medden worked for over 10 years in advertising. After a short break to have two children, Clare began her career in the world of website design. Four years on, and Medden Website Design is flourishing. The company prides itself on offering a friendly and reliable service and strives to create websites that are both individual, expandable and future proof.



Clare's Dos:

- ✓ Research, Research, Research – when choosing any professionals to help you, you cannot do enough research. You must take the time to find the right services for you.
- ✓ Find a niche – find something that others are not doing or are not doing well and do it better.
- ✓ Enjoy the feeling of that first sale and use that feeling to put more back into your business.
- ✓ Keep true to your core business.
- ✓ Specialise. Don't try to be all things to all people.
- ✓ Make contact with a website developer, even if it's just for advice.
- ✓ Above all have fun – it's not good going into an online business or getting a business online if you aren't going to enjoy it. Yes, you may cry at some of your mistakes, but pick yourself up and you will laugh at them one day.

Clare's Don'ts:

- ✗ Don't follow the herd. Think for yourself and don't be frightened to try something new.
- ✗ Make sure your domain is registered in your name. Clare says: "I can't tell you how many redesigns I have done and found out that people had no contract with their existing developer and that we have a problem getting the domain signed over to them."
- ✗ Don't rest on your laurels and think that you know it all. The internet is an ever-changing industry and anyone who thinks they know it all and does not need to keep up to date will soon be seen as extinct as the dinosaurs.

# Day 1: Planning & Research

## Essential Prep

Today is all about planning, researching and brainstorming. We will talk about setting short and long term goals and objectives for your site to steer you in the right direction. We'll also discuss options for managing your online business and watching for competitors.



### IINSPIRE JUICY THOUGHT PATTERNS

- ✓ **Print off your plan and take it with you**
- ✓ **Add more details when on the train or bus**
- ✓ **Scan the notes, then drift into creative mode**
- ✓ **Having your plan with you, will give you an organised way to edit and pump up your website.**

You will learn how to analyse your strengths and weaknesses as well as any potential threats and most importantly, the opportunities that raise their heads.

As you plan your shiny new website, you will understand the need to explore every avenue of your online business so that you are fully prepared. The work you do now will be reinforced along the way.

Polly Gowers from Everyclick believes that running a business is like playing a game of snakes and ladders. She says: "It can be the roll of the dice that takes you to the top snake or ladder. However, I have learned that the better the team you gather around you, the easier you find the ladders."

## Naming Your Site

By now you'll have an idea for your website; it could have been stewing away in your brain for many years or it may have only popped in for a visit recently and something made you pounce on it.

Before we go into planning your site, one of the first things to consider is the name. Many entrepreneurs have realised the viral effect naming

can have on a business. When you go through the process of brainstorming a name, you will come up with all sorts of concoctions.

Your Name Could:

- ✓ Be a synopsis of your business concept
- ✓ Use a key message or catch phrase
- ✓ Include keywords
- ✓ Be a type of business
- ✗ Don't copy competitors

I suggest you come back to your name when you have finished all the chapters in this book.



**KAREN HANTON FROM TOPTABLE ADVISES...**

- ✓ **Do some simple research to make sure you have a market for your product, however simple.**
- ✓ **You can come up with a sample consumer group from friends, relatives and neighbours that will cost a lot less than a McKinsey report and will probably give you just as accurate a result.**

## Domain Names

Firstly, there are a multitude of sites from which you can buy a domain name. Many of them will offer hosting as well.

If you aim to set up an instant site (more on this soon), use their domain and hosting service all in one if you can, just to make life easier. They may also provide pop boxes for a personalised email – which I definitely recommend. Have you seen a professional site with an email address along the lines of: `aname123@hotmail.com` or `anotherexample@btconnect.com`? Would you recognise that business as trustworthy and solid or as a 'one person band'? Point taken. So when you're buying your domain, get yourself an email that reflects and brands your website's domain.

The most important thing about domain names is: firstly you **MUST** own it and secondly, find a name that you can use for viral and optimisation purposes as well. Before you rush off and buy up a hoard

of names, as I have done in the past, and then sit with useless domains, let's consider some factors that go into choosing a domain.



- A POP Box is a nifty way to ensure that your email matches your company name. Because you are not online 24/7 your emails are caught and stored in a 'box' on your ISP's server until you do come online.
- Your mail program (Outlook Express, Netscape, Eudora, Pegasus, etc.) logs into your POP3 mail box via your local access provider to read your mail. Each POP account requires a unique username and password to access the mail.

## Successful Domain Names

You may want to buy a name for an existing business, thus you need to get that exact name, or something similar if it is already taken.

If you are choosing a name to reflect a brand then make sure it is short, clear and easy to spell. I would suggest you buy both the .com and the .co.uk and any others that protects your brand in future.

If you cannot get the exact name you want you may need to have a fiddle with – (dashes). If your best choice is taken for a .co.uk or .com, search with Geek Tools for a better choice to get a primary domain. See the notes on Geek Tools in the next section.

Better still – choose a descriptive, keyword-rich domain name. Google favours these domains in its rankings for searches that are based on those exact words. If it isn't possible to get the perfect keyword-rich domain name you desire, you can use keywords in the URL. We did that before we were able to transfer our site to a better performing SEO architecture.

**FOR EXAMPLE:** we used the term work from home after the domain, which went something like:  
[www.remoteemployment.com/work-from-home/contact us](http://www.remoteemployment.com/work-from-home/contact-us)

## International V Country Domains

A .com gives your site international appeal, whereas a .co.uk shows that you are a UK based company. .co.za will tell your visitors that

your services and products are mainly for the South African market. The same goes for any other country fixture.

There is nothing stopping you choosing any country fixture, it is completely your decision based on your long term goals and aspirations for your new site.

Here are some of the domain names that you will come across when researching names. Along with .com and .net, .org is one of the original global domain names.

### GENERIC

- **.COM:** the most famous and popular global domain name. It was originally created for commercial websites, but has developed into the preferred first choice for any type of website
- **.GOV.UK:** mainly for the UK government sector
- **.AC.UK:** used for educational purposes like universities, colleges and schools
- **.ORG:** for non profit organisations and charities
- **.BIZ:** mostly for business use
- **.INFO:** originally created for global information websites
- **.NET:** was originally created for use by technical websites. It is often used when a .com is unavailable, or to protect brands that already have the .com.

### COUNTRY DOMAINS

- **.CO.UK:** for UK sites, they often register both .com and .co.uk
- **.EU:** is used within the European Union
- **.IM:** is for the Isle of Man!
- **.BE:** is the extension for Belgium
- **.DE:** is the country code for Germany
- **.MX:** is the country code for Mexico
- **.CO.AU:** is the country code for Australia
- **.CO.NZ:** is the country code for New Zealand
- **.PL:** is the country code for Poland
- **.IN:** is the country code for India
- **.CO.ZA:** is the country code for South Africa

And the list goes on...

### **MOBI**

Mobi is one of the newest top level domain names. It is aimed specifically at companies, organisations and individuals wanting to create websites and services for mobile devices.

An individual, organisation or company must ensure that any site using a .mobi domain name:

- Is built using compliant mobile code
- Responds to requests from mobile devices at its primary URL
- Does not use frames

### **.ME.UK**

This code was created with individuals in mind, .me.uk is great for those who want to create a more personal domain name, but please note that .me.uk domains can only be registered by individuals.

**FOR EXAMPLE:** students who aim to get a top job can set up a .me site and list all of their achievements.

### **.EU**

The .eu domain name is one of the most popular domains for companies, organisations and individuals within the European Union. An individual, organisation or company must comply with the following:

- Have its registered office, central administration or principal place of business within the Community
- Be an organisation established within the Community without prejudice to the application of national law
- Be a natural person resident within the Community
- Exclude domains on the blocked or reserved list



## Geek Tools

Another handy thing to know is how to find available domains and, at the same time, keep your search for them hidden to prevent your cool domain from being snatched up before you get the chance to buy it.

Use [www.geektools.com](http://www.geektools.com), click in the far right hand corner on the link called 'Whois' to see if certain words are already taken as domain names.

This screenshot shows that you can enter some ideas for names and then see if someone else has that domain name already. The full name including the domain tail was too long for me to show you, but you should also add the fixture such as .com

or .co.uk onto the name to provide a full search. The end results show you the person who owns that name; otherwise it comes up with 0 results if the name is still available.



## Hosting

It seems natural to talk about hosting right after domains, as you would naturally buy a domain and hosting together or you would find a company to host your domain. However, you may be able to get hosting included in a free website package and a pay monthly website. And, of course, your developer can arrange this for you too.

Once you have established what kind of site you are going to have you can tackle hosting. Before signing up to the first provider that comes along, add these questions to your research list as you will need to find either the best deal or the best support package.

## HOSTING QUESTIONS

- ❑ How much web space will you need to store even the most basic website? Remote Employment has thousands of pages and a site of this size could be costly.
- ❑ Remember your future plans and how successful your site could become. What will you need in the coming months and years?
- ❑ Will your site require video, podcasts and other multimedia applications? If so, check that the hosting provider can supply this.
- ❑ Will you need support? If something goes wrong does it matter to you whether your provider is UK or overseas based? Even though our first developer was only a few miles down the road, our site toppled over once and we couldn't get hold of him to sort it out on a Sunday. These things happen!
- ❑ Will you need email pop boxes?
- ❑ Will you need regular back up?
- ❑ Will members be uploading content? Are there uploading restrictions?

Hosting fees can be high, and they are normally paid for in advance, so do shop around. I suggest you read the Free Websites, Hosted Websites and Bespoke Website chapters before you decide on hosting as the information in these chapters may help to determine which option you should go for and, therefore, if you need separate hosting or not.

## Score Goals

If you haven't already done so, you will need to set goals and objectives. This way you can establish the exact aim of the business. You may have grand plans to sell this brilliant idea of yours for a cash bomb with an exit strategy after a number of years. You might want to manage a small and cosy family business over a long period. Maybe you need to run your online business while working a day job or alongside another business.

Whatever it is you want to do, you need to aspire to something in order to achieve it. Recognition of your aspirations and actually visualising it, will lead to achievement and result in success.

My mentor, Karen Darby, inspires people when she tells them that she started visualising her ideal home. Then, when she sold her

business, SimplySwitch, to the Daily Mail for £22m she found the house of her dreams and was pleasantly surprised to find it matched her imagined home.

You too can picture where you want to go and what you want to do with your website. In tough times recall this image and renew your determination to make it work. The best way to get somewhere is to want it badly enough!

## Hey BIG Thinker

While considering your aspirations for your new online business we are cooking up together, be positive and always aim high.

You will achieve far more in life if you reach for the sky. Don't be afraid to fail. More importantly, don't fail to start. If you aim half way up the ladder, you may reach just below the half way mark, yet if you aim above 75%, you could achieve more than 50 or 60%. So dream big dreams and think big thoughts.

It took time for Remote Employment to become Google's No 1 for 'Flexible Jobs', but we have always aimed to be the biggest and best site for flexible and home based working. We are now in the running to become the global leader for remote and home based jobs!

*"Don't expect to make money straight away.  
Do your research and make sure there's a  
market for your business."*

Carrie Longton, Mumsnet

As we go along you will be reminded of your goals and aspirations. When we chat about branding I will give you some ideas about thinking differently in order to become a BIG player. So when you plan your goals think BIG and believe you can achieve whatever you set out to do. In saying that, don't delude yourself in believing you can become an instant overnight millionaire. If that happens, brilliant, but it's better to prepare for a longer journey and some hard work!

At the end of today's chapter, make a start on your goals. I would strongly suggest you keep scribbling away at them as you go along

because each day covers important details, hints and tips that will bring you back to your goal setting.

Keep this book in your bag or briefcase or take a notebook everywhere you go and as inspiration floats by, grab it and write down your thoughts.

An example of a goal could be to finish this book within a certain time frame, to complete your research within 7 days, to hold meetings with prospective developers by the end of the month or to possibly set up weekly project meetings with the key members of your online team.

Once you have a BIG dream for your business, set goals and objectives to achieve that vision. Have these goals and targets visible, possibly on a notice board above your desk, in a spreadsheet, in your calendar or even on a fridge magnet. Just keep them handy so you can monitor and measure progress on a regular basis.

## **Business Plans**

If you are aiming to start a business that will have 'legs' and stick around for many years, you should also write out a full business plan. There are many organisations to help you as well as online resources to tap into. Some banks also offer this service to new business start ups. Although I would like to go into detail about what to feature in a successful business plan, I simply don't have the space here, as I need to give you more elements on how to set up a thriving website.

## **USP**

A Unique Selling Proposition (USP) is described in Philip Kotler's book *Principles of Marketing*, as the unique product benefit that a firm aggressively promotes in a consistent manner to its target audience. The benefit usually reflects functional superiority: best quality, best services, lowest price and most advanced technology.

Check Wikipedia's USP Examples:

- Head & Shoulders: "You get rid of dandruff"
- Olay: "You get younger-looking skin"
- Domino's Pizza: "You get fresh, hot pizza delivered to your door in 30 minutes or less -- or it's free."

- FedEx: “When your package absolutely, positively has to get there overnight”
- More: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unique\\_selling\\_proposition](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unique_selling_proposition)

## **Now Get SMART**

You may have heard people sprouting about SMART goals. Although the acronym has a number of slightly different variations, in short, it means your goals are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time Limited.

### **SPECIFIC**

Don’t just say you want to set up your online business this year. Say that you want to set it up within the next three months. Or, better still, set a launch date. A general goal would suggest: “Set up my online business.”

A specific goal would state: “Launch my online business by 29 January.” Also try and stretch yourself by using this type of declaration to inspire you or boot you into action.

### **MEASURABLE**

Measure your progress with meaningful goals and milestones. This way you will stay on target and experience the excitement of achievement, which will motivate and urge you to reach your goal.

### **ATTAINABLE**

To attain, reach or accomplish your goal, plan your steps and create a time frame. When I set goals for this book to be published, I created a spreadsheet in Excel and as I targeted publishers, I literally ticked them off the list. I am sure you can guess that I am a ‘list person’!

### **RELEVANT AND REALISTIC**

Your goal will be realistic if you truly believe that it can be done and you know what it will take to accomplish it. When my partner and I decided to be Google’s No 1 for flexible jobs, we had no idea what it would take and I set myself a steep learning curve (hey ho, what fun we’ve had).

Be reasonable with yourself and, above all, be rewarding. Give yourself little treats when you reach different milestones and share it with your family. It will gain their support for your idea.

**FOR EXAMPLE:** whenever we reach even a small step in the right direction, we buy ourselves a mega coffee, a lunch or even a dinner. You may even set aside outings with friends and family.

How good would your son feel if you told him that you were going to play footie with him after school on Friday? Whatever the treat, the feel-good factor makes you work harder.

### **TIMELY**

By setting a track-able time frame with an exact date, you have set your mind into gear. Without you being aware, it will be quietly working away at reaching the goal date. Setting a time also cunningly gives you a sense of urgency to ensure you keep making progress.

## **Define Your Strengths and Weaknesses**

A SWOT Analysis is a way to plan and assess the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats involved in starting and running your website. Once you know the objectives for your website, you can consider positive and negative aspects of your plan.

Identifying your SWOTs is crucial because you can take steps during your planning to overcome a weakness or lessen a threat. It will also establish your strengths and opportunities and spark creative ideas for marketing.

It is particularly helpful to bring to light any future development and possible growth plans.

## CREATE A SUCCESSFUL WEBSITE

**FOR EXAMPLE:** after we launched Remote Employment, we went back to our SWOT and explored ways to increase our strengths and diminish any weaknesses or threats. So we launched an Awards site honouring individuals and companies who champion remote and home working.

Polly Gowers from Everyclick advises that you be clear about what your objectives are and what it is you need your customer to do. Everyclick is all about enabling the user to support their favourite charity so they make sure their content is highly personalised to support their favourite cause. See this in action below where Everyclick has personalised an RSPB page.



everyclick

Give as you Live™ raise funds for free!

Web  Search

Search the web, shop online and trade on eBay

RSPB

Give now more ways to give

The RSPB speaks out for birds and wildlife, tackling the problems that threaten our environ... [more](#)

Live Activity - updated every 3 minutes Total: £4,859.75

Deborah Dewar	Give As You Live	£13.403
Craig Round	Give As You Live	£1.692
Anonymous	Give As You Live	£3,018.714
Alan Gould	Give As You Live	£3.239

[Sign up](#) to track your giving [Make this your homepage](#)

## SWOT = AKA Sweat Analysis

Ideally, a SWOT analysis starts with defining a desired end objective, it's a sweaty old task, but someone's gotta do it.

### STRENGTHS

List out qualities of your online business or website that will help achieve your business objectives. Remember to include resources, such as yourself or business partners. Your and their strengths are important to your venture.

**FOR EXAMPLE:** my background is PR and this 'strength' played an important role in reaching a wider audience and overcame one of our weaknesses, a limited marketing budget. So use a strength to combat a weakness.

### WEAKNESSES

This could be the actions or activities of you, your business partners and your company that may hinder achievement.

### OPPORTUNITIES

This is fun: list out positive external or internal factors that will assist in achieving your plan.

**FOR EXAMPLE:** in our SWOT, advances in technology were regarded as a big opportunity for more people working from home. Then, when the recession hit, despite it being a negative it turned to a positive opportunity as many people who were faced with redundancy now wanted alternative ways of working.

### THREATS

Negative outer or inner factors that could potentially do damage to your online business.

**FOR EXAMPLE:** when we launched The Remote Worker Awards and were looking for headline sponsors, these were brief and basic SWOTs:

- **STRENGTHS:** unique, new, sexiness of the remote working concept, huge PR opportunity.
- **WEAKNESS:** no track record, therefore harder to crack big sponsors.
- **OPPORTUNITIES:** Award Categories could be branded with a company's name, along with a high profile judging panel.
- **THREATS:** some sponsors may have the view that because it was the inaugural Awards, that the idea could potentially fail.

We took our Opportunities and Strengths to the extreme and managed to get more than £891k in positive PR media coverage. The campaign doubled our site traffic! The moral of the SWOT story - take your S and O and go hell for leather to reduce the W and T.

It is a good idea to look at the 'order of magnitude'. If the S and Os are a lot bigger than the W and Ts, put most of your effort into them or vice versa. And don't underestimate the T of your competition - know their S and Ws.



Your SWOT analysis will help you use lateral thinking to get the most creative ideas into your plans. As you get further embedded into this book and more light bulbs go off in your head, keep coming back to this section and add to your SWOT. It is a constantly revolving and evolving piece of work.

## **Revolve and Evolve**

Babyworld was set up to provide medical and expert advice and has developed over the past 11 years. It now aims to deliver information and advice for parents so they can make informed choices about all areas of being parents with totally unbiased information on a wide area of topics.

*“Everywoman’s evolution has been driven  
by the needs of our community.”*

Max Benson, MBE everywoman

Similarly, the ‘everywoman’ website has changed constantly over the past ten years. It has had many incarnations, but their mission has remained the same; they always support women in business.

## **Competitive Analysis**

While you want to beat the competitive guys over the road, you don’t want to copy them, so find out what they do best and worst. Ensure that there is no fuzzy confusion with their site and yours by avoiding the same colours, fonts and designs. Of course, it goes without saying, never use their key message. Yours must be distinctly different and unique to your business. Don’t try and wear too many hats - in other words, focus on a niche or speciality. This will give you the competitive edge.

### **SPY SPOTTING**

When you spy on your competitors, establish what makes you different from them and why your visitors should buy from you. Also figure out what model they use and how you could follow the best of something similar without being a copy cat. Best of all - be original and creative, and only use them to gauge your SWOT. In doing so, you will rise above them.

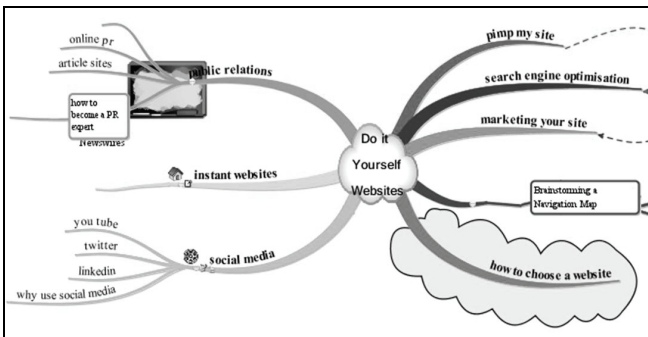
## BRAINSTORMING

In order to get yourself prepared for your website, research your market's industry sector and brainstorm different inventive ways to show off your products. The act of brainstorming doesn't always have to be at a white board, in front of a PC or surrounded by your notes. Once you start the process of brainstorming your unconscious mind and creative thought processes will be working intensely to decipher the issues you need solving.

For a long time I have written novels and whenever the idea for a new book pops into my head, my brain chomps on the idea and it develops over time. Then, when I get down to the planning process, I am chuffed to see how much has been brewing upstairs. Keep your bubbling pot going and carry on making notes. As you go through this book, bursts of meaty detail will come to light.

## iMindMap

A cool tool to brainstorm is mind mapping. Buzan's iMindMap is an organic thinking experience. This brainy piece of software hosts a range of features designed to make you more productive and creative in the way you think.

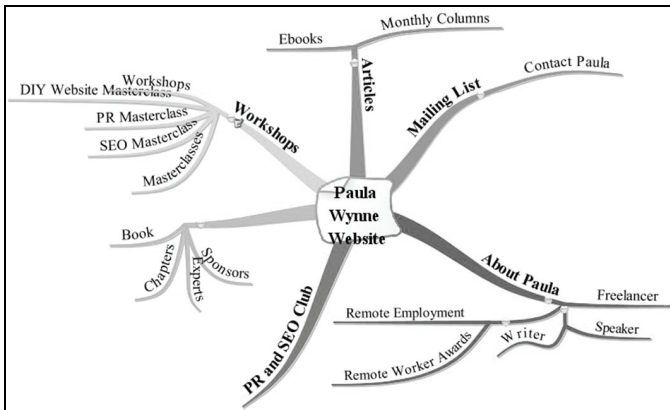


It's like a giant Octopus with colourful tentacles, images and icons that allow you to add notes and links to a range of files.

When brainstorming chapters for this book, I tried iMindMap Ultimate, which helps you to generate new ideas quickly and effectively and most importantly, to store them in an organised way. It helps to plan and record spontaneous bursts of inspiration, as well as to explore promotions for your future website.

## CREATE A SUCCESSFUL WEBSITE

This piece of software is just what the doctor ordered for your navigation map, which we cover in our next chapter. The computer age is so exciting and innovative. With this kind of cutting-edge technology writers, promoters, marketers and planners - in fact anyone - can map their mind, thoughts, inspirations, goals and much more. Give it a whirl and have fun!



## Testing The Market

Research is vital for any project, especially for an online business. There is a multitude of sites out there so you need to know exactly what you are getting into before you rush ahead, spending money on a fancy website, only to find there are several hundred already doing the same thing.

### QUICK TEST

- Write down a target market for your business.
- Create a simple questionnaire.
- Aim to get around 20 or 30 responses.
- Phone the decision maker.
- Record the results in case you need this later.
- Only count the definite 'yes' responses - you want at least 50% to be strongly positive to your idea.



### THOUGHTFUL

I find it handy to use a personal tape recorder or Dictaphone; it goes pretty much everywhere with me in case I can't make notes. A BlackBerry and other fancy mobiles can also do this.

### POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

- Do you currently buy this product or service?
- If it were available, would you buy it?
- How much would you pay for it?
- What else would affect your decision to buy it?

## Research List

Researching your business idea is just the beginning. Create a list of other subjects you need to investigate. Start with a few simple tasks and keep adding to the list as you think of new ones. Here are a few examples to get you going, but come back and list new action points after each chapter or keep a Word document or spreadsheet with all the details.

### RESEARCH EXAMPLES

- Make contacts.
- You may need to interview experts, depending on your site and your specialty, this could even be professionals.
- Start meeting and getting to know some of the people who could help you down the line.
- Check out potential domain names.
- Research developers for your website – more to come.
- Check out the competition - what they do best and worst.
- What are their colours, fonts and designs?
- What you do better or can do differently? More on this in Branding.
- Why should your visitors buy from you?
- What trends, styles and development will you pursue?

## Niche

Dictionary.com describes a 'niche' as "a place or position suitable or appropriate for a person or thing and having specific appeal." When we set up Remote Employment there was a need for professional workers to find home based jobs. So our niche not only had specific appeal to *us personally*, but also to our potential users.

At the time there was no reliable website or directory that we could lay our hands on, and so we trawled the web looking for all our keywords only to find loads of 'dodgy' sites and link farms claiming they offered 'genuine' work-from-home jobs.

*"All sites must evolve or die."*

Karen Hanton, Toptable

Polly Gowers from Everyclick advises: Find your niche, find out where you customers are hanging out online, find out what keywords they use and then find a way of getting in front of them.

## Finding Your Niche

It's really important to find your niche and now is the time to research it. When contemplating your niche, carefully consider the following questions.



### KAREN HANTON ON MAKING MISTAKES...

- We all make wrong turns. Anyone who says they don't is probably not being truthful.
- Most important thing is to recognise and accept that something isn't right and fixing it is the easy part. Denial is the enemy!

Ask yourself:

- What are you passionate about?
- Are you knowledgeable and skilled on a certain subject?
- Is your content general or specific?
- Can you write about broad or narrow topics?

**FOR EXAMPLE:** you may be a photographer, so what's niche about that? Well, maybe you specialise in underwater photography or newly born babies. If you're a commercial photographer your niche may be shooting scenes such as factory equipment, food or rock concerts.

Above all, you should only 'niche' it up if you love your chosen web concept and you know a lot about it. Don't settle with a topic you're unsure about just because you think it will make money or be a runaway success. Do what you love the most, where your passion will ride waves and your energy will be unstoppable.

## Why You, Why Now?

Now take the time to list all the reasons for setting up this fabulous new site; it will help refine your research.

### IS IT A NECESSITY AND WHY?

At the time we set up Remote Employment, there was no dedicated port of call to find home based or flexible remote working jobs.

### IS THERE A GAP IN THE MARKET? HOW WILL YOUR SITE FILL THE GAP?

For us there was a clear gap in the market and Remote Employment aimed to fill it with a job board that offered people the first and best site for alternative working.



#### DEBBIE BIRD ON PLANNING YOUR WEBSITE...

- When planning the structure of your website think bigger than just what you need now.
- Have a vision of where you want to be in 5, 10 and 15 years' time.
- Once you have that vision, start planning how to get there.

### **WHO WILL BENEFIT AND WHY?**

We want to make a difference to people's lives. Everyone who has a flexible work option will enjoy so many benefits. This encompasses parents, carers and generally anyone who wants an alternative way of working. You may have a more specific target market so list the details here.

### **WHAT WILL IT ACHIEVE & HOW DO YOU INTEND TO DO THIS?**

With The Remote Worker Awards we wanted to raise awareness for remote and home working and increase our site traffic. We did this with a huge injection of self driven PR.

### **WHY ARE YOU THE BEST PERSON TO DO THIS?**

We were the first and as such we became industry experts on the topic of remote working. As a result, we are often called upon by the media to comment on remote and home working.

## **Exit Route**

No, it's not a roadie film or anything similar. An exit strategy, also known as exit route, is just what it says on the tin. It is a plan for exiting the business or company, either due to an unsuitable situation or by forward planning, which is why I am mentioning it now.

You may want to maintain a long running family business in a cottage industry and keep it that way. No problem with that. Or you may have plans to make a mint and then let someone else take over when the time is right to sell. This is where your exit plan comes in handy.

Jo Haigh, from *fds* and MGR advises that you plan your exit the day you start your business. In other words, always have in mind what your business should look like to potential investors to get the best value possible. Having a great management team and a strong brand are steps in the right direction.



#### **KAREN HANTON ON MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES...**

- ✓ It is good to have a high profile shareholder.
- ✓ If you have a good proposition, it shouldn't be too hard to interest somebody relevant to your audience in return for a small share.

Most entrepreneurs set up a Strategic Management Team with a clear exit plan for some point in the future. Investors will be interested in this, as it shows them a way that they can recoup any money they invest in your business. The most common exit route is selling the business to someone else. And if you have an investor, they get a return on their investment once the sale is complete.

Deciding to exit, or not, doesn't make or break you as an entrepreneur, it just decides the future outcome of your online business. Don't stress over this now if you hadn't even considered this option. Just let it sit in your bubbling pot and see what happens when you finish this book. Even then, you don't have to make a decision until you know what is best for you and the business. If you plan to build the business with a clear exit route in place then remember to make notes in your SWOT analysis.

## **Management Team**

Jo describes a Non-Executive Director (NED) as a member of the Board of Directors who form part of the executive management team, but may not be an employee of the company. Working with an NED should strengthen your management team (remember to explore this in your SWOT Analysis), especially if they are an industry expert and you are not. It could be a good idea to make contact with possible NEDs at an early stage of your planning. Think carefully about the essential skills you need yet don't have and interview or select NEDs based on this list.

Consider someone with experience in the areas where you and your team are possibly weak. You could also look for a few people who will complement your business and use their skills and experience to reinforce your SWOTs. You may want to offer them a Sweat Equity, which is a share (preferably small) in your business in return for their sweat ... err, their help and advice.

Jo suggests that you choose only those people who are better than you in whatever area you feel deficient and make sure you like them! You need to have a clear understanding of what you want from them and what they can do for you, and then communicate this to them so both parties have full understanding of the agreement.



*“Learn to delegate. You can’t possibly do everything yourself. Find other specialists that can do certain things better than you.”*

Polly Gowers, Everyclick

Jo also advises that you have clearly defined rules of engagement. What happens if they leave or you want them to leave? Lastly, on the subject of Non Executives, Jo believes that you should not mix up consultancy with NED roles. Instead, have agreed director’s fees; a contract for services should you not get an NED involved in your business.

## **Mentor**

Dictionary.com tells us that a mentor is a wise and trusted teacher or an influential sponsor and supporter. Do yourself the biggest favour and find one of these wise owls by asking someone you respect. Or make contact with industry experts through people you meet or know. Networking is a perfect way to meet possible NEDs and mentors.

Imagine winning a mentor who is one of the most successful woman entrepreneurs in the UK! I did! Let me tell you, I still pinch myself. I was awarded Karen Darby as my mentor in the FreshIdeas Events Award.

We’ve had the greatest fun, from her flipping pancakes - and serving them with ice cream at our meetings - to fishing frogs out of her pond for an exhibition!

Aside from the good laughs, Karen has given me bucket loads of inspiration and her confidence in my business concept has been a huge boost. Every time I see her (even if it’s only for a pub lunch or coffee) I walk away buzzing with excitement and creative thoughts whirring in every direction.

Working with a mentor may initiate imaginative thinking, create new ideas for long term strategies and help you to evolve your business or website over time. Karen has done all this for me and more.

### WHY A MENTOR?

A mentor may offer a long term commitment and a vested interest in you and your business's future. The mentor could be where you aspire to be and they may even come gift wrapped with the influence and contacts you need.

### A GOOD MENTOR

- Willingness to share their experience
- Constructive feedback or criticism
- Share their brain power
- Your ideal role model
- Similar backgrounds
- Good sense of humour
- Listening skills
- Ability to discuss wide range of issues
- Aspiration to bring about change
- Positive upbeat attitude
- Open to learning from you

### FINDING A MENTOR

Ask at your network events or within other organisations to see if there's a mentoring programme you can join. Surf the net as well, as there are various websites on mentoring.

To find someone, identify a person you admire and respect. Go back and look at your goals and see the notes you made on your management team and decide what characteristics you're seeking in a mentor. Do some research on people you'd like to work with; you can even use LinkedIn to find people you have seen speak at seminars or functions. First, approach them for a link or connection before you cram them with requests to give up their time for you.



#### FIND A MENTOR

- ✓ Don't be afraid to ask someone to be your mentor, they can only say 'No.' Nothing lost, experience gained.
- ✓ Dust yourself down and try again. And keep trying until you find someone who will help you, support you and guide you through the ups and downs.

### APPROACHING A MENTOR

When you approach your wise owl, go slowly and don't bombard a possible mentor; it could make them say NO! Test the waters by a simple request for their advice on a particular challenge that you know will be their forté. Or make a direct request. Be open, honest, realistic and enthusiastic.

Another way is to buy them a coffee or splash out and do lunch. If you both feel good afterwards, there is probably a basis for a mentorship. Don't forget to thank them for their time, even if the idea of mentoring is going nowhere.

When you have their trust, tell them your intentions and request a trial mentoring period. That way it gives them an opt-out if they feel that they won't be able to help you and vice versa.

### YOU AS A MENTEE

You should show your potential mentor trustworthiness and confidentiality. Agree from the start how things will work and how you will communicate. Decide on boundaries together and clarify time commitments and expectations.



#### JO HAIGH ADVISES MENTEES...

- ✓ Don't ask too much
- ✓ Do what you have agreed
- ✓ Stick to time tables
- ✓ Open your mind - you will learn loads!

There are thousands of networking groups where you could scout for your mentor. Some of them even pair mentees and mentors, such as FreshIdeas Events where I saw the competition, applied and was awarded Karen as my mentor. Jackie Brennan, from FreshIdeas Events, is an excellent mentor matcher and has advised on both mentor and mentee topics. Check out Jackie's mentoring program at [www.freshideasevents.com/services.asp](http://www.freshideasevents.com/services.asp).

What a ride! You may not be flipping pancakes or fishing for pond life, but the inspiration and motivation, as well as good common business sense, will set you on fire and make you aspire to be as successful as they are. Don't just get a Mentor, get one today!

## Summary

Today's topics and tasks are the foundations of your new website. Prepping up and setting objectives at this stage will pay off later on.

We set short and long term goals, objectives and SMART goals for your site to steer you in the right direction. As you venture on your quest to ensure online success for your website, analysing your strengths and weaknesses will help you recognise the opportunities that lie ahead of you. We discussed options for managing your online business and watching out for competitors.

Brainstorm all possible avenues of research so you get all the 'must do' tasks out of the way because we are now heading into some pretty exciting stuff. We've had some fun today and we've done some serious soul searching to determine all that needs to be done in planning your new online business.

## Checklist

- Naming your site
- SWOT analysis
- Brainstorm
- Create an iMind Map
- Research list
- Set SMART goals
- Why me, why now?
- Consider your exit route
- Management team
- Non Executive Director
- Potential mentors
- Competitive analysis