

Small Business Website Launch Checklist

A step-by-step guide to getting a small business website ready to go live - from first planning conversation through to the weeks after launch.

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This checklist is written for owners, managers and small teams. Work through each section in order, tick things off as you go, and use it alongside whoever is building or managing your site.

**Items marked with an asterisk may not apply to every business - complete these only if applicable to yours.*

1 Planning & Strategy

- ☐ Define the primary objective of the site (e.g. generate enquiries, drive online sales, showcase your work).
- ☐ Map out the site structure, distinguishing essential launch pages from post-launch additions.
- ☐ Assign final sign-off authority to a single person or small decision-making group.
- ☐ Set a realistic target launch date and communicate it across the business.
- ☐ Confirm who will be responsible for ongoing site maintenance post-launch.

Key Insight: Clear upfront strategy prevents costly scope creep and launch delays.

2 Content Preparation

- ☐ Write a clear overview of what your business does and who it's for.
- ☐ List your products or services with clear, accurate descriptions.
- ☐ Confirm your pricing, quoting or booking process is ready to go live.
- ☐ Set up and end-to-end test any online payment or checkout process.*

- ☐ Display up-to-date contact details (email, phone, and business address if applicable).
- ☐ Include your company registration number and VAT number in the website footer, if applicable.*
- ☐ Source genuine photos of your work, team or premises rather than stock media.
- ☐ Gather testimonials or reviews from existing customers.
- ☐ Confirm copyright clearance for all images, text and other media sourced from third parties.
- ☐ Perform an independent proofread of all site copy.

Trust Signal Note: Genuine photos, real testimonials and clear pricing build buyer confidence faster than any design choice.

3 Legal & Compliance

- ☐ Publish a clear Privacy Policy detailing data collection and usage.
- ☐ Include Website Terms of Use.
- ☐ Implement a Cookie Policy and consent banner if tracking tools or analytics are active.
- ☐ Ensure all forms comply with UK GDPR requirements for handling personal data.
- ☐ Confirm SSL encryption is configured across all data collection forms.
- ☐ Publish a clear Returns, Refunds or Cancellation Policy if selling products or services online.*
- ☐ Confirm compliance with Consumer Contract Regulations for any online sales to consumers.*

Compliance Note: Distance selling and cancellation rights apply automatically once you take orders or payments online, even without a dedicated shop platform.

4 Accessibility & Usability

- ☐ Verify that text meets minimum visual contrast standards.
- ☐ Test full site navigation via keyboard.
- ☐ Add descriptive alternative text (alt text) to all informative images.

- ☐ Ensure the layout adapts seamlessly to browser text zoom.
- ☐ Review site functionality across mobile devices and desktops.

Accessibility Standard: Inclusive design broadens your customer base and reduces legal risk under the Equality Act.

5 Technical Infrastructure

- ☐ Verify the active SSL certificate (HTTPS / padlock indicator).
- ☐ Audit page loading performance on mobile networks.
- ☐ Perform a link check across all pages to eliminate broken links.
- ☐ Set up web analytics tracking.
- ☐ Add spam protection to any public-facing forms.
- ☐ Test form submission deliverability to ensure automated notification emails avoid spam filters.
- ☐ Configure a custom 404 error page.

6 Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)

- ☐ Write unique meta titles and descriptions for every page.
- ☐ Submit your sitemap to Google Search Console.
- ☐ Set up or claim your Google Business Profile.
- ☐ Standardise Name, Address, and Phone (NAP) details across all online references.

Local SEO Note: A complete, active Google Business Profile often drives more local enquiries than the website itself.

7 Pre-Launch Verification

- ☐ Complete end-to-end test submissions on all contact, enquiry, and checkout forms.

- ☐ Verify display consistency across key browsers (Chrome, Safari, Edge, Firefox).
- ☐ Conduct user testing with a small group outside the business to catch usability gaps.
- ☐ Create a full backup of any existing site prior to migration.
- ☐ Prepare launch announcements for social media, email list and existing customers.

8

Post-Launch Maintenance

- ☐ Monitor user interactions and address reported issues during the first 72 hours.
- ☐ Schedule quarterly or annual content reviews.
- ☐ Store administrative credentials securely in a centralised password manager.
- ☐ Ensure the domain name and primary admin accounts are registered under the business's own account, not a developer's personal one.
- ☐ Document an Emergency Contact / Handover Plan in case the current site administrator becomes unavailable.
- ☐ Assign specific roles for ongoing content and technical updates.

Long-Term Ownership: Assign clear responsibility for ongoing site updates and security maintenance before going live.

Need assistance?

Yelland Digital specialises in designing and building fast, professional websites for small businesses. Contact us at yellanddigital.co.uk for a site review or launch support.