

9 Practical Business Rules, on how to develop and manage a winning web, site without blowing the budget!

Practical Rule #1 - Your web site is your business.

We often hear that a web site should be treated like any other marketing investment, and you should think of your web presence as an advertising or marketing medium.

We say that as a business manager in today's economy you need to start thinking of your web site as your shop, your office, your sales agent, your communication channel, and your delivery staff etc. New Zealand has one of the highest internet connectivity rates in the OECD and business opportunities online are growing. But it's only when you start viewing your web site as an online extension to your business, that can you really develop a competitive and profitable web presence.

The first step you should take is to look at your existing web site and ask yourself whether there is anything else your web site could be doing for your business, either in terms of increasing sales (generate more leads, sell your products online etc) or by optimizing existing business processes to offering a better service to your customers (taking enquiries from your web site, offer product or service updates etc).

Practical Rule #2 - Your web site must be profitable.

If you have to run your web site as an integrated business unit to the rest of your company, then the same business rules apply. Developing and maintaining a good business web site doesn't have to blow the budget. Tools and services are available to get started online for less than NZ\$1000 ([visit Domainz Web Design service online brochure for more information](#)).

If you already run a web site, you should ask yourself a few simple questions:

- a) How many visitors does my web site receive on a weekly basis?
- b) What percentage of my web site visitors make contact with my company?
- c) How does my web site rank in Google for a specific key phrase?

Practical Rule #3 - Keep the information on your web site up to date.

Imagine what it feels like when you visit a web site, try to find out information and you come across old price lists, broken links, or outdated events in response to your query. Updating your web site doesn't have to take much of your time, after all your web site is supposed to make your business more profitable and more efficient - not waste any of your resources, including time.

Useful Tips: A useful tip to manage your web site updates is to restrict regular changes to one single page. So your first step should be to create a set of standard pages that will not require frequent updates such as "About Us", "Contact Us", "Products Range" and then have one page built with a Content Management System that would allow you to easily manage the content. A typical page that requires frequent updates could be an "Events", "Reports", "Prices", or "Special Offers" page.



Practical Rule #4 - Cut down on the number of pages on your web site.

Web site visitors only browse a few pages in search for the information they require, so by spreading your information among several pages you make it more difficult for users to find what they need and in turn more likely for them to leave your web site and not come back. Try to keep your web site to a maximum of 10 to 15 pages of content, and create a good navigation system or menu. [\(You can find out more about good navigation web sites on News.Domainz\)](#)

Practical Rule #5 - Collect information from your web site visitors.

If you run a physical shop or an office where customers can walk in or make an appointment to come and see you, you then have the opportunity to interact with them and you can influence their experience. With web sites you don't have such a luxury, therefore it is essential that you collect some contact information from interested visitors and potential buyers so that you can keep in contact with them or follow up.

Useful Tips: A simple way to encourage web site visitors to provide their contact information would be to offer a competition, or a free gift. If you implement this marketing tactic, you need to make sure you ask your customers for permission to contact them in the future and that you will not disclose their information (a privacy policy).

Practical Rule #6 - Monitor Search Engines .

What do you offer through your web site?

What is your product or service?

Type your answer into the Google New Zealand search field and find out how your web site ranks for a targeted key phrase that defines your product or service range. Alert. If you are not in the top 20 listings in Google.co.nz you may want to speak to a Search Engine Marketing Consultant [\(to request a free SEM report from Domainz\).](#)

Practical Rule #7 - Tell everyone about your web site.

Make sure your web site gets as much offline visibility as possible. You should have your domain name listed on your business cards, letterhead, brochures, yellow pages listings and any other form of marketing or sales collateral that your company produces. Finally, ensure your domain name (or web site address) appears on your email signatures.

Practical Rule #8 - Content is King.

Search engines, and most importantly viewers, value and reward good quality content in a web site. As you are an expert in your sector, you should aim to produce unique and relevant content for your site which search engines will index and visitors will enjoy reading and find informative. Keep in mind that while good graphics are important for a short term effect (immediate impact), good content provides a long term solution to attract customers to your web site and improve search engine rankings.



Practical Rule #9 - Have fun with your web site.

A web site provides new ways to promote your company, web sites and the Internet are a new media and you shouldn't be afraid to try new, innovative ways to use this tool - and if you do, remember to email us at Domainz to let us know so we can expand and improve our help guides. (email webmaster@domainz.net.nz)

