



"The Moon is made
of green cheese."

- John Haywood 1546

"Dude, it so is!"

-Neighbor 1546



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WEB myths

*Dubunking common
folklore in web design,
strategy & web marketing.*

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MYTHS & Answers

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1 Good Sites Look Pretty.

I see this all the time. People go to a web developer and say, "I need a website for my business. I want it to look great!" By the end of the project, the majority of the budget was spent on design elements that make the site "Look" more attractive, but ultimately did nothing to accomplish basic business goals for the site. Now, the site may look great in the first five seconds, but with a little reading and further investigation, the site is all fluff, no meat, and the prospective customer leaves because there is nothing engaging to keep them around. Yep, that is correct, most of your business goals are not achieved through good looks. Conversely great content, optimal user experience and well placed "call to actions" contribute to a sites success. There is no shortage of pretty things to look at on the web, and there is no reason to compete for attention on pure aesthetics alone. However, there are a few exceptions for businesses where the aesthetic presentation is an integral part to a artistic product or service.

 **Tested:** Good Sites work for your audience, business objectives, skill level and overall marketing strategy.

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In our experience, we have seen people pay a lot of money for sites that were, for lack of a better word, crap....no matter how much you spend. There is no shortage of people that will take your money and give you something that doesn't do what you need it to do. Often times, this is your fault because you had vague guidelines to begin with and you probably didn't even know what you wanted. This is especially true for people that are having a site designed and built for the first time. Like a picture, examples of what you want say a thousand words quickly and succinctly. Pushing this responsibility onto the developer is analogous to rolling dice and eats into their budget and time by forcing them to guess on what you want to accomplish. Here are a few suggestions when identifying your web presence team, get examples of their work and get prices for what that example cost. There is no point in looking at sites that cost 20k, when you are looking at doing something for much less than that. Also, it is useful to identify your business objectives up front, then offer them to provide examples of how they would accomplish that.

 **Tested:** The cost of a website should be based on what it needs to accomplish and a healthy budget with defined deliverables.

3 More is better.

Have you come across a site where there is so much content on the page that you feel overwhelmed, confused and annoyed all at the same time? Often times people try to fit as much on the site as they can, thinking that more is somehow better. Today, your emphasis should be on straight forward, quality content, not quantity. Jamming paragraph after paragraph of useless clique copy and istock photos ad nausea kills your page conversions. People don't want to read garbage or poorly writun copie. Sometimes, this content congestion happens over time. A good site might have been handed off from the web developer, and then the direction of the site changes, new content is added, and other irrellevant content is taken down. As companies migrate in markets, offers and branding, so should the site. Often times, these are our easiest clients to work with. They already have much of the tough parts done, they just really need some content pruning and some design refresh.

✓ **Tested:** People are busy. Giving them the level of information that is truly valuable to them is effective and respects your visitor.

4 I need to be technically competent.

Actually, this is not true. Actually, you only need to have the patience and willingness to learn. Today, managing the content on your site should require as much technical expertise as your email client. If you can manage a word document or navigate the internet, you can manage the basics of your site. No, you don't need to know HTML or learn anything really technical. All decent websites have something called a Content Management System (CMS). If you can type then you should be able to edit the content on your site. If time is an issue, you can have your secretary or virtual assistant trained to do it. The older model of web development married you to your developer. Every change involved his/her assistance and nice little price tag associated with that. Not today. No developer worth his or her salt will give you anything less than a simple tool for managing the content on your site. There are a lot of choices to choose from. I personally think Wordpress is a great choice.

✓ **Tested:** You know more than you think. If you know how to use email you should be able to manage your site.

5 I sell bricks, I don't need a website.

You're right, you don't need a website...ever. The world as a whole is becoming less and less interested in connecting through the world wide web. In a few years, this whole technology fad will run its course and you will be all the wiser for never wasting a minute of your time learning anything about websites. Lol...ok that was a bit over the top, but I hope you get the point.

Really, the web is only getting bigger. 10 years ago, who would have thought that you could order your food online and then go pick it up. The reason, more than likely, that you don't have a website is that you personally are anxious about having one. It is foreign and unnecessary from day to day operations now. If you are in this category, I would invite you to consider purchasing a very simple package for your business. Really, this will have zero impact on your business, but if you will take the time to learn the process, you will gain a web vocabulary that will help you to see the true relevance for site for your company in the coming years.

✓ **Tested:** Even if you have done okay in the past, our culture is changing rapidly and expects business to be accessible online.

6 I can just throw up my site and be done.

Ok, this is not a myth. You can really do this. But, just so you know static sites die. They die for a couple of reasons. One is that google hates static sites. According to google, if it isn't changing then your Search Engine Rankings rankings take a hit. However, for a lot of companies that is ok because they are not competing for page rank. But here is another question. Is there any value that you can provide your customers by providing ongoing relevant value on your site? There is always something new about your business that is changing? I don't think you realize that you are brilliant about something and that you should be demonstrating that brilliance with content. The new model for sales involves you proving your value before an exchange of services is ever made. People want to see what you have to offer before they purchase, or they want a pretty good sample. Why? Well


✓ **Tested:** Simple, easy updates to your site make all the difference in your search rankings and usability and relivance for you visitors.

7 One Person Can Do It All.

Beware of the jack of all trades. In my experience there are 4 very different components involved in a website...possibly more. I have yet to meet someone that can do them all well.


- Architecture/Strategy/Marketing/Business Development
- Technology (Content Management System, SEO...)
- Design/User Experience
- Content/Copy

Really, I know how nice it is to be able to go to one place and get it all handled at once and a lot of web development companies do this. But a lot of them say that they take into consideration your business process, but really don't. At the end of the day, you need to know what you want your site to accomplish for your business and why. I have a lot more to say about this, but just know that these 4 areas require completely unique skill sets. The best site uses a combination of people to build it out.

 **Tested:** Teams of individuals who are genius in their skill generally bring much more to the table than the lone-ranger.

8 Web presence equals a website.

There are a lot of people that are fairly popular online through a lot of other technology vehicles besides a website. Some people have just a blog, which is technically a subset of a category of website. Some people just network through their LinkedIn community or Facebook. Some people belong to message boards and have established their reputation through hundreds, or even thousands of posts on various subjects. The point is that rarely does a web presence strategy just involve your website. Really, it can and should involve so

 **Tested:** Bringing your personality, connections and relationships into your online world count much more than "just a website."