# 30 Criteria For a Great Website



Welcome, Annette Welsford here.

In this episode of Tradie Success I'm going to be talking about something which I'm really really passionate about. It's the thing that our wonderful team at Commonsense Marketing does every single day – and that's create websites for our clients.

Now even if you've already got a website – I want you to listen to this, because I've just launched a new ebook – called 30 Criteria for a Great Website – and today I'll be sharing 10 of the 30 criteria with you.

There are websites which are basically online brochures, and then there are websites which generate leads and/or sales.

The ones which generate leads are those which give your users a great experience – to the point where they take action.

And this is the basis of Google's primary strategy when it comes to determining which websites are listed on page 1 of search results for keyword searches – and which aren't.  And as most people don't ever get to page 2 of search results – **you need to be on page 1**.

If your site doesn't keep visitors engaged – whereby they visit at least two or more pages and/or take the action(s) you want them to take – then it's not a good user experience.

This is a very simplified explanation – there's more to it than these parameters.  But your user experience is the key.

So there's 3 key areas to a great website.  Unfortunately most web developers only concentrate on one or two of the areas.  They look at design and functionality, but when it comes to the most

important element of all – Content – they don't have the training, skills or experience to help with that.

We have had so many clients come to us after paying a web developer to build them a website.  The site functions well, but usually the content and the layout has not been done from a marketing perspective.  So it fails as a lead generator.  And if you don't generate business from your website, what's the point?

Okay, let's look at the obvious things first – functionality.  How should your site function?

# Website Functionality

## Navigation should be at the top and bottom

Navigation bars should appear at the top and bottom of every page (unless it's an optin landing page) and be structured in a logical way that makes sense to site visitors.

Sometimes the way you organise your company and products internally is completely different to how a website visitor may search for information on your site.  You must think like a customer!

Make use of the footer.  Any viewer that makes it to the bottom of your page is going to see it (users do scroll).  It makes sense to have a repeat of your primary navigation as the viewer has finished with that page and will be looking for the next one. If there is space, include contact details and a phone number.  The footer is also the ideal place to include links to non-primary but essential pages such as privacy, terms, sitemap, social media links, payment types etc.

It's also a good place to repeat titles and links to your blogposts.
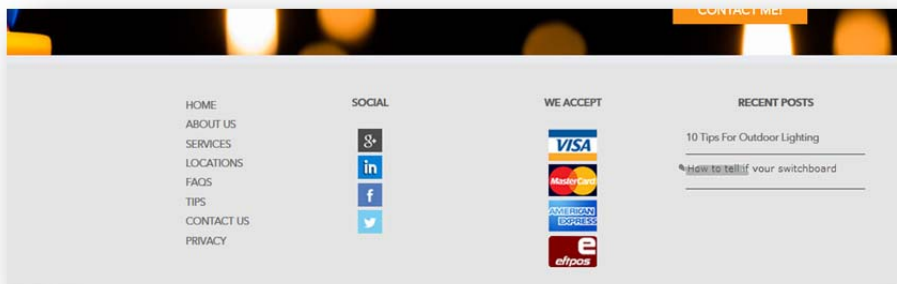


## Responsive design is a must

Responsive design refers to a web design that automatically detects the visitor's device and resizes and changes the layout to suit the device.  This is different to a site that just resizes to display the same on a smaller screen and still requires the visitor to pinch and zoom to read the content and navigate.  And then there's adaptive – which involves maintaining a completely separate website just for use with mobile devices.  We design responsive sites for our clients.

On April 21<sup>st</sup> 2015 Google changed their criteria (algorithm) to place a bigger emphasis on mobile friendly websites.  If your site's not responsive, you will be penalised in search results.

- **Mobile.** If your site isn't phone-friendly and tablet-accessible, your customers will bounce right off your site and give their business to your competition. And did I mention that by 2017 80% of Australian people will own a smartphone?
- **User experience.** Nobody likes wasting time trying to zoom and tap tiny links, and squinting at postage-stamp sized images.
- **Click to call.**  If you don't have click to call on your site – your website visitors (who are mainly using phones) can't call you easily. So they'll visit your competitor's site where they can.

## Backup and security

Hacking has become prolific – and no site is immune to it.

We take several precautions to make it difficult for hackers to gain access to your site and email systems.

With our hosting package, we take monthly backups of the entire site and store on a separate secure server (to make it easy to restore should that be necessary) we update all plugins every month and we remove all email addresses from your site to avoid harvesting by spam bots.

# WEBSITE DESIGN

## Design for conversion

The ultimate purpose of a website is to display information that the visitor is seeking and to inspire them to take the desired action (phone, fill out a form or buy).  When they take this action – it is considered a "conversion" and can be tracked in Google Analytics.  It is far easier to double conversions (phone calls / opt- ins / email enquiries) on your website than it is to double your traffic (the number of people visiting your website).

If someone doesn't find what they are looking for within a narrow window of time, they leave.  By focusing on what is important to the prospect by making their way through the website as pain free as possible you will have a dramatic impact on conversions. Stay focused on the end user and why they are using your website.
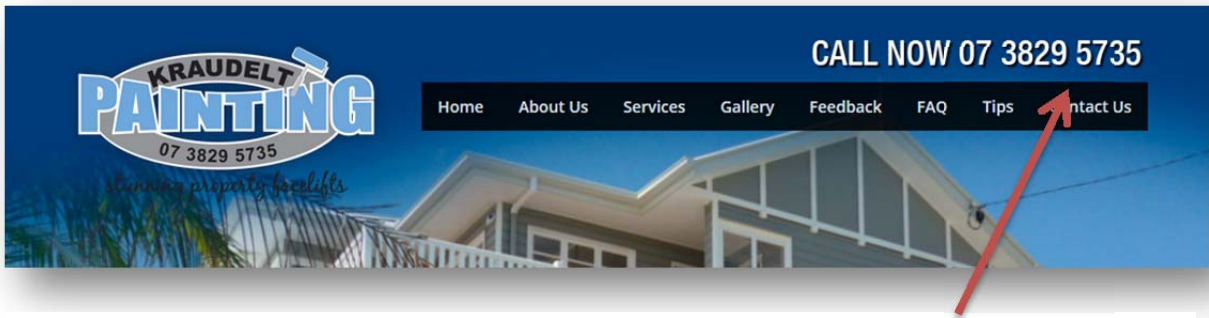
*We track how many people call our client Kraudelt Painting direct from their mobile phones, when they click on this number. This is one of several "conversion" actions on the website which we track and measure.*

## Capture visitor details for ongoing marketing

Not everyone who visits your site is ready to buy now. It may take days, weeks or months before they're ready.

If you capture their email address, you can continue to keep in contact – building rapport, adding value, providing more info about your authority and credibility.



Keep forms simple and the number of fields at a minimum and make sure the form is linked to a trustworthy email marketing system. You may need to provide a benefit to entice people to hand over their name and email address.

*This simple contact form provides a free valuable guide to help people choose a concreter, and is a great way for our client Inspire Concrete to grow their email marketing list and stay in contact with prospects long after they've left the site.*

## Typography for readability

When something is effortless to read you will naturally read more of it. Good content layout effectively uses headlines, bullet points, ordered lists, tables and shorter paragraphs. Research has proven that left aligned text is more readable than justified text (aligned both left and right).

Font size is also an important factor. A minimum of 12pt should be used for optimum readability on screen with a good line height of around 1.5. Ensure there is good contrast between the font and the background colour. Sans serif fonts (Helvetica, Arial, Tahoma) are easier to read online than serif fonts (Times New Roman, Georgia).

Whatever fonts are used – they should be google friendly – ie: display properly on desktop and mobile devices.

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# WEBSITE CONTENT

## Use benefit-laden copy

Instead of focusing on the features of your services, focus on the benefits. Focus on what's in it for the prospect and the larger problem that they are facing, for example lack of time, trust, service, quality. The goal here is to get them emotionally engaged.

## Make your content interesting

What do you think is more interesting to read?

A website that uses line after line and paragraph after paragraph of text?

Or a website that puts thought into understanding the most important elements of text and visually representing these in icons, infographics or diagrams?

There has been a strong growth in diagrams called infographics. This is a way of arranging and sorting data and then presenting it visually in a simplified manner.

Well prepared copy will be succinct, provide relevant and useful information, be presented in a visually appealing way (eg: bulletpoints, indents etc) and supported by headings and graphics.

## Add a blog

A blog is the single best way to keep your site fresh, relevant and indexed. It's the perfect tool for writing short articles on topics of relevance to your target market. Sometimes they don't know what they don't know – so if you add new articles at least once a month) about issues they may face, on changes in your marketplace, new products and services you've introduced, how to do things, etc – then you will increase the time they spend on your site.

A blog is a "must have" component for improving search engine visibility. Every time you add content – share it with your social media followers and your email list. – And you can mix it up with video, text, audio, infographics to
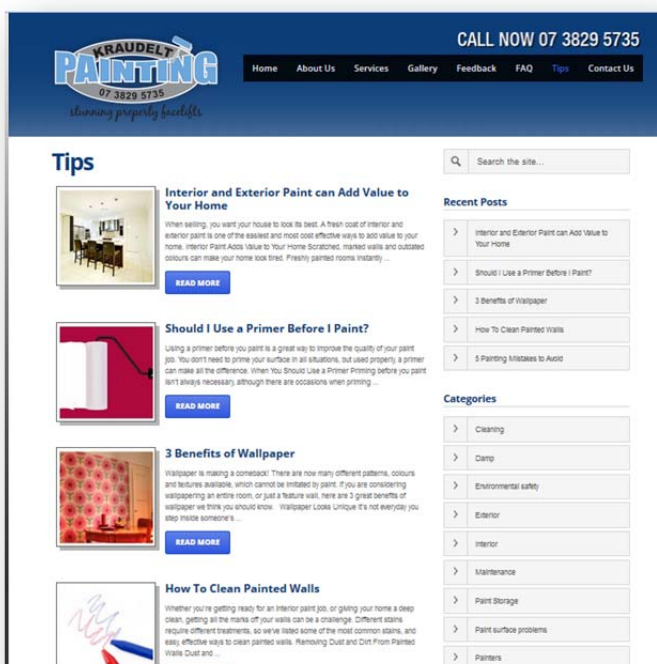
enhance appeal and usability.

### Use testimonials

You can talk about how brilliant you are until the cows come home – but it's what other people say that really counts.  Testimonials (ideally in video format) of other real customers using your products and services are the social proof that people who don't know you will be looking for. This breeds confidence by seeing that other real people are happy with you.

## Promote it!

Build it and they will come.  One of the world's biggest lies.

Once your site meets all the above criteria – you need traffic.  And you need the right traffic – not thousands of hits from Russia or the Philippines (unless you're selling to these markets of course!).

- It's important to plan and execute online marketing campaigns to drive traffic to your site. This can be done in a variety of ways – SEO, PPC advertising, remarketing, Social Media posting and advertising, social bookmarking, authoritative backlinks, reviews, youtube marketing, email marketing and offline marketing.
- If you're a local business – make sure you have claimed your Google My Business listing, optimised it and linked it to your website.
- Regularly measure and review performance using Analytics tools and conduct split testing to try and improve results.

Developing a lead generating website is Step 1.  You must constantly promote it.



Online Marketing Process
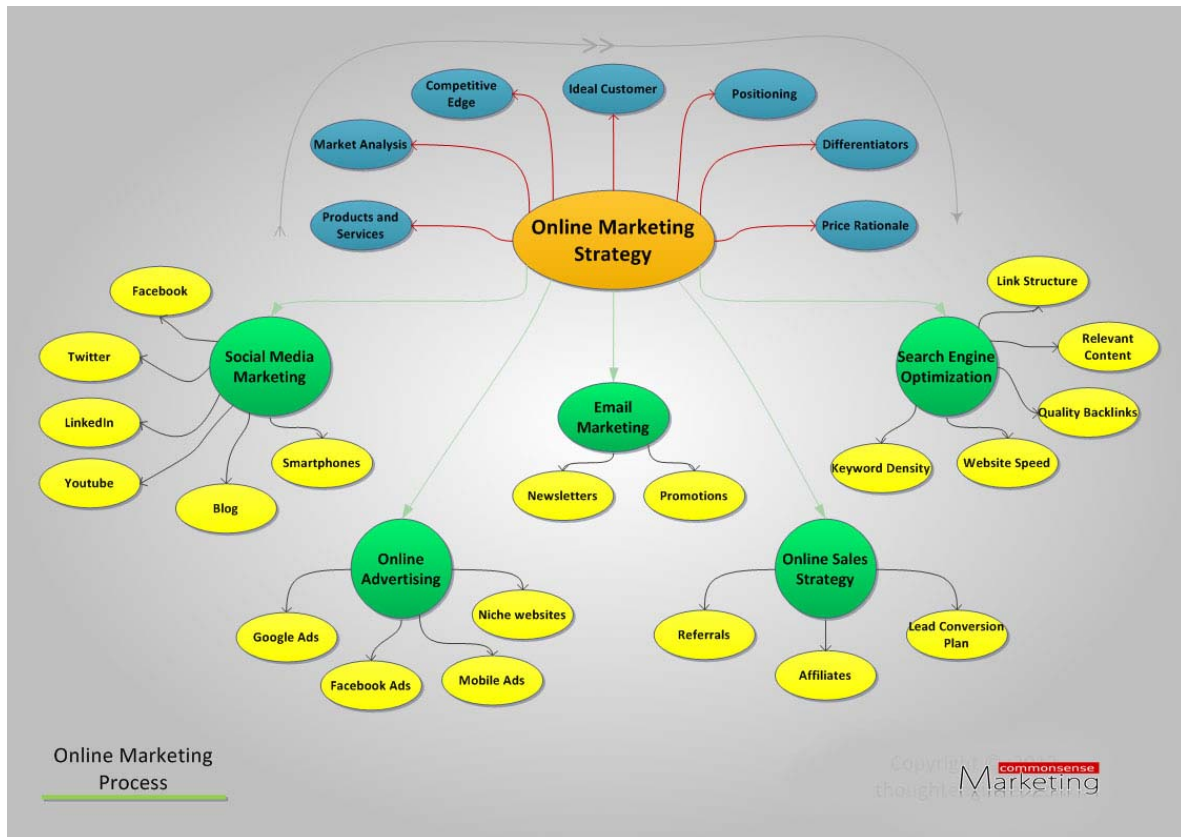
# TAKE ACTION

In the late 20th century we entered the Age of Technology and the internet explosion has changed the way we market our businesses forever.  The 21st century is officially known as the Age of the Customer.

Not only do you need a website – you need a great one.

With 97% of Australians connected to the internet by computer or mobile device, and 80% of all site visits coming from a mobile phone  – you cannot survive and grow without a well-planned and active digital footprint. Online marketing is quite involved, as you can see. But when done properly – the results can be outstanding.  If you're not getting a lot of traffic to your website and generating a steady stream of leads then how are you going to maintain and grow your business?  Cause online is where everyone goes.

I suggest you find out about the other 20 criteria for a great website and use the checklist in the back to see how your site measures up.

Download the entire book from the Resources link below  – it normally retails for $14.95, but tradie success podcast listeners can get it for half price- $7.50 – just enter the code GREATDESIGN to get 50% off.

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**Give us a call on 1300 554 495 or shoot us an email from the contact us page here to discuss your website and marketing. We'd love to design a great website for you – one that generates the results you want.**

## Today's Quote



"Websites promote you 24/7: No employee will do that."

- Paul Cookson
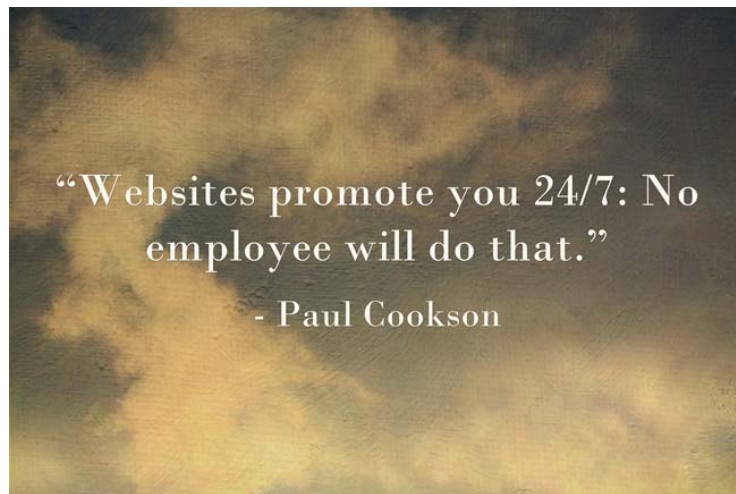
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## Resources

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