

The Netsmarts guide to
Business Web Essentials
The key tools to help your online presence

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Business Web Essentials

As the world goes online the website becomes one of the most important business functions. It's essential our Internet presence is professional looking and can be easily found on the web.

There's a wealth of tools available for businesses that want to ensure they are making the most of their web site and online presence. Online Business Essentials lists over 80 of the key ones that will help your website get seen and project a professional presence online.

Many of these tools are free while others have a "freemium" version – a free basic product with a more advanced paid version – and some require payment. While we've chosen tools that are affordable, it's important not to get too obsessed with free versions as often the paid edition may be better suited to your business needs.

Links are grouped roughly into online functions with the odd background link such as some of the trademark offices and the Spam Act where it will help you ensure you don't get in trouble while online.

If you've subscribed to our Digital Times newsletter (<http://www.netsmarts.com.au/newsletter>), you'll be the first to know when new links are posted. We're always happy to hear about new tools and ideas so feel free to contact us with your suggestions.

About Netsmarts

Netsmarts works with you to help your business stand out on the web and use the net as an effective office tool. We help business and people understand and use online tools like cloud computing, social media and the web with training, consulting services and assistance in setting up web services. Our contact details are at the bottom of each page.

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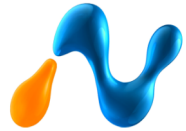


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Search Engine Listings

The single most important aspect of the web is the search engine so it's critical your site is listed so they can index your content.

Google Submit Your Content
Google Submit Your URL
Microsoft Bing submission
Signup to Windows Live
Yahoo Site Explorer

<http://www.google.com/submityourcontent/index.html>
<http://www.google.com/addurl/>
<http://www.bing.com/webmaster/submitsitepage.aspx>
<https://signup.live.com>
<http://siteexplorer.search.yahoo.com/>

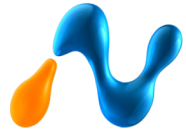
Local Search Listings

For businesses servicing local communities, it's important to list with the various local search services.

Google Local Business Centre
Microsoft Bing Local Listings
Yahoo7! Free listing
True Local listings
Sensis free listing

<http://www.google.com/local/add/businessCenter>
<https://ssl.bing.com/listings/ListingCenter.aspx>
<http://siteexplorer.search.yahoo.com/au/free/request>

<http://www.yellowpages.com.au/pages/advertise-with-us/free-listing>



Social Media Tools

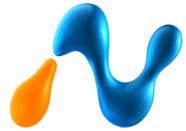
Social media is changing the way our customers and staff communicate. Having a presence on the most popular social media platforms is essential to getting the word out about our businesses.

Facebook	http://www.facebook.com
Facebook business pages	http://www.facebook.com/pages
LinkedIn	http://www.linkedin.com/
Flickr	http://www.flickr.com/
Twitter	http://twitter.com

Blogging tools

Web logs, or blogs, are not just diaries any more; they are powerful and effective ways to tell your business story. The great thing is most of the tools are free.

Blogger	www.blogger.com
Wordpress	www.wordpress.com
Weebly	www.weebly.com
Tumblr	www.tumblr.com
Amplify	www.aplify.com
Posterous	www.posterous.com



Searching for a business name

When online it's easy to use someone else's business name or trademark. Check with the various authorities before registering so you can avoid trouble.

MelbourneIT	www.melbourneit.com.au
Domain Naming Tips	http://www.dotomator.com/tips.html
Social Media Name Search	http://knowem.com/checkusernames.php
Australian Securities Commission business search	http://www.search.asic.gov.au/gns001.html
Australian trademark search	http://www.ipaustralia.gov.au
UK Companies House	http://www.companieshouse.gov.uk/info
US State and Local Business resources	http://www.business.gov/states/
NZ Business name search	http://www.business.govt.nz/companies/
Canadian provincial business registration contacts	http://www.canadabusiness.ca/eng/guide/1282/

Internet workings

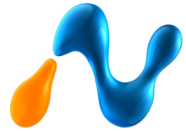
The Internet is a complex beast and there's a whole bunch of rules and committees that keep it running.

List of country Internet domains	http://www.iana.org/domains/root/db/
Internet protocol list	http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_network_protocols

Registering a domain

Once you've found a suitable name, you need to register it with an accredited domain reseller. This list is not exclusive and isn't a recommendation.

List of accredited domain registrars	http://www.icann.org/en/registrars/accredited-list.html
Godaddy domain registrar	http://www.godaddy.com
Netregistry Australian domain registrar	http://www.netregistry.com.au
New Zealand domain registration	http://www.domainz.net.nz/



Hosting services

Finding a reliable and affordable home for your website is important. If your site is unreliable, what does it say about you?

Whirlpool – for hosting research
Smartyhost
Rackspace
Bluehost

<http://www.whirlpool.net.au>
<http://www.smartyhost.com.au>
<http://www.rackspace.com>
<http://www.bluehost.com>

Website publishing platforms

There's a range of services you can use to control the look and content of your website.

Microsoft Sharepoint
Squarespace
Shopify
Wordpress
Joomla
Drupal

<http://sharepoint.microsoft.com>
<http://www.squarespace.com>
<http://www.shopify.com>
<http://www.wordpress.com>
<http://www.joomla.com>
<http://drupal.com>



Customising your website

Once you have your website up and running, you can customise it with a range of tools and additions to make it look unique to your business.

Wordpress themes
Wordpress add-ins
Favicon convertor
Favicon creator
Downloadable favicon

<http://wordpress.org/extend/themes>
<http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/>
<http://www.html-kit.com/favicon/>
<http://www.favicon.cc/>
<http://www.faviconsr.us>

Web design

There's some basic principles to a website's layout that make it easier to read.

Formspring anatomy of a webpage

<http://www.formstack.com/the-anatomy-of-a-perfect-landing-page>

Online Payments

If you're taking payments online it is essential you understand the rules and best practices involved to protect your customers. It's also important to choose a reputable payment gateway.

Payment Card Industry Standards
PayPal
eWay

<https://www.pcisecuritystandards.org/smb/>
<http://www.paypal.com.au>
<http://www.eway.com.au>



Benchmarking your site

These tools can help you track how your site is performing against your peers. You can also use these tools for checking out your online competition.

Google analytics

<http://www.google.com.au/Analytics>

Compete site comparison

<http://compete.com>

Peoplebrowsr

<http://www.peoplebrowsr.com>

Google Site Optimiser

<https://www.google.com/analytics/siteopt>

Buzz Numbers

<http://www.buzznumbershq.com/>

Choosing Keywords

Because people find us through search engines, it's important to ensure you're using the right words for customers to find you online.

Google Keyword Search

<https://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal>

Google webmaster tools

www.google.com/webmasters/tools/

Yahoo developer network

<http://developer.yahoo.com/performance/rules.html>

Online advertising

Paid online advertising can help spread the word about your business in a crowded market.

Google adwords

<http://adwords.google.com>

Adbrite

<http://adbrite.com>

Chitika

<http://chitika.com>

Guide to Facebook ads

www.facebook.com/adsmarketing

LinkedIn Advertising

www.linkedin.com/advertising

Social media management tools

Managing social media can be a full time job in itself. These tools help you keep track of what's going on in the online world.

Tweetdeck
Hootsuite
Bit.ly

<http://tweetdeck.com>
<http://hootsuite.com>
<http://bit.ly>

Customer engagement

Engaging with your customers through newsletters and surveys is a great way of staying in touch. Just be careful you don't breach the Spam Act.

Mailchimp
Spam Act
Survey Monkey
Google Apps

www.mailchimp.com
<http://www.acma.gov.au>
<http://www.surveymonkey.com>
<https://www.google.com/a>

Stock Images

Adding images to your site gives pages a lot more vibrancy and breaks up the text, making your business look more appealing.

Stock xChng
RGB Stock photos
Flickr

<http://sxc.hu>
<http://www.rgbstock.com/>
<http://www.flickr.com>

Getting Aussie Business Online

To help overcome Australian businesses' reluctance to go online, Google and MYOB offer the Getting Aussie Business Online service.

Getting Australian business online
MYOB's Your Business Net

<http://www.gettingbusinessonline.com.au>
<http://www.yourbusiness.net>

Further Reading

If you'd like to keep up to date with changes in the online world, here are some resources to help you.

Wired magazine
A VC
Silicon Alley Insider
ZD Net
Entrepreneur
Gizmodo
Paul Wallbank
Netsmarts

<http://wired.com>
<http://avc.com>
<http://www.businessinsider.com/sai>
<http://zdnet.com>
<http://entrepreneur.com>
<http://gizmodo.com>
<http://www.paulwallbank.com>
<http://zdnet.com>

Thank you

It's our pleasure to provide these resources to our clients and the business community. We like to get your feedback on how to improve these services and publications so if you hear of anything we should include in future editions or have any comments on changes we should make or errors we've made, let us know at through our website or email address.