

BRIGHT ORANGE THREAD

# Small Business Website Development Guide

**7 Essential Things to Know**  
*for your next website*

The Small Business Website Development Guide to

# Attracting More Visitors, Converting Clicks to Customers, and Standing Out in a Sea of Digital Information



The Bright Orange Thread team created this guide to specifically address small business challenges and to provide best practices to better utilize the web in support of small business outreach and marketing efforts.



## The Challenge

How do most people find a business or service today? Search engines. Internet search engines have essentially replaced the Yellow Pages as the primary source for finding information, and businesses have to embrace this change to continue growing. Most small business organizations today have a web presence. What is the real challenge experienced by a large majority of these businesses? They know their web presence should be doing more to help support and grow their business—they just don't have a clear understanding of how to go about doing this.

Of course there are a number of services and tools available—from web hosting companies and search engine optimization services, to content management tools, and email marketing providers—all of which make great claims regarding how they can help. But most of these are merely pieces to an overall picture. There are very few resources that provide a clear answer to the basic small business question: “How can I better utilize our web presence to bring in more business and really stand out in my industry?”



## The Framework for Success

This Website Guide has been created specifically to address small business challenges and to provide best practices to better utilize the web in support of small business outreach and marketing efforts. The phrase *small business* can have different interpretations, so for the purposes of this guide it will be defined as a business with 2 to 200 employees.

The information contained herein applies to the three primary types of websites utilized by small businesses:

### 1. Active Marketing Sites

An active marketing site is a standard website that includes built-in marketing tools such as data collection forms, landing pages, web ads, integrated email marketing, or even social media tools (blogs, Facebook, Twitter, etc.).

### 2. Business Transaction Sites

A business transaction site can include the same tools as an active marketing site but also has an e-commerce function, an integrated database function, or a combination of both.

### 3. Informational Sites

Informational sites are for businesses that do not currently have a strong need for active marketing or business transactions, but still require a web presence to provide the basic information about their business and stand out in their industry.

No matter which site you currently have or aspire to create for your business, this Website Guide provides a framework for attracting more visitors, bringing in more business, and standing out in your particular industry.



The seven essentials things to know

1. **Analyze Your Current Site's Assets** (Analytics)
2. **Define Who You Want to Find You** (Target Audience & Objectives)
3. **Be Found** (SEO & SEM)
4. **Write Effective Copy** (Information Architecture)
5. **Stand Out** (Good Design)
6. **Offer Fresh Content** (Fresh Content & Content Management Systems)
7. **Reach Out to Your Audience** (Email Marketing & Social Media Marketing)



## Analyze Your Current Site's Assets

Not every business considers the different assets that come with a lead-generating website: content, inbound links, keyword rankings, users, the most and least visited pages, etc. With Analytics, you can frequently take inventory of these assets, and then determine which areas are strengths and weaknesses on your site.

Analyzing the performance of your current site gives you a baseline to measure the improvements and success of your efforts going forward with a new site. The prospective firm doing the redesign should ask for a report on your current site so they can decide which areas are producing positive results and which areas need improvement. Once the new site is launched, you can compare statistics with the project's defined goals.

Hopefully you have been measuring the performance of your current site and have access to the Analytics. If you don't have a service set up with your site, make it the first item on your to-do list.

### Analyzing Visitor Behavior

Visitor trends and patterns are the best indicators of what works and what falls short on a website. Identify which pages are the most and least visited. Track the average amount of time spent on certain pages. If users are only spending a few seconds on your pages before leaving, then you might have some issues with the clarity of your links. Or, perhaps your key message isn't visible or compelling enough to catch their eye. You can make some changes and compare results, all from studying your visitors' behavior.

### Identifying & Optimizing Compelling Content

Many of our clients have discovered which content their visitors find most compelling and easy to digest through the use of Analytics. They first identified the most active pages in terms of time, as well as the pages that seemed to convert the most users to prospects. They then shifted their efforts to optimizing that content to keep site traffic up.

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#### WHAT ARE ANALYTICS? NOT SURE IF YOUR SITE IS CURRENTLY MEASURED?

Web site analytics is the collection of data about how users are visiting a website. Ask your current web developer for access to the analytics for your site. And if they can't provide a report, then ask them to install Google Analytics right away. Google Analytics is free so the small fee your web developer will charge to install it will be well worth it for the data you can collect in a month or more.



## User Demographics

With Analytics, you not only better understand what your visitors do, but also who they are. You can compare the kind of browsers being used to view your site, the speed of connection, and the locations of users. Having this data provides insight on how the majority of your users are interacting with your site and whether their experience could be improved. For example, if you find the majority of your users have a slow connection rate, then you will want to make sure the website has a fairly fast loading time. Avoid overloading your pages with videos, slide shows, images, or JavaScript features.

## How important is Analytics to my site?

**Informational sites** need less than an hour a month to get an understanding of their web traffic. Their web masters should focus on how visitors interact with their site and question whether they need to make certain information more visible (like a call-to-action).

**Active marketing sites** need as little as a few hours a month to measure their email campaign and ad success. The tools provide an in-depth analysis to make better programs to move forward. They allow you to test different AdWord campaigns and landing pages, and help you discover the content and approaches that are more successful at driving and converting traffic into leads.

**Business transaction sites** depend on Analytics to understand how visitors interact with their site. Did users find what they were looking for? Where in the purchase process did they abandon the online store? Were we able to cross-promote products and increase sales?

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- [Google Analytics](#)
- [Smashing Magazine: 'A Guide to Google Analytics and Useful Tools'](#)

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## YOUR EFFORTS IN GENERATING TRAFFIC?

- Matches between ad keywords and user searches
- Number of inbound links from other sites
- Transactions from ads or campaigns
- How your site compares within your industry



## Define Who You Want to Find You

Defining the target audience is the most overlooked practice for small businesses. Many small businesses loosely understand who their clients and prospects are and their sales associates intuitively know who they need to talk to. However, a website created for a loosely and intuitively defined target audience feels disjointed to the end user. Remember, you are not building a website for your business—you are building a website for the people who want to learn more about your business and the products, services, and support that you offer. You want to give visitors a clear, articulate vision of the benefits of engaging with your firm. And to do that, you must define, with specificity, your target audience.

### Defining Your Primary and Secondary Objectives

To help define your audience, you must first define your website's primary function or objective. Is your objective to generate leads? Or is it reducing customer calls to your support department? You might want to achieve a number of things. In order to meet multiple objectives, you must effectively balance each on your site.

You can have secondary objectives for your site—just make sure you have allotted the appropriate space to your primary objective.

### Defining Your Target Audience

You must clearly define your target audience and their needs, in specific terms. Is your target audience CEOs, teachers, or IT directors? Are they novice or savvy consumers of information on the Internet? Where are they located geographically? What online spaces do they belong to? Will they prefer a contact form or a simple phone number to call?

You may have a good understanding of your audience, but you might not know how to approach their needs on the web. Internet marketing advisors will not only help you define your objectives and audience, but also help you find solutions to meet your needs as well as your users' needs. You will then better understand how to communicate with your audience.

Defining your target audience must be one of the first steps you take in your next website project because it greatly influences all other decisions you will make. The definitions and objectives you set forth will ultimately shape and improve your site's copy, design, and search engine optimization (SEO) practices.



## Be Found

As we mentioned before, search engines are now the go-to sources for people looking for the best local businesses (the Yellow Pages are on their way out). If your business is going to take the time, effort, and resources to build a quality web presence, making sure your site is found needs to be a top priority.

### Organic vs. Paid

Generating traffic to your site can be done either organically (SEO) or through paid advertisements (SEM). The goal of organic SEO is to improve your site's ranking on search engines naturally. Paid SEM practices like Pay Per Click (PPC) ads ensure your site is listed high in the results, but you must pay a fee each time a user clicks on the ad.

#### *Organic is not completely cost-free.*

A common misunderstanding about organic SEO is that it is totally cost-free, which is not exactly true. Getting your site to rank highly as a natural result can involve cost, whether it's paying for an experienced web copywriter or paying an outside firm to promote your site. But organic SEO does hold certain benefits over paid SEM. Anyone can pay for an ad, but not everyone can get to the top of the naturally-ranked listings. Therefore, a lot of people tend to trust natural listings over advertisements.

### Organic SEO

The plethora of information available on organic SEO may seem complicated and overwhelming, but for small business websites, it really starts with two things: writing search-engine-friendly copy (an on-page factor) and building inbound links (an off-page factor).

#### On-Page

##### *Semantic HTML*

To improve your SEO organically, you can start (and go a long way) with including semantic HTML on your site.

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#### AVOID FLASH FOR THE SAKE OF GOOD SEO!

Flash sites are mainly composed of images and video, which cannot be read by search engines. The same applies to non-Flash websites that use a great deal of images for text. These types of websites miss out on developing great organic SEO because search engines are unable to make sense of the content.



### ***What is semantic HTML?***

Semantic HTML is a programming language consisting of “tags” that are placed around a web page’s content. The word “semantic” means “having meaning,” and the acronym “HTML” stands for Hypertext Markup Language.

The heading tags (‘h1’ through ‘h6’) and paragraph tags (‘p’) are just some of the HTML elements that create a hierarchy of information on a web page. Search engines need these tags to “make sense” of the content inside them and to determine how relevant a page is to a user. Search engines determine the relevance by comparing the copy on the page to the words used in a user’s search. Placing certain targeted keywords in your copy not only increases your site’s relevance in results, but also encourages users that your site is useful.

### ***Keyword Placement:***

#### ***Getting it right with the headline.***

One HTML tag—the ‘h1’ tag—is particularly useful for keyword placement because it holds more importance over the other tags. The h1 tag points search engines to a web page’s most important message or headline, which is the perfect place for targeted keywords. A descriptive headline not only provides another instance of keywords, but also clarifies the page’s relevance for the user.

#### ***Researching Keywords:***

Once your code is set in place, you can optimize your copy to include the best keywords. You will need to conduct a bit of research to identify which keywords are most relevant to your services and users. Find out which words or terms your target users are entering in search engines. Realize, though, that words or terms that are too common or popular may yield little results for your SEO. You might need to revise your keywords as search trends change.

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#### **BEWARE KEYWORD STUFFING**

Search engines also look for keywords in the rest of a page’s copy. But an over-use of keywords in your copy—called keyword stuffing—can be damaging to your SEO. The search engine will know when a page has been stuffed with too many keywords. (These engineers are smart—they have algorithms that compare your copy to natural writing.) If a search engine flags your page as “stuffed,” your website can drop in ranking or be removed from the search engine’s index.



## Off-Page

### ***Building Inbound Links***

Another focus in improving your organic SEO is the creation of inbound links or backlinks on other websites. Inbound linking involves increasing the number of links to your site on quality websites, a process that requires strategic planning and time (at least 6 months). The more inbound links you have on other websites, the more popular your site looks to search engines.

To create inbound links, you can reference your site or a specific page of your site via comments on blogs, forums, networking sites, and online magazines. You can even pay to have your site promoted on other websites. However, like keyword stuffing, search engines are programmed to avoid sites that generate a lot of inbound links in a short amount of time (overnight, for example). The number of inbound links should grow naturally over time and appear on the most credible sites.

## Paid SEM

A paid SEM campaign is the perfect compliment to your organic SEO campaign, as it guarantees visibility for the keyword results your site does not rank highly on.

### ***Pay Per Click (PPC)***

Maybe your site is a high-ranking result for a certain targeted keyword or phrase, but it isn't visible at all for another. A solution is to create a Pay Per Click ad that appears whenever a user searches with that specific keyword. For each click your site receives from the PPC ad, you pay a fee.

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#### WANT INSTANT RESULTS?

For instant traffic-driving results, you can launch a paid search engine marketing (SEM) campaign and create keyword-based ads.

### ***Writing Compelling Ads***

Each click a user makes is one more click that leads them away from their original search. You need to help the user every step of the way in their search. This involves writing a compelling ad that ties into their search and offers a specific solution. Leave out anything that might make the user think they'll be deviating from their course if they click on your ad.



### ***Creating Landing Pages for PPC Ads***

Again, you need to help the user every step of the way. Users who click on your ad will expect to land on a page that matches the ad, which matches their original search. Stay tight to the user's course by creating a landing page separate from your site. Tailor the landing page around the user's specific need and your specific service or product (the solution to their need). All that's left is making that solution compelling enough that users will want to perform the call-to-action.

### ***Monitoring SEM Performance***

Search trends change all the time, which is why it's important to monitor your SEM campaigns through your search engine accounts. The best keyword is one that is high in searches but still low in the number of paid ads competing for it. Monitoring your performance allows you to anticipate search trends so you can switch to better performing keywords or try different copy in each ad.

### **SEO/SEM is about doing a lot of things right.**

We realize we've only covered the very basic practices of SEO and SEM. Small businesses who are redoing their site for the first time in 2 or more years will benefit from coding and writing search-engine-friendly copy. And the addition of a modest backlinking campaign will lead to significant improvements in search engine rankings. Small businesses in very competitive markets require efforts beyond what keywords and a backlinking campaign can deliver—efforts that require a substantial effort to generate compelling, targeted content that can then be posted to the site and be disseminated through email and social media marketing.

#### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

- [Google's Definition of 'Keyword Stuffing'](#)
- [The Blog Herald: 'The Art of Backlinking'](#)
- [Google Webmaster Central blog: 'Good Times with Inbound Links'](#)
- [BOT Blog Post: 'Boost search-engine rankings with semantic HTML'](#)



## Write Effective Copy

To know how to write copy for the web, you need to know that people rarely read web pages. They scan them, looking for specific words or phrases. That's why your website needs to be more than an online version of a printed brochure. You must constantly engage readers and do so with effectively-structured, compelling content.

### Compelling Content: Client-In Vs. Consultant-Out

What makes content “compelling” is different for every user and, therefore, difficult to define. But for the purpose of this section, we will define compelling content as the content that visitors find useful to their task at hand. To ensure you are providing this content, you will need to view your copy through two perspectives: client-in and consultant-out.

A “client-in” approach is focused on the user and their needs, whereas a “consultant-out” approach is focused on what your company does.

#### *When Client-In Works...*

Businesses work very hard to prove their expertise to their audience, which seems logical, but it's not very effective on every page of their site, especially on solution or product pages. When you talk about how qualified your team members are in providing your services, the copy's focus is no longer on the target audience or their needs—it's about you. The consultant-out approach tells users how great your company is, but doesn't offer users the compelling information they want (which is how their life will improve).

#### *When Consultant-Out Works...*

There is a time and place for consultant-out copy on your site. “About” pages are better fitted for the consultant-out approach because they are about you. Visitors can still find the content “compelling” as long as they are coming to the page looking for information about your business.

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#### CLIENT-IN

The client-in approach shows users that you know and understand their pain-points. This is reflected in messaging that focuses on the benefits of buying your products and services. How will the customer save on salaries by automating a process or save on replacement because your widget is more durable?

We're not saying you can't ever show your expertise — it is important to prove your credibility and skill. Just make sure it is appropriately tucked away.



## Engaging Users with Your Copy

Once you have made sure you are writing from the appropriate approach, you can turn your focus to effectively structuring your copy with proven web-writing techniques.

### ***Peak the user's interest immediately.***

In the **Be Found** section, we talked about search-engine-friendly copy, which is about coding the copy to give clarity to search engines regarding the topic of the page. Your readers want clear and descriptive copy too. When users click on your “Services” page, they want to know right away what the page is about and why they should keep reading. A lot of businesses repeat the link title (in this case, “Services”) as the page’s headline, but that’s a waste of an opportunity to engage the user.

Instead of stating that you offer certain services, say why people should use your services. It’s just that simple.

### ***“Chunkify, Chunkify, Chunkify”***

By now, we hope you’ve realized the importance of a page’s headline in improving SEO, as well as the user experience. Once you’ve peaked the user’s interest with a great headline, you should turn your focus to the page’s headings. We recommend using a lot of these throughout a page to help “chunkify” or break up the content and to help users find what they’re looking for (and they often are looking for just one thing). Chunkifying includes breaking long paragraphs into shorter ones, attaching descriptive headings to each paragraph, and putting sentences into a list when appropriate. Your users will greatly appreciate this practice

### ***Front-load your headings with value.***

Through eye-tracking studies, researchers have found that users tend to only read the first 3 words of a heading or paragraph before deciding whether or not to keep the paragraph. Make those first 3 words count and put the value or benefit up front. In the sentence, “Join our weekly mailing list to receive discounts and promotions,” the benefit is placed at the very end. By placing “receive discounts” at the front of the sentence, users are more likely to stop and read how they can get those discounts.



***Call-to-Action: Tell them what you want them to do.***

So you've peaked the user's interest and they now have a clear understanding of the content, but the transaction is far from complete. Capitalize on their interest and give them a clear action to take (the "call-to-action"). For example, an active marketing site that has posted a news article about a product should include a decent-sized button encouraging visitors to sign up for regular email blasts. A business transaction site should have a clear "Add to My Cart" button on every product description page. Without a call-to-action feature, users will most likely move on to something else.

***Write for the user, not for search engines.***

We mentioned in the **Be Found** section that search engines read your copy for keywords, but search engines are not your primary audience. You don't want to alienate your users by overloading the copy with dry keywords. Your primary reader is human, and keyword stuffing makes awkward reading (we're sure you have read a few of these web pages already). Write copy that is clear, concise, and interesting to your target audience. Interestingly, a good copy writer who writes scannable text will naturally insert keywords in the most beneficial places. This is a great skill to have since search engines have algorithms to evaluate that copy is naturally-written.

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

- [BOT Blog Post: 'Is your website as helpful as your best employee?'](#)
- [Jakob Nielsen: 'How Users Read on the Web'](#)



## Stand Out

Few people, if asked, can easily design a good website, but almost everyone knows one when they see one. Too many small business websites have a “cookie cutter” look, are overburdened with unnecessary content, and do not provide the viewer with a good overall picture of their business. Good design, in conjunction with proper SEO and compelling content, is what makes the good website stand out above the rest.

### The Research Behind The First Impression

A study conducted by Dr. Gitte Lindgaard and her team found that users can judge the visual appeal of a website in 1/20 of a second. This means your window for making a good first impression is incredibly small. Users appreciate a website with a clean look, a sensible color scheme, and smart structure—all aspects that can be met with the right designer.

### Designing for the User Experience

Even if you nail the first impression, your brand’s credibility can easily diminish once users start clicking around your site. A business pitfall for the web is trading usability for style. Users shouldn’t have difficulty using a website because the design confuses them. Stylish design and high usability are compatible.

Designing for a positive user experience involves looking at your website with a new perspective—the user’s perspective. Your site’s design might make sense to you, but does it make sense to the user? Let’s say your company’s colors are red and black. Should you use red text on a black background because it fits with your brand? Probably not. A good design tip is adjusting the contrast of the page elements so the user’s eye can flow over the page easily and naturally. Good design will help users know where the main content is, where the navigation bar is, and where they can click to go to the next page. Before you make any final design decisions, put yourself in the user’s position and look again. That’s the way your website should be.

#### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- ♦ [More about Dr. Gitte Lindgaard’s research](#)
- ♦ [BOT Blog Post: ‘Tirade on Web Portfolios’](#)



## Offer Fresh Content

Keeping your website fresh is critical to attracting visitors and building your brand's credibility. Stale, out-of-date content reflects poorly on your business and drives visitors off your site (all it takes is having an old blog post or an event featured that has passed). You need to show users that you take care of your website and offer valuable information on a regular basis.

Fresh content gives users a reason to check back. They will learn to trust your site as a reliable, credible resource. And for business transactional sites, repeat visits will increase sales. For active marketing sites, repeat visits will increase lead conversions.

### Content Management Tools

You shouldn't have to buy software or use an outside company to manage your website's content. In the time it takes you to send an email, you can post your own changes via a content management system (CMS). A CMS is a web-based tool that allows users to post, edit, and manage content on a website. These systems were built specifically for users with little-to-no experience in programming, and they're easily accessible through a web browser. With a CMS, your business will keep its website fresh while saving money, time, and effort.

#### *Basic Versus Database-Driven*

Businesses today have a lot of options when it comes to using a CMS. A simple CMS is good for informational sites since they require small changes and few features. For more complex websites, there are highly-customizable, feature-rich systems available. Most active marketing and business transaction sites need to frequently post news, white papers, events, or press releases with a more complex database-driven CMS. The CMS not only makes it easy for you to post updates, but also automatically removes and archives out-of-date information and sends out emails to customers or clients.

#### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- [Smashing Magazine: 'Getting Started with Content Management Systems'](#)
- [SEO Site Checkup: '5 Reasons Why Fresh Content is Critical for Your Website and SEO'](#)

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#### SEARCH ENGINES VALUE FRESH CONTENT TOO

Having fresh content is important to SEO. Search engines are constantly tracking which sites have the newest content because new content means new opportunities for keywords



## Reach Out to Your Audience

So you're measuring your site traffic, SEO is in place, you have effective copy, your design enables you to stand out from other sites, and you now have regular content updates to keep your site fresh. What else can you do to drive more business? Reach out to your audience.

Every website needs an email marketing campaign.

Email is still one of the best channels for reaching and building your customer base. By sending frequent email campaigns, you can let customers know about new offerings and stay on their minds. Most email campaigns are permission based, which means your subscribers have asked to be on your mailing list. Therefore, you can be sure your business is focusing its money and efforts on the right group of people (people who might actually use your services). Subscribers are often previous customers too. And every good businessperson knows it's less expensive to sell to existing customers than it is to sell to new customers.

To get the best out of email marketing, make sure you are offering compelling information to your subscribers. Inboxes fill up quickly and you don't want to give subscribers a reason to delete your email or hit the "unsubscribe" option. You can actually learn what subscribers find compelling through the email campaign process. There are tons of tools that measure and compare the success of each email you send out. A simple practice is A/B testing, which involves sending out multiple emails with varying messages, layouts, or images and measuring the effectiveness of each. The results should tell you what's working and what's not working.

Once you have a firm grasp on your email marketing, you will have a better understanding of your audience, how to connect with them, and the kind of content that generates traffic. You can then use your email marketing success to enter social media marketing (SMM).

## The Benefits of Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing is the new wave of businesses connecting with their audience. More and more businesses are using blogs or social networking sites like Facebook, YouTube, and LinkedIn to reach out to existing and prospective customers. SMM is great because it allows you to target your audience on the sites they spend the most time on, and it's often free to sign up for the services. When done right, social networking will increase your site traffic, your potential leads and sales, and the number of people who know about your business.



You can even leverage your marketing efforts by tying all your social media spaces together. To get your audience interested in a new service, you could create a short video introducing the service, write a blog entry about it, and of course, send an update about it through an email campaign. The goal is to make your business visible and viral, meaning it's easy for customers to share your business with others.

### Is SMM right for my business?

Creating and executing an SMM plan, however, takes time, effort, and the right knowledge. You should first begin by asking yourself some questions:

- Do I know my target audience? (If your email marketing is going well, then the answer is “yes.”)
- Do I have the time or budget to find online spaces to promote the company?
- Am I ready to monitor those spaces daily or weekly?
- Am I committed to generating compelling content for those spaces?

If you think you're ready, you should do some basic research on the social media spaces you're interested in. A little research will help prepare you for a marketing consultation with professionals who better understand the social media world. Even if you feel you aren't ready to use social media, it's still a good idea to create accounts in your company's name in case you ever want to. You don't want outsiders representing your business on these powerful online spaces.

These are just a few issues you should consider when exploring SMM. Remember, your money is better spent on developing an effective email marketing campaign first. Make sure you've secured a connection with your target audience before expanding it.

#### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- [MailChimp](#)
- [CampaignMonitor](#)
- [Graham Jones: 'Email proves better than social media at selling'](#)
- [eMarketer: 'Social Networkers Still Love E-mail'](#)



## Conclusion

Some of the concepts addressed in this Guide may seem obvious, but many small business websites often miss the mark in several categories. Successful websites are derived by how well each of these practices are executed, as well as how good they work together as a complete tool for your business. We hope this Guide gives greater insight into these concepts and will help guide your business to significant web presence success.

These “essential things to know” included:

- ♦ **Analyzing Your Current Site’s Assests** to know where you stand and need to go,
- ♦ **Defining Your Target Audience** to understand their needs and your site’s objectives,
- ♦ **Being Found** using search engine optimization (SEO) and search engine marketing (SEM),
- ♦ **Writing Effective Copy** that’s easy to read and grabs the user’s attention,
- ♦ **Standing Out** with good design,
- ♦ **Offering Fresh Content** via a content management system (CMS), and
- ♦ **Reaching Your Audience** through email marketing and social media marketing.

We thank you for reading our Small Business Website Guide. We hope you study and use the valuable information presented here when you consider your next website. If you have any questions or would like to learn more about the issues covered in the Small Business Website Development Guide, please contact the Bright Orange Thread team. We’re happy to help.



## About Bright Orange Thread

Bright Orange Thread specializes in improving the marketing effectiveness of websites. We are user-focused web designers, and a team of people who deeply understand how users interact with the web and how businesses can better communicate with them. For over 12 years, Bright Orange Thread has worked with a diverse list of clients, including mid-sized business corporations, academic institutions, and non-profits.

### About Hendrik-Jan Francke, Creative Director and Owner

Learning is what Hendrik-Jan Francke is all about. As a former professor of Visual Communications at the University of Delaware, he spent hours kindling the spark of comprehension in aspiring web design students. Now, as owner and Creative Director of the successful web design studio, Bright Orange Thread, he spends his time learning about his clients' marketing objectives and translating them into intelligently designed websites.

After a long stint at Mraz Design, Hendrik-Jan left to join the faculty at the University of Delaware in 1997. While there, he opened Bright Orange Thread and taught web and graphic design to his students, covering disciplines such as information architecture, usability, interface design, and various programming languages. His graduates have gone on to work at nationally-recognized design studios and interactive agencies across the country.

In 2006, he left academia to focus on growing Bright Orange Thread full-time. Since then, he has steadily built a client list of diverse Delaware Valley businesses—from real estate and development firms to high-tech companies and non-profit organizations. The quality of Bright Orange Thread's websites has led Hendrik-Jan to serve on the advisory committee for the design and interactive programs at Wilmington University and Salem Community College.

Hendrik-Jan brings a unique blend of creative energy, marketing insight, usability and technology expertise to each client engagement, striving to create the best and most productive user experience possible. Like any good teacher, he is constantly looking for new and better ways to achieve his client's goals, and has developed proprietary products, such as the OrangeFresh content management system. He has also expanded into search engine marketing, offering clients a full range of both organic and paid services.

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### Contact Hendrik-Jan Francke

hfrancke@brightorangethread.com  
(302) 250-2339

### Visit Us

<http://www.brightorangethread.com>