



CONTENT CURATION CHECKLIST

When to use this checklist:

The purpose of this checklist is to help you efficiently plan for your website's content. If you can help it, do this *BEFORE* you start choosing layouts and website packages.

Before you start, answer these questions:

1. What do I/we offer?
2. What is my most expensive problem right now?
3. What is my most time-consuming task?
4. What are some repetitive tasks I find overwhelming?

It's easy to get bogged down with the status quo of website development, but websites can be so much more helpful than just providing a digital storefront.

The first question is your starting point for your content, but the last three could provide some clues as to how to create a valuable set of tools for your business. For example:

- If you find people expecting free information from you, you might want to create a space for free resources (like where you found this guide!) Bonus: you can also turn them into lead magnets
- If you are losing a lot of time exceeding appointment times, you may need to have a digital space that guides your clients to prepare for appointments
- A lot of people would say they find their finances overwhelming, but as they say - "There's an app for that!" There are lots of tools you can integrate with your website, including sales-tracking, scheduling appointments, invoicing/billing, forms and questionnaires, and so much more

Even if you're still pretty new to entrepreneurship, you probably have a basic idea of where you'll be leeching time, money, and energy. Use tools that are appropriate for the stage of business you are in, and be mindful that your website should evolve as your business grows. Anticipate regular changes!

Let's start with the basics:

- MENU ITEMS.** Have a brainstorming session around how you will organize the information on your site. You don't need to put everything on separate pages, but you should make it easy for people to find what they're looking for. To start, you should have "Home", "Products/Services", "About", and "Contact". You can add some as you move forward, but try to keep the titles as simple (but descriptive!) as possible.
- PAGE TITLES.** Your menu items can double as your page titles, but sometimes we have extra pages (like sign up pages) that don't appear in the menu. List them!
- HEADINGS.** Within each page, we can organize content by adding headings and subheadings. We call this *content hierarchy*. To keep search engines happy, we need to make sure we have headings and subheadings that are formatted appropriately. Simply put, don't format headings as paragraphs and just change the font.
- ACTUAL TEXT.** You shouldn't wait until you're designing to create the actual content of your website. In all likelihood, you'll get sidetracked by trying to make things fit as opposed to making sense. This is the content that people are looking for, keep it brief and make it count!
- FOOTER CONTENT.** You need a copyright symbol, the name of your business, and the current year, as well as any extra menu items you want to keep handy for people who scroll to the bottom of your page. Privacy policy and legal jargon are usually in this space as well.

Add Value (for you AND your clients)

- SUPPORTING CONTENT/FREEBIES.** If you have resources to share with the world, make sure they're ready to go before you start building your site.
- SALES COPY.** If you have sign up forms, courses, products, etc., have your sales copy ready. You might have a brief description, price, taxes, etc, but be clear here about what you're offering. There is no room in the modern attention span for marketers to beat around the bush.
- CALLS-TO-ACTION.** These are the actions you want your website visitors to take. "Buy now", "Learn More", "Sign up Here", are all pretty common CTAs in across all industries. Feel free to get creative, but keep them short.
- WIDGETS.** I recommend you be careful with how many widgets you add to your site. They can cause a great deal of frustration when they slow your

website down too much. Decide what kinds of tools you can add so that you can make things really convenient for you and your website visitors. Make sure you check reviews, and avoid third party developers who don't maintain their widgets.

- ❑ **COMMUNITY PARTNERS.** If you are a member of an organization, or donate regularly to a cause, or simply work with other local businesses often, feel free to share some links to external content.

Visual Design

- ❑ **FONT PAIR.** Choose two fonts to use on your website to differentiate between headings and regular text. If you need help with this, also download the [DIY BRANDING GUIDE](#).
- ❑ **COLOUR SCHEME!** The best-looking websites I've created have been inspired by the things and colours that surround the website owner. You may have pictures that show off your happy clients, maybe it's the colours in your office, or maybe you feel truly inspired by photos you've found around the internet. Find the colours that are consistent in the spaces you live in, and start there.
- ❑ **PHOTOS.** Based on your content, you might now have a mental list of photos you want to have to accompany everything. I always suggest you balance stock photos with authentic ones, but they can be really helpful when you're just starting out. (My favourite free resource is [Unsplash](#)). Remember to resize them before uploading - graphic heavy websites can be problematic.
- ❑ **MOVEMENT.** This doesn't have to mean animations or videos, but it certainly can. Something as simple as an arrow or artful "swoop" can help create a flow to your content. Animations and hover or scrolling effects can do wonders to draw attention to featured items. Be careful not to go overboard, too much will slow your site down and turn your potential clients away!

SEO and Social Sharing

Now that you have the bulk of your content ready, we've gotta make sure your goods are sharable! While a lot of entrepreneurs still avoid social media, it has become an important part of how we, as consumers, communicate with other

consumers. Bonus - these are also items that will win you brownie points with search engines.

- ❑ **DESCRIPTIONS.** Each page needs a brief description, but not all website builders have this built in. Sometimes you can add it directly to the code, but you'll need to check with your website software provider. Otherwise, if you keep your content clear and concise, and remember to stay focused, organic SEO will be beneficial in the long run. *Side note: you can tailor the previews people see on Facebook using the [Facebook Debugger](#) tool.*
- ❑ **PREVIEW GRAPHIC.** This graphic will go hand-in-hand with your page descriptions, provided you get an SEO-friendly theme. If you didn't, most themes have a "featured image" section. You can also tweak this in the Facebook debugger.
- ❑ **SITEMAP.** This helps search engines and social media platforms figure out how your website is laid out, and whether or not the content is relevant to someone. You will never see the sitemap, it's very much a "behind the scenes" thing. You can sign up and get a free one at [XML Sitemaps](#).
- ❑ **PRIVACY POLICY.** Don't miss out on showing up in search results for not having this. Google will prioritize websites who have these, so it's a simple way to give your SEO score a few extra points. There are resources online to help you build a privacy policy, free and paid.
- ❑ **TERMS AND CONDITIONS.** Functions exactly the same as a privacy policy, and even looks similar. But it's different enough to need it's own page :)

Final Notes...

If you ever find yourself struggling to get the last few pieces to fit together, reach out to me. Sometimes there are very specific challenges that need a little extra attention. Rather than give up or feel defeated, you are always welcome to book a [compatibility call](#) with me to see how I can help you.

In the meantime, treat yourself to a latte (or whatever tickles your fancy). Entrepreneurship is hard work, and since you are your own boss, it's up to you to reward the staff!

