

# Getting Started With WordPress, Mailchimp, and Social Media

**Telaco**

# Introduction

Whether you like it or not your customers will be talking about your business online. They share customer service stories with their friends, recommend products and services and leave ratings and reviews for other customers to find. You can be part of their conversations.

The web and your business information are now accessible anytime, anywhere on the latest smart phone and tablet devices. People expect to be able to contact you quickly and easily, find out the solutions to their problems, and be informed of your latest products and services. A well designed online strategy which enhances customer contact with a business will increase profitability and improve chances of business survivability in today's highly competitive markets.

Businesses have to be able to change their websites quickly and easily to reflect changes in their markets and to respond to their customers' demands. Use of standardised, well documented technology to create websites has many advantages for businesses. Components can be added or removed quickly, designs can be altered with ease, and development of new content and capabilities for your website can be accomplished rapidly and at reasonable cost. Businesses can retain control over their website rather than handing power to a web designer who doesn't understand their particular market or customer base.

Telaco, through the use of software and services such as WordPress and Mailchimp, create and development business websites which can be adapted to changing market circumstances, and which enhance customers' contact experience.

I hope you enjoy this 'Getting Started' guide.



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# WordPress

22% of new active domains registered in the USA are running WordPress sites.

Over 14% of the top 1 million sites online are powered by WordPress, rising from 8% the year before.

WordPress is open-source technology, meaning it is free to use and adapt for your business purposes.

WordPress is highly extensible with a variety of easy-to-use designs and functional plugins.

WordPress is a popular content management and blogging program. WordPress is the software that creates the web pages for visitors to your site.

How does WordPress measure up against the key requirements for choosing content management software?

- Does the software help you achieve your online objectives?
- What is the cost to build, run and maintain your site?
- Is it easy to edit your content?
- Is help and support available?
- Is the software future-proof?

## HOW DOES WORDPRESS MEASURE UP?

WordPress is highly flexible and extendable. Around 22% of new websites registered in the USA are running on WordPress<sup>1</sup>. It can be adapted to suit your business purposes - from simple online presences, business sites, online shops, product listings and directories - to club and membership sites.

As WordPress is open source software, it is free to use; your costs are limited to a developer, designer and webhost.

WordPress is designed with users in mind. WordPress makes it easy to change and edit content on your site. One of the risks of a website development project is that of

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1 [WordPress.org/news/2011/08/state-of-the-word/](http://WordPress.org/news/2011/08/state-of-the-word/)

absent developers. A business may become reliant on the developer who built their site. Developing your website in WordPress means that you aren't tied to any one developer. As a WordPress user, the power to demand high standards is put in your hands. WordPress is open, there is a large community of developers who can develop and build sites. If your developer leaves, you don't need to re-start your website from scratch.

There is a large community of WordPress developers - which means you will always be able to find someone with the skills to build, maintain or improve your website.

Since WordPress is built by the community it is constantly being added to, refined and developed. Building your website with WordPress means that you can take advantage of new features of WordPress and web technology as they are released. Upgrading your website can be as simple as a few clicks. WordPress helps future-proof your website, lowering the cost of changes and modifications.

### **THE WORDPRESS CHECKLIST**

- WordPress is free.
- You can easily adapt WordPress to your ongoing needs.
- There is a large and active community of WordPress developers - the power is in your hands.
- WordPress is always being developed - it will be easy to take advantage of new technology as it is released.

# Mailchimp

Mailchimp is a paid-for service, but they also offer a free tier of 2,000 list subscribers and 12,000 emails per month - perfect for testing out how valuable email campaigns are.

Mailchimp allows you to track your best customers - ensuring that you can respond quickly to their needs.

Mailchimp offers iPad and iPhone apps to help you generate signups for your email lists.

Mailchimp is a bulk email marketing service. It offers many useful features to help you send professional emails to your customer or client lists.

Email marketing has a bit of a bad reputation due to spam and poorly thought-out email marketing campaigns. However, this shouldn't deter you from building a successful email marketing list.

Email marketing can be an incredibly powerful tool. You can use it to:

- Build lists of customers who may provide you with repeat business.
- Keep your business network informed of new products and services that your company offers.
- Target and segment your marketing to a subset of your contact list.
- Get feedback on how well your marketing campaigns are going - helping you test messages and sales copy.

Mailchimp has a free usage tier - allowing you to dabble in email marketing before taking the full plunge to a paid subscription. Mailchimp is easy to use, even for the novice. It is customisable and extendable - so as your business and email list grows you can invest more in getting your email strategy closely aligned with your business objectives and brand.

Mailchimp has detailed inbuilt analytics and reporting, allowing you to measure the value added to your business by your email campaigns.

You can integrate Mailchimp directly with your WordPress site through tools such as:

- Integrated sign-up forms - people can sign up for your Mailchimp list on your website.
- Synchronisation of your website subscribers with your Mailchimp customer list.
- Analytics 360 for WordPress lets you track the impact of email campaigns on visits to your site.

You can track how well your email campaigns are performing on views, clicks on links and people visiting your site both in the Mailchimp dashboard, and on your website dashboard.

#### **KEY QUESTIONS WHEN DEVELOPING AN EMAIL LIST**

- Who are my best customers?
- What do I want my customers to know about my company?
- What can I offer my customers to give me permission to provide them with information on my products and services.

You can use the information Mailchimp provides to adjust your campaigns to drive higher sales, and a better contact experience for your customers.

#### **THE MAILCHIMP CHECKLIST**

- Mailchimp has a free tier allowing you to experiment with email campaigns.
- Mailchimp allows you to track interactions with customers.

# Social Media

There is a buzz about social media. Many companies have sprung up offering services to set up and run social media accounts on Twitter and Facebook for businesses. But how can these tools benefit you, and what do they actually achieve?

Facebook has over 500 million users - around half of which sign in every day.

You can use online tools to track people talking about your company, and then join their conversation.

## **MATCHING SOCIAL MEDIA TO YOUR BUSINESS**

Perhaps it is best not to think of your social media strategy as a checklist of social media sites - but as a way of working online. The effort required by your business is not to set up an account on each new site - but to look at your internal business processes for dealing with customers and align those processes with your online activity.

Whether you like it or not your customers will talk about your company online. They may be discussing it with their friends and neighbours, leaving reviews and ratings, or trying to get customer support.

Having a good social media strategy requires that you identify *where* your customers will be talking about you - to ensure you are there to listen - and that you have the processes in place to respond adequately.

## **INTEGRATING SOCIAL MEDIA WITH YOUR WEBSITE**

Your website will be one of the locations that people will look for information on how to interact with your company.

WordPress has many plugins that allow you to showcase your social media posts, and allow others to share your content with their friends. This will make it easy for people to spread the word about your news, products and services.

You can make it easy for people to share and comment on your content - and then track those interactions, improving your customer communication.

A proactive strategy to engage people on social networks will be tied to a content-generation strategy for your website. For example, if you are providing customer support then you may wish to build a set of Frequently Asked Questions or Knowledge Base. For customer recruitment you can build pages with testimonials and product information - which you can link to from your social media posts.

Social Media should form a core part of your online strategy and not simply an add-on that is used without any thought.

### **THE SOCIAL MEDIA CHECKLIST**

- Identify the places where your customers are talking about you online.
- Prepare content to answer customer questions and showcase your products and services.
- Share content and engage with customer conversations.
- Be active!

# Your Next Steps

There are several steps that you can take next:

## Further Reading

There are countless more sources online for information about all the material discussed in this guide. You can find more details at these useful links

- **Google Zero Moment Of Truth** - a discussion of online marketing and adapting your business to the Internet. [www.zeromomentoftruth.com](http://www.zeromomentoftruth.com)
- **WordPress Showcase** - a gallery of sites that run on the WordPress system, so you can see what is possible. [www.WordPress.org/showcase](http://www.WordPress.org/showcase)
- **Mailchimp Resources** - several guides and resources on getting started with email marketing. Essential reading, whichever email provider you choose. [www.mailchimp.com/resources/](http://www.mailchimp.com/resources/)
- **Facebook Marketing Solutions** - case studies and an introduction to marketing your business on Facebook. [www.facebook.com/marketing](http://www.facebook.com/marketing)
- **Facebook for Business** - how to set up a Facebook page for your business, and promote it using Facebook advertising. [www.facebook.com/business](http://www.facebook.com/business)
- **Twitter for Business** - learn about how you can use Twitter to promote your business with case-studies and tutorials. [www.twitter.com/business](http://www.twitter.com/business)

## **Get in Touch**

For a quick chat about your web presence get in touch with me [hello@telaco.com](mailto:hello@telaco.com) - you can read more on the blog at [www.telaco.com/blog](http://www.telaco.com/blog)

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