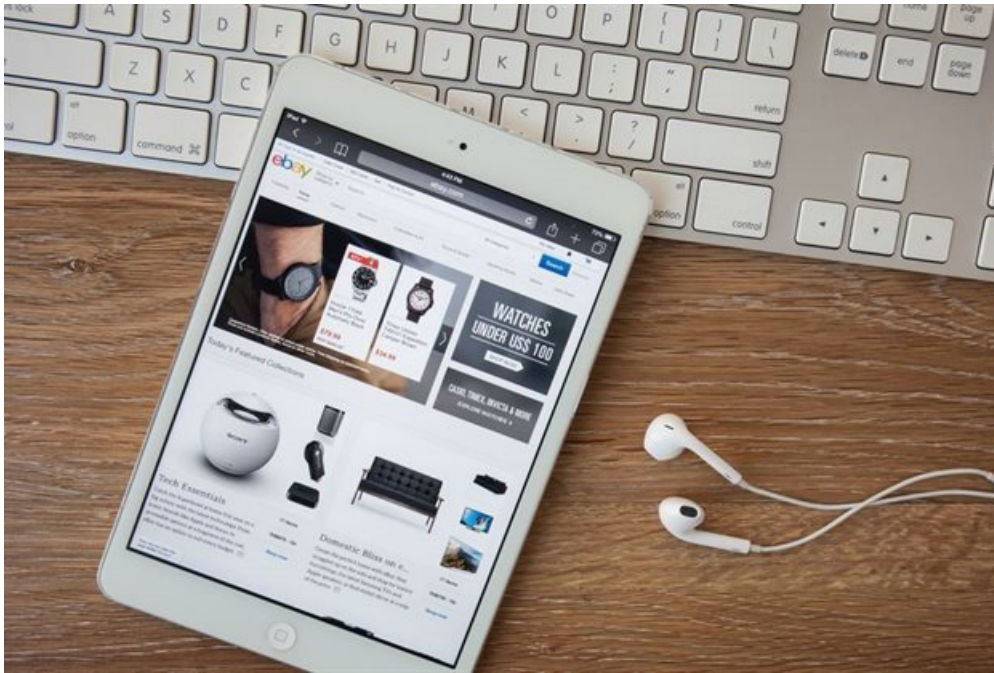


4 ways a website can help your small business weather the pandemic

By  Selina Bieber

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The 2020 GoDaddy Global Entrepreneurship Survey found that entrepreneurs who had a website were less likely to close their businesses during Covid-19 lockdowns than those without one. We also discovered that those with a website were more optimistic about future growth, with 31% projecting growth of at least 50% versus only 23% of those without a website.



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These findings highlight that if a website was important before the Covid-19 outbreak, it has become essential in the wake of the pandemic. With social distancing expected to be a part of our lives for a while, digital channels have taken on a new role in small businesses' operations, in many instances becoming their primary way of connecting with customers.

Here are four ways small businesses can use digital channels and engagements to help steer a way through the ongoing Covid crisis:

1. Drive new business

Music & Innovation specialises in composing music, sound design and audio visuals for all formats of advertising and media. Like many small businesses, it has had a challenging journey since the start of lockdown with many projects cancelled or postponed. "We have adjusted by applying our creative solutions to the digital space," says the company's Lindani Ntsibande. "We have seen a need to help brands communicate effectively in the digital space at affordable rates."

For small businesses facing a loss of revenues due to the pandemic, a website can be a cost-efficient and effective way to bring in new customers. You can use your website – paired with social, search and email – to promote your products and services to people who may need them. Your website can act as a digital brochure, sharing up-to-date information about your offerings, as well as a direct sales tool.

2. Provide a one-stop source for customer information

Some small businesses are flourishing. It's a nice problem to have, but many entrepreneurs that run digitally-enabled businesses are struggling to keep pace with demand. Yolandi Erasmus of My Go 2 Girl has tripled her business throughout the lockdown and grown her team from 2 to 8 workers. "I can direct clients to my website to find out more about what we do and get answers to many of their questions," she says.

3. Project a professional image

Marli Maak Mooi's Marli Joubert is an Illustrator and designer from Pretoria who squeezes as much fun as she can from every project. She says that her website enables her to project a professional image. At a time when it's hard to meet prospects and clients face-to-face, a well-designed website can give them the reassurance that they are dealing with a professional company.

4. Communicate with the market in an agile way

More than half of the businesses with a website in our Global Entrepreneurship Survey reacted by bolstering their online presence by adding more content, increasing their digital marketing, or adding an online store. This illustrates how a website isn't just a static piece of brochureware – it is a living and dynamic space where you can keep clients up to date with your news at a highly volatile time.

Websites are simpler to set up and affordable

Many small business owners avoid setting up their own website because they think it's complicated or expensive. But building and maintaining a website is easier and more affordable than ever. Even if you aren't tech-savvy or creative, you can now use simple web publishing tools to quickly build a website. And once you're up-and-running, you have an online place to tell your brand story, connect with customers and promote your products and services.

ABOUT SELINA BIEBER

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