Website Creation and Development for Creative Practitioners

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- ○ Not going to show you exactly what to do
- ○ Will show you where to start
- ○ Go away from today and you'll be able to tinker with Wix and get your site live by yourself.

Goal of today is for you all to be able to have the skills to know what to put on your website, and to be able to tinker about with Wix to put your new website together.
I'm not going to be able to show you everything you need to do, so being able to have confidence in playing about with Wix or a similar tool is very important.

What I Do

- Websites & Apps
- Networking
- Website Membership… SOON
- Unity & Unreal
- 3D (Printing)

- Ushaw College
- Third Eye Neurotech
- Roz Gadd Art
- Create North
- RTProjects
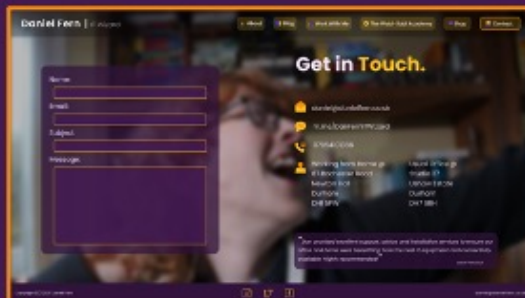
10:00 - Welcome

10:10 - Part 1 - What is a website for & why do I need one

10:40 - Break

10:55 - Breakout 1 & Feedback

11:20 - Part 1 Closing

11:30 - Breakout 2 & Feedback

12:00 - Break

12:15 - Part 2 - Putting the website together

12:50 - Closing

13:00 - Done

- Not sure what I mean? Just ask

Your content is the hard bit!

- Knowing what to put on your website, that's most of the battle

- But, you know your business and what you do!

- With tools like Wix and Squarespace, they make it so fast and easy to put things together.

- Of course, going custom, it does take longer.

So, it probably seems bonkers that my plan is to spend much more time today on planning your websites, than building and designing them.
And yes, it does seem a bit strange. But, knowing what your website is going to do, who it's for, and the content for it, that's most of the battle.
Modern website building tools, like Wix and Squarespace have made the process of putting the site together so streamlined that it's not the biggest part anymore.
However, of course, if you want something more flexible and fully featured than what services like Wix can provide, it is going to take longer, and it is going to be more difficult.

What is a website for and why do I need one?

I'm sure that you've all heard at some point that websites are just one of those things that you "have to have to be relevant".

They are a very useful asset to have for your business

- A place to find out about everything you do!
    - Show off your work
    - Tell your story
    - Get people to hire / commission / buy from you
    - Social media accounts
    - Contact you
- An extra avenue to sell yourself and your work, products and/or services
- Boost credibility

- True for the most part.
- Help your credibility
- Easier to find information about what you and your business do
- Central hub for everything you do online.
    - Even bringing your social media streams together
- Help visitors find your events

- Most common – make money
- Sell a product or service
- Direct to other place to purchase product or service, in turn makes them money like a plumber will just advertise online but you'll hire them in the real world.
- Even a portfolio, or someone showing off what they do can make money
    - Can land them a job, or get them commissions
    - Donations via Patreon
- Someone could start a blog not intending to make any money
    - Through being an influencer can change
    - Companies could pay them to advertise
- Social networks even make money, through advertising
- Boil it down, almost all websites in some way, are designed to make money.
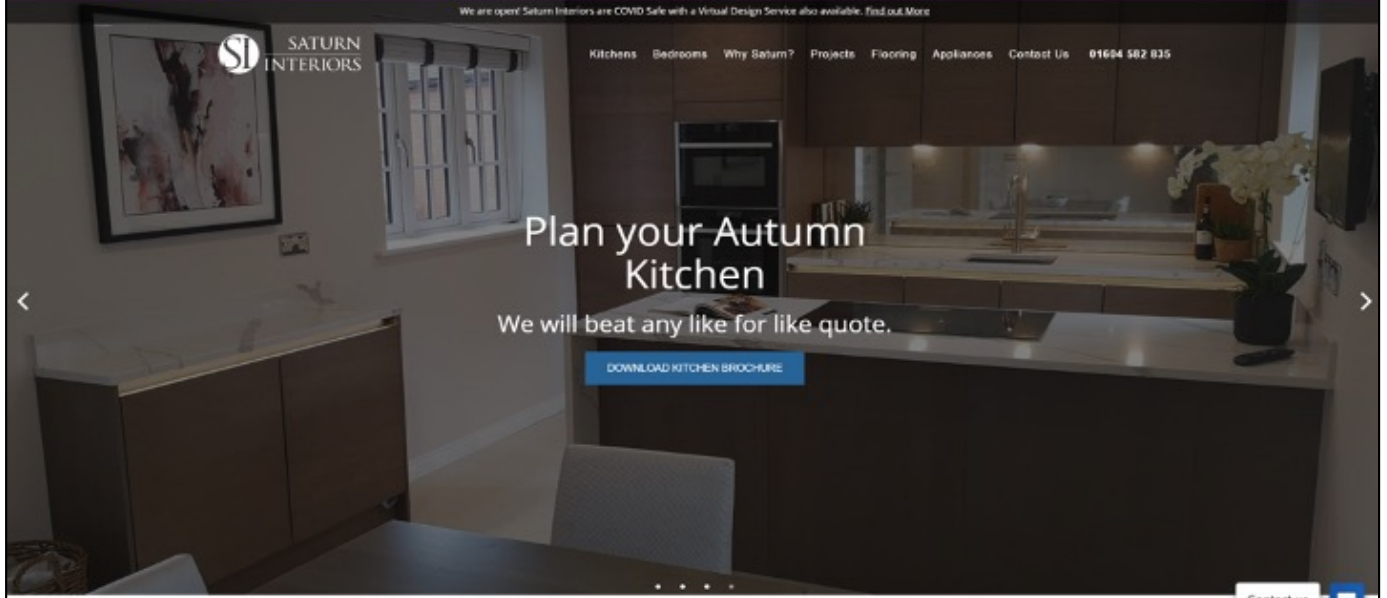
Let's generalise websites a bit more...

- Since we can see what websites are designed to do.
- We can break them down by functionality too, to see how they use that to sell to their audience.

- Since we can break down what websites can be designed to do
- We can break down the types of website too, showing what they do to achieve their goals
- Depending on this goal, we build in different functionality.
- For example, trying to land a job, you'd build in a portfolio, or gallery type of thing.
- Websites just designed to sell products might not need all the other info
- Take Amazon for Example, they don't need to tell you what they're all about you'll buy from them anyway.
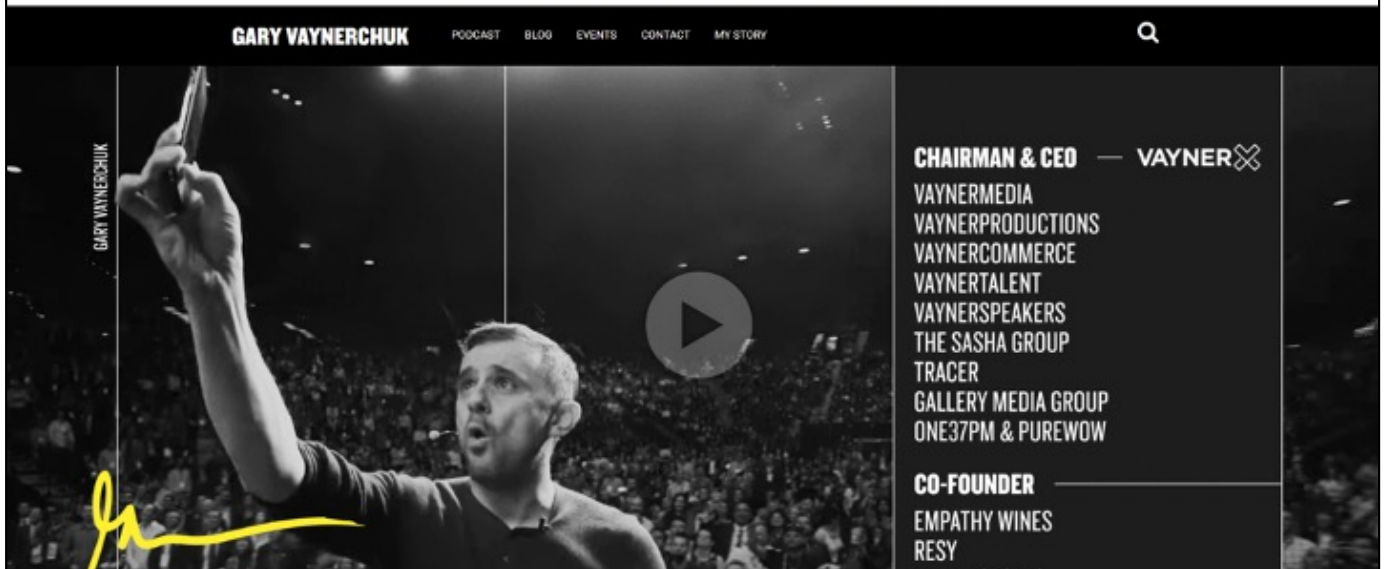
- A Digital equivalent of handing out a leaflet
- Common examples include trades people like plumbers, electricians
- Tell you what they do and how to get in contact with them too book a job or their equivalent.

- Lots in common with brochure sites
- Lots of info selling you on what they do.
- Because it's a portfolio, will show a lot of their work with something like a gallery and focus more on the work usually, than the individual
- Often have a blog too. Keep readers up to date on their latest work
- The goal? Usually to get commissions or hired for a job
- Also can rope you into their mailing list to keep you updated, and keep you interested in their latest works.

A Blog

Like a newspaper... but just about one thing... usually

- Often combined with other features, but they stand on their own too.
- Usually started to talk about things they love or something they are doing at the time
- Common examples include food blogs and travel blogs.
- Artists often use blogs to show a new skill they are learning, or walking readers through the process of creating their latest piece of work.
- Can also sell indirectly. By talking about their latest piece, an artist's readers will inherently invested in it, and potentially want to buy it.
- Helpful tool to gain rapport with your audience
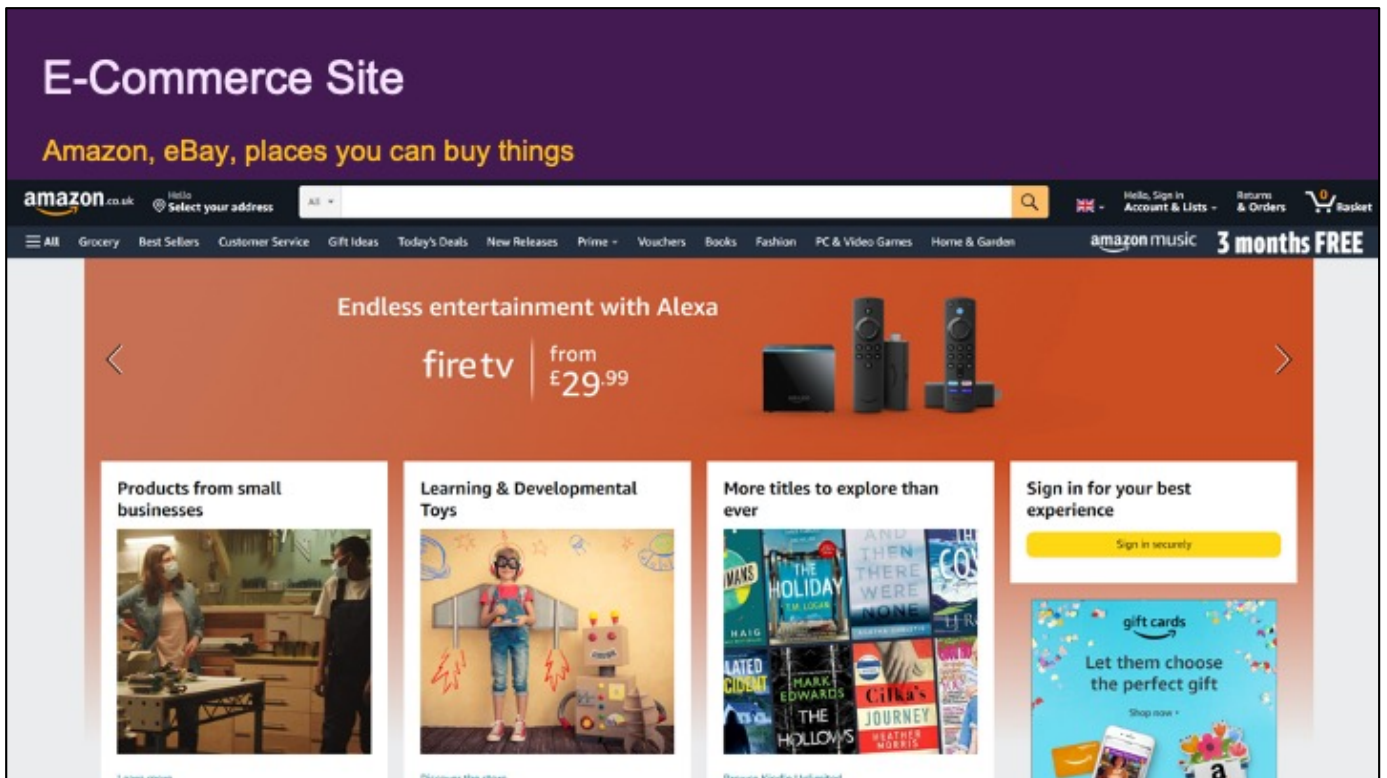
An e-commerce site consists of two main things - a catalog of products and a checkout that can be used to purchase the products. Amazon & eBay are two of the most well known websites, and they both focus on e-commerce with Amazon being a curated catalog, for the most part, and eBay being populated by the users. If you're going to be selling things on your website, then it's going to have an e-commerce system of some sort built into it.

Social Media Sites

Facebook, Twitter, all those things...
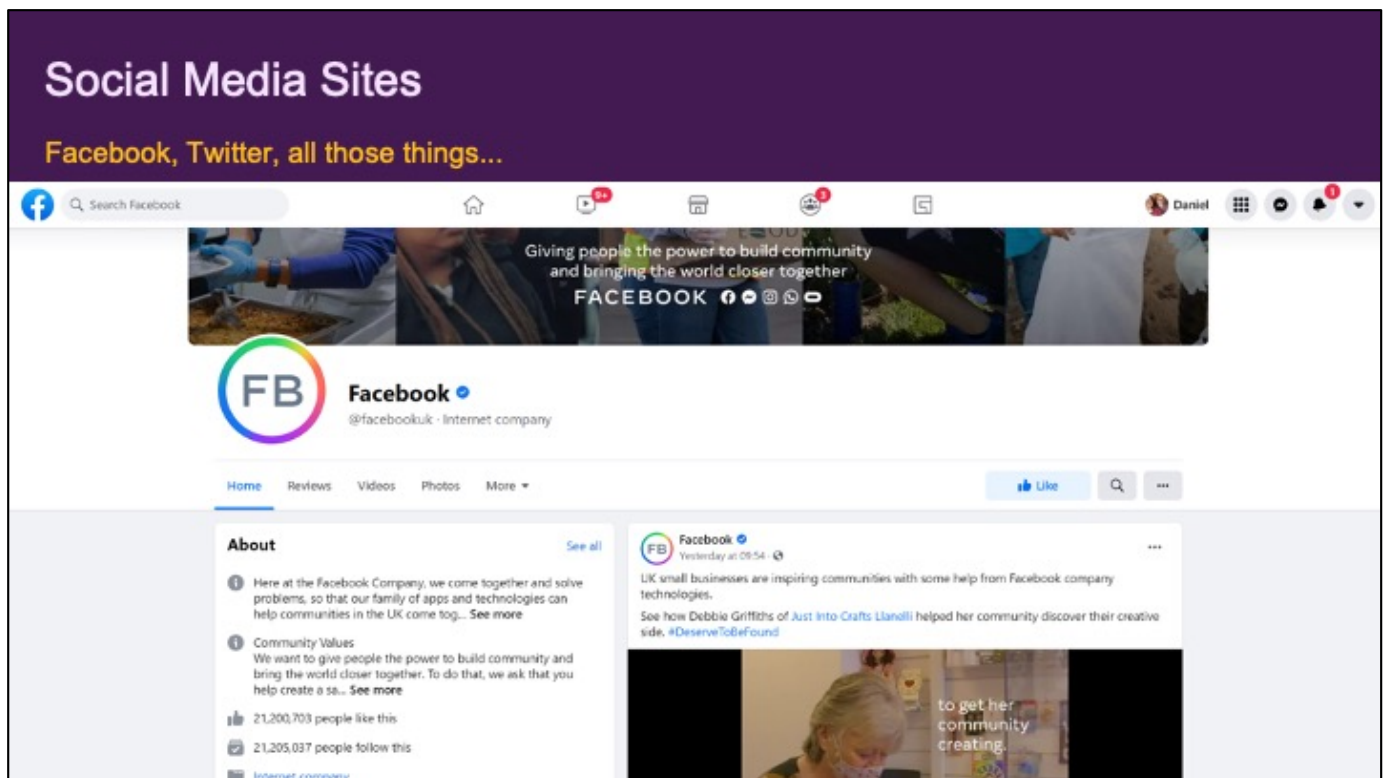
Social media websites, I don't think they need much explanation. They allow you to connect with people you know, and form new connections with people you don't know. The content of social media sites is all use generated. For example, on your facebook news feed, all the content you see is pages you've liked, groups you're part of, and people you've friended. The content is usually 'curated' by an algorithm that nobody understands other than those who wrote it, but you can often just see the latest posts instead.

Their money is generated pretty much entirely through advertisements, which you'll see as part of your content feed, mixed in with other posts. Facebook is the most popular social media site, but the basic concept of most of them is the same. However, each will add its own spin on things; for example twitter has a limited word count, instagram is almost entirely images and videos, and Snapchat is all about very short messages that in most cases, can only be viewed once.

- o More Pushy than a brochure site
- o DFS
    - Gone in with a sofa in mind
    - Sales rep just giving you the last little nudge to say yes!
- o Telling you all about one offer
- o Want you to say yes, you're already interested

Any page that could be considered a starting page to a website, like the homepage, is a landing page.
But usually when someone refers to a landing page, they mean something like this. They're a page FULL of information trying to get visitors to do something.
It could be something simple like signing up to a mailing list or registering for an account; but more often than not they want you to buy something. And they'll make it seem urgent!
The information you'll find on the page will contain lots of testimonials or stories from previous customers, and there'll be a lot of buttons giving you the lots of chances to say "YES, I'll give you my money".

If you've come across them before, you'll have seen how they just go ham on trying to sell something, and it can be a bit aggressive. But the thing is, they work! One thing that makes them so effective is that there's usually a countdown of some sort saying that the offer is going to expire, and the price will go up or you won't be able to sign

up again. Whether that will actually expire or not is something different entirely but it makes it feel urgent.

For most artists, landing pages probably aren't particularly useful, but they definitely can be. For example, if you're going to be part of an event that people have to sign up to, or you have a special offer for commissions... something like that.

A thing you'll notice with many landing pages is that they don't look like they're part of the normal website, they look like they can stand by themselves. Of course they follow the same visual style so they're at least coherent with the main site but they can stand on their own.

Of course there's more, but they're the most notable

- Websites often fit into more than one of those categories.
- An artist's website would often have:
    - A Portfolio
    - E-commerce
    - A Blog

Websites can do a LOT of things, almost everything you could want if you know the way to do it but those were probably the most common functions.

You can do some absolutely bonkers things with a website to present a blog, or a shop in a different and new way, but when it comes down to it, you've still built a blog, or a shop.

A website that you build for your business will often be a combination of at least a few of these types of website.

For example, a website for a musician would be

A brochure site because it's providing information about them and their business, with a portfolio showing off their work, maybe having some demo tracks to listen to.

There could also be an e-commerce part where you can buy their music and they could have a blog keeping readers updated on their latest works.

Other features could include a calendar showing where they are performing and embedding their social media feeds

o Building a relationship with existing and potential customers

o Add huge amount of value to your business i.e. business with mailing list is worth more

o Segmenting your audience reduces spam! Makes people less likely to unsubscribe.

One thing to have on your website that's really important if want to maintain a relationship with your customers and potential customers is a mailing list.

They make it really easy to keep keep track of an keep in touch with people that are interested in what you do.

You don't have to keep a spreadsheet with a list of email addresses or anything like that. Services like Mailchimp do it all for you.

Most of them, including Mailchimp, have a free version that does limit some of the features you have access too, but even with the limitations, you can still do a lot!

You can have a form on your website that adds people to your list without you doing anything.
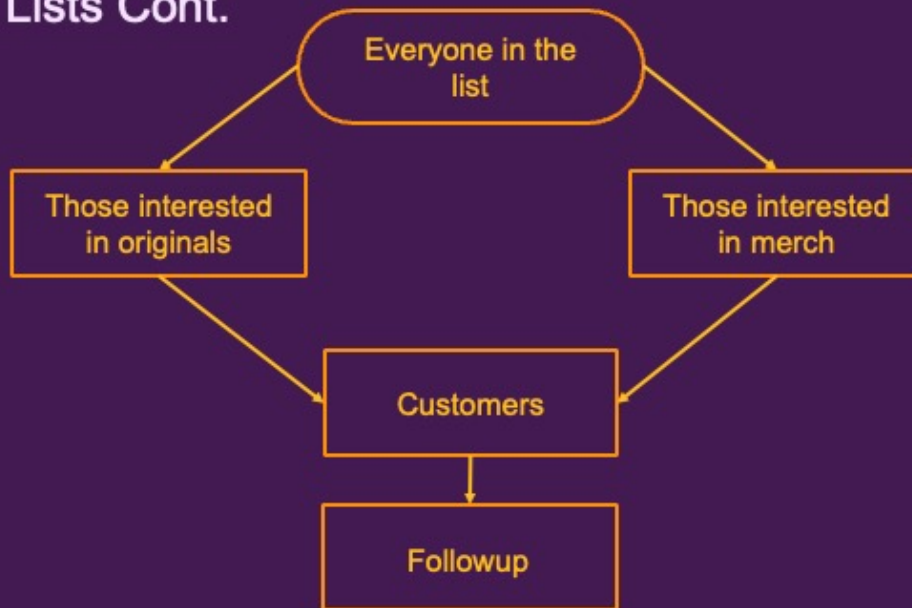
Mailing lists can even automatically split your audience into segments. You can have options on your signup form for members to select what they are interested in. Your chosen mailing list service can then take this information and allow you to send emails out to those members specifically.

For example, a portrait artist could have visitors that are interested only in commissioning a piece, or only looking at buying merchandise. Since there is a significant price disparity between these things, splitting them into separate groups can make sense and you can send them separate emails. But you can still send emails to everyone at once as the whole audience if you wanted to.

Once people have bought things through your shop, you can send them follow up emails to try and get them to buy something else, or get them to leave you a review. Online shops also send out "abandoned cart" emails whereby, if you leave some items in your cart and start the checkout process then leave it, you'll be sent a follow up email reminding you to complete your purchase. Mailing lists allow you to do that, and they are surprisingly effective.

For My Website, What Do I Want?

- No definitive structure for a website

- How much selling do your customers need?

- What do your customers want to know?

- How are you going to keep in contact with them?

Unfortunately, I can't just say to do this, this, and this and you'll have the perfect website!
It's all going to vary on what you do, and who your customers are.
However, there are some things that I can say for sure you'll want to have.
The typical brochure site pages are necessary for pretty much every business and these are:
An about page which introduces you and/or your business. This page is essentially the "why should i choose this business?" page
A services page which introduces what you and your business do! This page is the "what does this business do and why are they the best at this?" page
A contact page is also a must. Since it allows visitors to get in touch with you.
And a home page, which can be a surprisingly difficult page to decide on the content for. Typically you'll want a brief introduction to the business, a brief introduction to what the business offers and some way to contact the business. It's kind of a concatenation of the other pages I've just mentioned.
So, these are the basic pages that make up a brochure site - they give visitors information about you and your business, and why they should choose you. But, there's still a lot you can do to play about with this basic formula. For example, you could meld the about and services pages into one.
Think about what your potential customers want to know or do, and then you can work it out from there.

Get into your Customers' Shoes

- What will they do on your website?

- What journey will they take?

Once you know what you want your customers to do on your website, it's time to start planning how they get there.
The best way to do that is using what's known as "user stories". This is exactly what it sounds like, you're coming up with a little story of what customers will be doing on your website.

Find Your Ideal Customer Avatar (ICA)

- This will help decide the purpose of your website

- When you start working on your own website, do this before deciding on, or

  building anything.

- There can be more than one customer your website is for.

Any questions before we move onto an activity?

For making your user stories, it's important to know who your users are. The best way to do this and put yourself in their shoes is to make up a new imaginary friend for yourself, which more professionally can be called your Ideal Customer Avatar, or ICA for short. They are who you want to be your customers. Make notes, write their CV, or a story, draw a portrait; do it however you want, whatever makes them feel real. You want to think about their lifestyle, jobs, everything that helps you to get in their head, and really understand them.

Doing this will make it easier to come up with their user stories; and they'll also be very helpful later too - when you're writing the copy of your website, writing posts on social media, writing newsletters, and really anything that you do to advertise to that customer!

Now, before we move on to an activity in breakout groups, does anyone have any questions?

User Stories

Each of your ICAs could have different stories

- *As a customer, I want to commission a portrait so that I can capture my daughter's youth forever.*

- *As a customer, I want to buy art merchandise so I can give it as a gift.*

- *As a customer, I want to keep up to date with your exhibitions so I can see original art in person.*

Once you know who your ideal customer is, step right into their shoes, and think of what they would want to achieve on your website.
And from their point of view come up with little stories, that are saying what the customer wants to do, and why.
Try to think of as many as you can. Yes, it is very tedious, but trust me, it'll be a big help later when laying out your content, and writing copy.
User stories are typically very structured being:
As a somebody, I want to something so I something.
You don't need to adhere to this though, do it however it works for you.
Here's just a few I came up with quickly for a portrait artist's website, and as you read through them there's some information that I'd want to include on that website.
Giving examples of occasions for commissioned portraits, information about giving art as gifts. And, adding information about any exhibitions that the artist is involved in.
These stories could also give you ideas for blog posts, and content to put on your emails to your mailing list.

> "As a customer, I want to know how the commissions process works so I can feel confident so I can feel safe working with you."

Let's break a user story down…

As a customer, I want to know how the commissions process works so I can feel confident & safe in working with you.

The customers want to know what will happen if they commission you for a piece.

To cater for this, you could either have a page just for that, or to put the information on another page. You want it to be clear where this page can be found though.

So our commissions process information could be a part of a "commissions" page or, it could have it's own commissions process page or "guide to commissions". Of course you could call it anything you want, as long as it's clear what the information on the page will be. If you put the information on your "pricing" page for example, potential customers might come across it anyway, but if anyone was looking specifically for commissions information they might not find it.

What is a Website for?

- In breakout rooms of 4-6

- With your scenario, come up with an Ideal Customer Avatar for them and some user stories for their website.

- In groups give them example scenario of a creative business and have them come up with stories for what their users will do on the website

- 15 minutes, followed by feeding back to the group so decide in your groups who will report back

Armed with our knowledge about what a website is for, and knowing about user stories, we're going to put you all into breakout rooms of 4-6 for about 15 minutes. I've got four examples of creative businesses, and I'm going to assign one to each group,

With the business, I want you to come up with an ideal customer avatar. Since this is only going to be short, don't worry about making it very detailed.

And with that, come up with some user stories for what the business would want on their website. So think of what the business would sell, and what potential customers would want to know about the products, and the business itself, and what they would want to be able to do on the website.

Over the 15 minutes, I'll hop into each group and answer any questions, and make sure you're all okay! Then we'll reconvene and feedback our ideas.

Ellie the Photographer

Ellie is a landscape photographer and, living in Barnard Castle loves taking photos around the High Force Waterfall. She has an extensive portfolio, having been a photographer for over 15 years and taken on many commissions, including an Arts Council project, and she's often featured in exhibitions. Ellie also sells prints of her work.

But… Ellie doesn't have a website

Philip the Painter

During lockdown, Philip lost his job and decided it was the perfect opportunity to pursue his passion of oil painting for his full time career. He's been doing it as a hobby for most of his life, and so has a large collection of his paintings. He's shown his work off at craft fairs before to great reception and his social media followers love his work. As well as selling his own paintings he wants to start taking on commissions.

But… Philip doesn't have a website

Bobby the Dressmaker

Bobby has just finished their degree in fashion design and they've dreamed about being a dressmaker their whole life. Having started out at their mum's sewing machine making doll dresses with fabric scraps and 13 years later, Bobby still has everything they've made and really honed their skills. Bobby wants to get a job in the fashion industry but just loves coming up with new ideas and talking about what they do.

But… Bobby doesn't have a website.

Richmond Creatives

Roy Kent is a manager at Richmond Creatives which is an organisation based in Richmond who have taken over an old community center and turned it into a set of artists' studio spaces, and a community space that is used for events and exhibitions. Roy and the team have only been going for about three years, but have build up a thriving community of people who regularly visit and take part in the community events.

But… Richmond Creatives doesn't have a website.

- Jan Cawood
- Jo Coates
- Alison Curry
- Ellen Dean
- Fiona Ford

- Amsaal Bawani
- Helen Coverdale
- Sara Cox
- Katherine Goda
- Anna Harding
- Jean Jackson

- John Badmus
- Elizabeth Billington
- Neena Currie
- Amy Mitchell
- Annette Poulson

- Sue Archold
- Dave Binns
- Jas Martin
- Louise Taylor
- Rosi Thornton

- Jayne Blacklock
- Peter Jackson
- Elizabeth Liddle
- Chris Robinson
- Ali Wilkes

- Brighid Black
- Ian Horn
- Amanda Raine
- Jo Scott
- Tom Wood

So now, we're going to breakout into the same groups as before.
Using the user stories you came up with earlier, decide which pages you think the website for the business in your scenario should have.
Also, if you have time, see if you can come up with a little summary for the content that you think belongs on each page.
I'm thinking we'll have 10 minutes for this, then we'll have a 15 minute break.
I know I've already talked a lot and given you a lot of information so hopefully a break will keep you all ticking over.
After the break, we'll go through each group's ideas about the pages, and then we'll move onto website design. Although, we have covered some design already!

- Jan Cawood
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- Tom Wood

So, if we go back to the user story we looked at before, we'll remember that, they want to know lots of information about the artist's commissions process.
Because there will be a lot of information to give here, having a page dedicated to commissions called something like "commissions" will fulfill this user's need!
Follow a similar process for each of the stories you've come up with.
What is the user saying they want to do and where would it logically fit in.
This will also give you an idea of the sort of content that should be on the page.

Welcome Back

- Any questions before we resume?

- With everything ask, "Does this seem intuitive?"

Doing all that, leads us onto the "Three Click Rule".
Again it's a bit of a broad rule as of course there are exceptions but generally, if it takes someone more than 3 clicks to find what they are looking for on a website, they will just leave.
You can use your user stories to decide what is important to your prospective customers, and in turn decide on a page structure to suit those.
The rule is three clicks, but you should aim for less if you can. But, on the flip side, you don't want to make your website feel cluttered so you don't want to just show everything on your homepage, as that also makes it overwhelming and confusing.

The Three Click Rule

- If it takes your customers more than 3 clicks to find what they are looking for,

  they'll probably just stop looking.
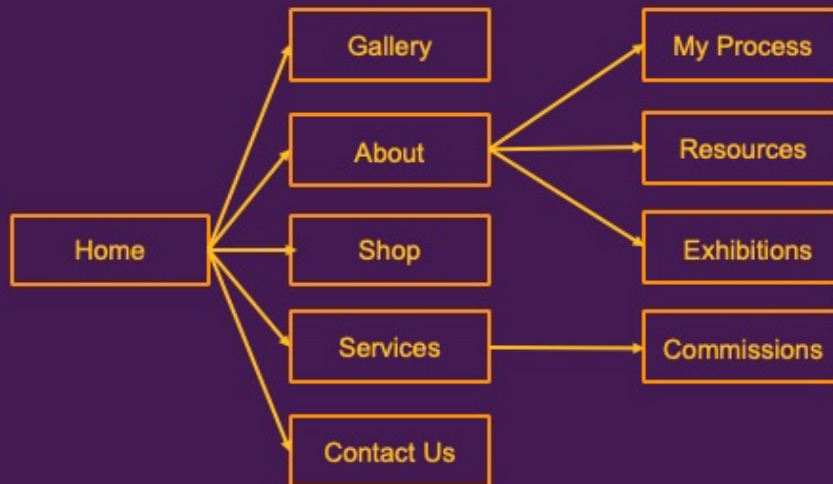
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A sitemap is just as it sounds, it's a map of all the pages you have on a website.
Generally, they are very similar to the layout of the items you'd have on your menu.
Here's a one i threw together which could represent the pages on an artist's website.
You can see we start at the homepage and all the other pages link off from that,
because that's the page where you'd expect to start on a website.
It doesn't have to be complicated at all. Really, as long as you understand it, you're
golden.
Your user stories are really going to help you design your sitemap, as they let you
know the information that your visitors will want to know and the things they want to
be able to do!

This err…. monstrosity(?) is Ling's cars.

In a workshop about web design, this website just absolutely cannot go unmentioned. It's full of quirky animations, tons of different fonts, random images, just everything you can think of. It looks like it's straight out of the early 2000s.

But you know what? It's really easy to use. It's just throwing everything in your face at once, but it's doing in a way that somehow, is easy to navigate and makes a lot of sense. Pretty much everything you can find in one or two clicks.

I think Ling's cars serves as a great example how you can embrace your style and just go mad with it to make a good website.

However, it's very easy to go wrong with it and make something that's a bit clunky and hard to use.

Part 2 - Putting a Website Together

- Design it first, so you have a goal.

- Use a design tool

    - I recommend Figma - it's FREE!

So now that you're able to design and plan the content of your website, we should probably look at how to make ti look nice, and how to put it all together.

When I first started building websites, I would just design as I was building them, and that's even when writing them in code rather than using a tool like Wix.

But quickly, this turned out to be a slow and actually much more difficult way of doing things. So I started using Photoshop to put designs together, and then when apps like Adobe XD, Sketch and Figma started to get really good I changed over. They are designed to help you design a website so they make it really fast and easy to do so!

Since doing that, I've been producing better looking websites, and doing it much faster!

I'd absolutely recommend doing it this way, even when using a something like Wix as you have a reference point for what you are trying to build. You will find the whole process smoother, and much more enjoyable.
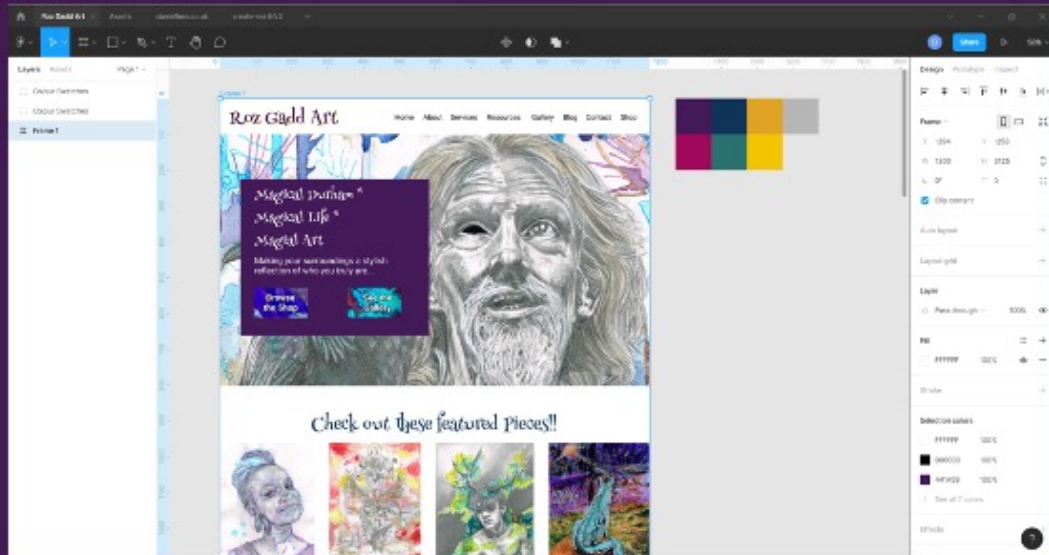
So this is Figma. As I just mentioned it's one of a few design tools available, but it's the tool I love and use almost every day.

It's entirely free and pretty easy to get the hang of so I would recommend that you use it for designing your own websites.

I'll give you a quick look round it now, so you'll know where you're headed when you come to use it yourself.

While we're there too, I'll show you how to get your site started in Wix so I can show you other things as we go along!

Fonts

- Aim for two but have no more than 3
    - One for titles & headings / subheadings
    - One for blocks of text
- Common to use sans-serif for text and serif for headings / titles
- I'm a Serif font - Times New roman
- Google Fonts is a fab source to find more

○ What are they?

○ You don't have to download any more, of course you can use what's there.

Fonts are very subjective as to what people like and there's a LOT to choose from. But because there's so many, you'll no doubt be able to find one you like, that fits the personality of you and your business.

When choosing them for your website, especially for blocks of text, you want to choose fonts that are pretty easy to read, and generally, these are sans-serif fonts, which don't have the extra sticky out bits which are called, guess what, serifs. Times New Roman is a classic serif font. Because sans-serif fonts tend to be more curvy, and more uniform in a block, they tend to flow better and are easier to read.

A common thing to do, is to choose a sans-serif font for blocks of text, and a Serif font for titles, subtitles etc. as it keeps them visually separate, even at a glance. But you of course don't have to do this yourself.

As for where you can find fonts, I'd recommend Google Fonts as they are all commercially licensed and free for you to use!

If you're using Wix, as long as your font comes in a TTF file, you can import it really easily!

Images

- Images and videos can really slow websites down
- But you still want to make sure they are high quality
- Most site builders will shrink them down automatically for you

You want to make sure your website has plenty of images, to keep visitors' interest. But make sure they you've got permission to use them! If you want any stock photos, Unsplash is a great and free source for them!

The downside to having images on a website is that they are slow, because visitors have to download them, and then render them to the page.

To combat this, we compress images. And, most site builders, like Wix will do this for you so you don't have to think about it.

But if you want to do it yourself, Photoshop is really good because it gives you a lot of options. If you don't have Photoshop, the free program GIMP is great too!

I'm sure you've noticed the two images on screen by now, and yes they are the same thing.

It's a small section of an acrylic painting that I've taken a high resolution scan of. One of the images is the quality of the scan, and the other is a compressed JPEG image. And I bet that looking on the screen here, you may only be able to see a slight difference between them, other than the inconsistent crop that I've done.

The size difference? The scan totals about 1.5GB in size, and the compressed version, about 1MB. It's over a thousand times smaller.

But when you come to create merchandise of the piece, or have prints done, the difference in quality is really noticeable. But here on the web, it doesn't matter too much.

However, you can't compress it too much or this will happen… Just don't go overboard.

But as I say, your site builder will worry about this for you most of the time.

As artists, I'm sure you understand concepts of colour theory with contrasting and complimentary colours. And it's quite important in web design too, as you can use it to come up with a colour scheme that fits your brand if you don't already have one.
There's a fantastic online tool made by Adobe simply called Adobe Colour, but spelt wrong without the u.
It gives you a colour wheel with points you can drag around and it will generate colour schemes for you based on colours you choose!
There's also a huge catalogue of premade colour schemes you can choose from too if you want to go in that direction.
Once you've found colours you like, you can copy and paste the colour values into your website!

The Beginnings of SEO & Bert (or Albert the algorithm)

- Search Engine Optimization = SEO

- We can do things to get higher rankings

- Google releases little tidbits every now and then

    - But it's most often, not very helpful

Now is a good time to start thinking about Search Engine Optimization, or SEO. SEO is the process of optimizing your page layout and content to rank higher on search engines; most commonly, Google.

Search engines have a huge database with all of the websites they know about. When you search for something, they use an algorithm to determine which websites and webpages are relevant to your search and the order that they should appear in. These algorithms are always being tweaked, but every now and then when there's a big change to them, search engine providers will put out a sort of press release letting the public know about any significant changes to how the algorithm works. Although this information is often not very detailed so doesn't help us that much with our SEO efforts. So, for the most part SEO is a lot of trial and error, throwing different techniques and ideas at the wall, and seeing what seems to work. However, what works for some people might not work for you. It's a bit of a complicated mess really!

What can we do for sure?

- Make sure your content is readable
    - Short sentences
    - Break up paragraphs with other elements
- Be strategic with your headings
    - Only one H1
    - Don't miss a heading level

There's various things we can do with the way we lay out our pages and structure content on them, that are known to help with SEO. As machine learning and AI is advancing, search engine algorithms are starting to analyse the content itself on web pages. It's quite impressive actually, and scary.

The readability of your content can be very important, not just to search engines, but to those who are browsing your website too. Keeping sentences short and readable is important, as is breaking up content with subheadings. Try not to have paragraphs be too long, and don't have too many in one chunk, break them up with subheadings and other things like buttons and images.

You'll notice when using a site builder to put your website together that there's different "levels" of heading. From H1 down to H6, with H1 being the largest, and H6 the smallest.

Think of the H1 as your page title. You only want one of these on each page on your website.

For the H2 through H6, think of them as subheadings, sub-subheadings, sub-sub-subheadings etc.

Use all of these as much as you want, but when you're going up the levels, never skip a level. For example, don't jump from H2 to H4, make sure to have a H3 in between. But going the other way, skip as many as you want!

In most site builders, you're able to preset fonts, sizes and colours for each heading level so they're very easy to re-use.

Make your Site Accessible

- Give all your images "alt-text"

- For this image from Mary Poppins we
  could have:

  "Woman floating in sky, pan faced, holding an open
  umbrella, and a handbag at her side."

Making your site accessible, is also incredibly important to SEO, as well as making your site's audience as wide as possible.

The main thing to be mindful of when making a website accessible is screen readers. A screen reader is a piece of software that a visually impaired user uses to verbally read out the content on a website. Structuring your content properly also helps with screen readers as they are able to group content effectively.

The way screen readers handle images is using "alt text". In this case, alt is short for alternative, and alt text was intended to be the text that shows in place of an image, when that image fails to load.

It is intended to be a short description of what an image is showing. This makes it very useful for screen readers as they can read out this alt text, and the user should have an approximate idea of what an image is. Try to add alt text for as many images on your website as you possibly can, even if you think they don't need it. Search engines love it; for two reasons, A, it shows that your site is accessible which makes it rank higher, and B, it lets the search engine know what the content of images is on your website. So it's definitely worth doing, and since each description doesn't need to be very long, it shouldn't take too long either.

Some alt text descriptions can be quite funny, with how literal they are.

Let's have a look at an example so you can see the sort of things they should say. Here's an image of Mary Poppins, and we'll see what I've come up with for the "alt text".
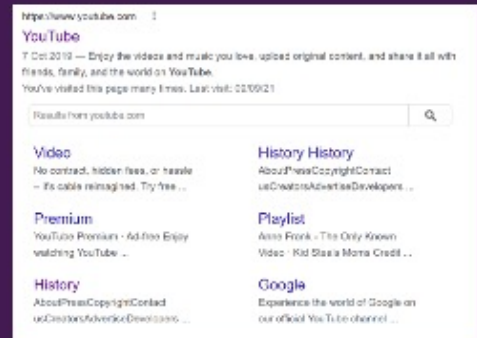
When you look at a search result on google, you'll see that it has a title, the web address and a brief description.

Well, these things can be changed. They are called the meta description, and the meta title.

They also don't have to mirror the actual content that's on the page. In fact they can say anything you want, but of course you want to keep it relevant to the content on the page.

As well as being what Google shows to searchers, the algorithm uses it to get a snapshot of your content.

Putting a website together

So now for the fun part!

Let's leave this boring presentation and look at something more exciting.

I've put together a website design using a program I like called Figma. It's a design tool that's free to use and can even just straight up run in your browser. If you want to, you can download it and run it as a regular application if you're using a Windows PC or a Mac. And, because it syncs all your documents with the cloud, you can move between computers and everything you need is just right there.

In fact, the website we're going to build, I designed it on my windows laptop, and now we're going to work on it here on my Mac Mini.

As we go along here, I'm going to show you how we do the SEO things I've talked about, and put together the features that I've mentioned too.

The main thing I'll do now is put together the site's homepage, as that'll show you everything you need to know to be able to get your layouts put together for your other pages.

I'm going to create the other pages too, but we won't be putting anything on them! And as for the shop and blog, I'll walk you through the process of creating products and posts!

So for now… Over to Figma

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