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BETTER WEBSITE  
SERIES



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# ANALYTICS



Website analytics gives information such as the number of daily visitors to the website or a particular webpage, the geographical location of visitors, the amount of time each visitor spent on a page, the most visited pages on the site, and so on.

Analytics tools provide a huge source of information which may be used, for example, to inform marketing strategy and targeting, or to simply discover what works and what doesn't on a website, all of which can boost your website's contribution to your business.

Google Analytics and Google Search Console are the most widely used analytics tools, but there are many specialised analytics tools for example for SEO (see below), for managing campaigns, even page heatmaps that track the clicking or scrolling behaviour of visitors.

# BACK END

The back end of a website is the area that website visitors don't see, and contains databases, software, applications and all the files of code that go into creating the website.





# BLOG

A blog is a type of website, or a section on a website, that presents articles written in a usually informal style , on topics related to the subject of the website.

Blogs usually have regular updates of new content which is presented in a chronological order with the latest first.

# BROCHURE WEBSITE



A brochure website, like a printed brochure, shows the company and the goods or services it provides.

It does not give the option to buy like an e-commerce website does.

# CONTENT

The content of a website is the text, images, videos and so on, that appear on the site to visitors.

You'll need to provide your web designer with all the content you wish to have on your website, although most website design companies also offer the option to create content for you if required.





# CALL TO ACTION

A call to action is a strong prompt on a website to encourage the website visitor to take a certain action, such as to 'sign up' or 'buy now', and they are often placed on buttons which need to be clicked to take that action.

## CDN

CDN stands for Content Delivery Network. This is a network of servers at different locations around the world which work together to deliver website content to users.

When a user request is made for a particular web page, the nearest server will respond and send the user a cached version of the web page that it has stored.

This system allows for faster delivery of content, and faster webpages, which is a Google ranking factor.



## COOKIE POLICY

see GDPR



# COUNTRY CODES

co.uk, .com, or what? These letters appended to a domain name are known as country codes or top-level domains (tld).

There are some things to consider when deciding which tld to choose:

- .com is universal making it the most in-demand, so the name you want may already be taken;
- .co.uk is good for businesses that operate in the UK;
- some tld are associated with certain sectors – .org with non-profits, .io with start-ups particularly in tech;
- .eu domains are restricted for EU or EEA citizens, residents or organisations. Brexit this may affect use for UK businesses – [find out here](#);

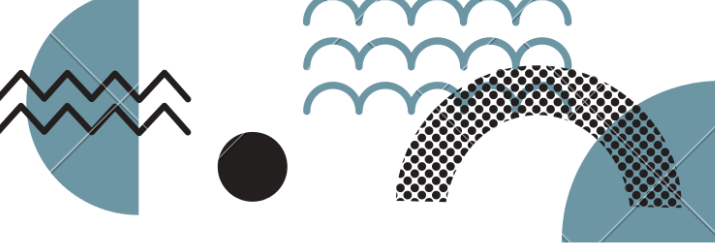
hundreds of new tld were released recently, making things more exciting – .london, .is, .me – [see here](#).

# DOMAIN NAME

This is the website's name (and address), for example: [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) and [www.webbd.co.uk](http://www.webbd.co.uk).

Every website needs a domain name.






A domain name often contains the company name, or the goods/services provided, or the subject matter of the website. It's entirely up to the individual what they wish to call their website - but domain names are unique, so the name you want has to be available.

There are a lot of companies which offer domain name registration, and there's not a huge difference between them.

The cost to register a domain name can vary hugely, depending on the perceived desirability of a name - [www.cheapcars.com](http://www.cheapcars.com), if available, may cost tens of thousands of pounds, but more often than not domain names that are more unique, like business names, cost in the tens of pounds per year.

Before you buy your domain, check that the name is available on social media platforms you'll want to use.

When doing a domain name search, if you find the name you want, buy it straight away - it's said that unscrupulous operators crawl the searches and buy domains, so if you go back later to buy it, it's at auction at a much higher price.







# DYNAMIC WEBSITE

See Static v Dynamic Websites

## E-COMMERCE



E-commerce refers to online sales and purchases, and an e-commerce website is simply a website which sells something – it can be physical products, digital products (for example ebooks, music downloads, software) or services (for example booking appointments).

## FAVICON

A favicon is the small image that is displayed in the web page tab in the browser; usually it's the company logo. The favicon image should have a transparent background so it will fit any customised browser theme settings of website visitors.

## FOOTER

The footer is the bottom area of a website. It often contains things like company contact details, links to Terms & Conditions and Cookie Policy pages, copyright information, disclaimers and so on.





# FRONT END

The front end of a website is everything that a visitor to the site sees – the fonts, images, menu, text and so on. See also back end.

## GDPR

If your website will have visitors from the EU, it needs to be GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) compliant and must by law have a Cookie Policy.


A Cookie Policy details how you treat personal data collected on the website. Data may be gathered when a visitor uses your site's contact form, opts in to mailing lists, buys products, makes a reservation, or if your site uses analytics tools.

GDPR is complex so ask your legal advisor, although there are generic policies available online.



## HEADER

The header of a website is the area at the top of each web page which usually contains the logo and the website's navigation menu.





# IMAGES

They say a picture paints a thousand words, and Google has found that sites with big blocks of uninterrupted text don't retain visitors as well as those with plenty of images.

Common image formats are .png, .jpg, .svg, .gif.  
.svg are maths based, so can scale without distortion  
.png can take a transparent background  
webp is a new image format which uses much smaller file sizes, but not all browsers have full compatibility yet.

You can't just take an image off the internet and use it because you may be infringing someone's copyright. Images with Creative Commons Zero license (CC0) can be used without permission, accreditation, can be modified and used for commercial purposes – always read the small print though!

# LANDING PAGES

These are a stand-alone web page with a specific purpose such as to get people to sign up to a mailing list, to take up an offer, to buy a product etc. They therefore usually contain content to encourage a particular act known as a 'call to action'.



# OPT-IN FORM


An opt-in form is a consent form which allows website users to fill in their details to subscribe to a service such as a newsletter, and is a method by which website owners grow a mailing list of potential customers they can market to.

EU law requires opt-in forms to have a double opt-in procedure – one is when the visitor submits their details and a second by clicking on a link sent in a confirmatory email. There should also be an 'unsubscribe' option, to opt out of receiving correspondence.

# POP UP

A pop up is a small window that literally 'pops up' over the webpage.

They are often used for marketing purposes for ads, and are set to trigger when the website visitor performs a certain action, for example the visitor is on a page for a certain amount of time, or gives an indications by mouse movement that they may be leaving the site.





# PORTFOLIO WEBSITE

Like a physical portfolio, a portfolio website displays examples of work. They are often used by people in the creative industry such as photographers and architects. Portfolio websites rely a lot on images rather than text.



## RESPONSIVENESS

Website responsiveness refers to the ability of a website to automatically configure to display optimally on the device that it is being viewed on.

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Online activity is now almost 50:50 desktop:mobile, and websites need to be tailored to look good on a range of different screen sizes.

Mobile traffic is so important nowadays that Google considers mobile responsiveness as a major ranking factor. Searches on mobiles will often return different results than searches on a desktop, so your website should be optimised for both, to encourage the most amount of visitors.





# SEARCH ENGINE V BROWSER



Search engines and browsers are interlinked in the web world, and there's often confusion between the two. Both are software programs but each has a distinct function.

Search engines are used to search databases and fetch information relevant to a user's query terms. Search engines include Google, Yahoo, Bing, Duck Duck Go, Baidu.

Browsers are used to access and display web pages. They include Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, Safari, Internet Explorer.

You need a browser to access search engines but you don't need a search engine to access a webpage.

If you know the address of the web page you want, you can type it directly into the browser address bar without doing a search engine request.





# SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMISATION

Everyone wants their website to be the 1st result at the top of the 1st page of a search engine result. This first spot will take around 30% of all traffic, so it's extremely lucrative, so fiercely fought over.


To rank a webpage involves a number of different methods – it's estimated Google uses around 200 ranking factors.

SEO is the name given to the combined techniques used to optimise a web page and website so that it may rank better in search results. Optimisation includes on-page SEO, off-page SEO and technical (back end) SEO.

On-page optimisation includes keywords, internal and external linking, heading sizes, image titles.

Off-page optimisation includes backlinks and inbound external links.

Technical SEO includes page speed, security certificates, updated software and should be done by your web designer.








# SERVER

A server is a special type of computer where website files are stored. When someone wants to view a web page and they type in the website address or click on a link, their browser will connect to the server where the website is stored (hosted) and a copy of the files that make up that web page will be sent to their browser, to be displayed on their computer.

# SITE BACK-UPS

To reduce the chance of data loss, regular back-ups are a good idea. This can be every few moments if necessary, although once per day or once per week is sufficient for most websites.

# SOCIAL MEDIA



Everyone has heard of Facebook, Twitter and Instagram but there are actually over 1500 social media platforms and growing.

Social media is becoming essential in spreading the message of companies, groups, charities and anyone wanting a market or audience.





# SSL CERTIFICATE

Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) is an encryption protocol used for internet communications such as between a website and a browser, or between emails.

They make websites safer and less at risk from cyber attacks.

Website addresses using an SSL certificate start with *https*, rather than *http* as was the norm. A website with an SSL certificate will also display a lock on the left of the webpage url, in the address bar.

SSL certificates have now become the norm for internet security, and Google penalises websites that do not have one. If you've ever visited a website and got a message warning that the connection is not private, this is often because that website doesn't have an SSL certificate.



## STATIC WEBSITE

see Static vs Dynamic Websites



# STATIC V DYNAMIC WEBSITES





A static website contains web pages which have fixed content. This means that typically each web page will have its own file and will display its contents identically to all visitors at all times (allowing of course for variations in different devices).

A dynamic website however contains web pages which are generated in real time, usually triggered by user action.

An example is a shopping cart – when a user puts something into their shopping cart, that page does not already exist, because the web programmer could not have possibly anticipated that User X would put Product Y into their cart at Time Z.

The programmer sets the parameters for the action that the program must take in response to user interactions, and when these are triggered new code files are created, and previously non-existent pages can be served to the user – like seeing the shopping cart page with the products the user just put in there.





# URL


URL (Uniform Resource Locator) is the unique address that every webpage, file or resource on the web has, for example: <https://www.mysite.com/about>

# WEB HOSTING


A web host provides space on their servers to store the files which make up a website. When someone requests a web page, the browser will fetch the files from the relevant web hosts' server.

Different types of web hosting:

- Shared – one server is shared by multiple sites
- Virtual Private Server (VPS) – a server is configured into multiple compartments and each website has its own compartment
- Dedicated – a server hosts only one website, for larger sites with heavy traffic
- Cloud hosting – several servers form a pooled resource and multiple websites are stored in the pool



A monthly fee is paid for web hosting. Some companies offer fixed prices with unlimited storage space and traffic, while others have scaled pricing where the more resources you use the more you pay.






# WEBSITE MAINTENANCE

Technology changes almost daily and websites need to keep abreast of these changes to ensure they continue to work and display correctly, and that there are no vulnerabilities to security attacks.

A certain amount of back-end work needs to be done regularly to maintain a website. If you're not particularly tech savvy in that area, it's best to let your web designer do your website maintenance, usually offered through monthly rolling contracts.


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## WORDPRESS



WordPress is a long-standing, award winning content management system (CMS) which is used to create websites, blogs, membership sites, forums, mailing lists and online stores.

It is used by more than 60 million websites worldwide including many household names such as BBC, Facebook, Observer, Ford, Sony to name just a few.





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## OUR OTHER TITLES

A Very Practical Guide to SEO  
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