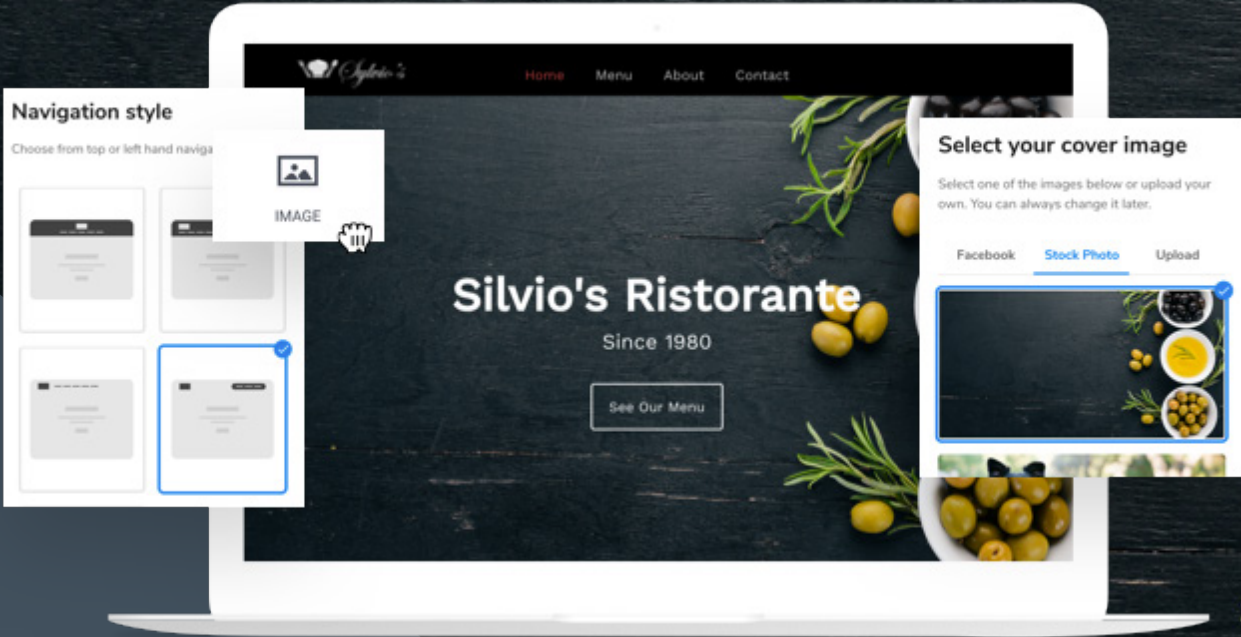


AN ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO

Building your new brand and website



The image shows a laptop displaying a website for 'Silvio's Ristorante'. The website has a dark background with a navigation bar at the top containing 'Home', 'Menu', 'About', and 'Contact'. The main content area features the restaurant's name 'Silvio's Ristorante' and 'Since 1980' below it, with a 'See Our Menu' button. Two overlay panels are shown: one on the left for 'Navigation style' and one on the right for 'Select your cover image'. The background of the laptop screen is decorated with fresh herbs and lemons.

Navigation style
Choose from top or left hand naviga

IMAGE

Select your cover image
Select one of the images below or upload your own. You can always change it later.

Facebook Stock Photo Upload

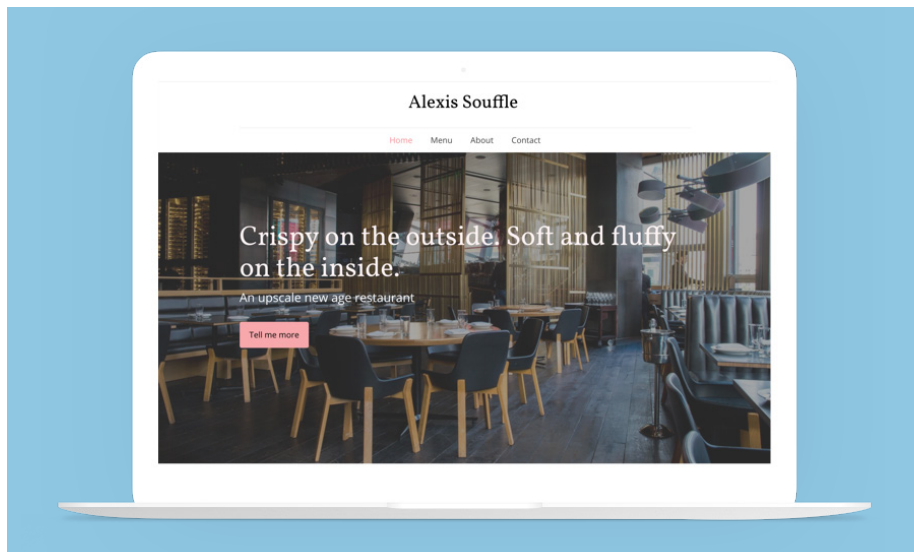
Build a brand your customers will remember

Think of your favorite brand.

It doesn't matter if your mind goes to a clothing company, a brand of computer, or a favorite restaurant – all of them use branding to evoke feelings within their customers.

Your brand is shaped by everything you do online to influence the way customers feel about your business.

You can build a brand online with the right look, and an effective website that represents your mission and speaks to your target audience. Customers won't just connect with you on an emotional level, but remember you, and engage with you.



In this guide you'll find practical advice on how to:

FIND YOUR BRAND VOICE **3**

DESIGN THE RIGHT LOGO AND LOOK..... **4**

CREATE THE THREE ESSENTIAL WEBSITE PAGES **6**

ENGAGE YOUR AUDIENCE WITH A BLOG **10**

It's time to build your brand and meaningful relationships with your online audience.

Find your brand voice

Brands have become more powerful than ever at driving purchase decisions and brand loyalty. Sometimes, brand personality is the only thing that separates competitors, so leaning into that personality can help your business stand out. What is your brand?

What is different about your company that customers can't get anywhere else?

When you look at anything, a painting, a poster, or a point-of-purchase candy bar rack – your mind makes a decision almost immediately. The gut reaction you feel when looking at a business is, “the brand”.

When customers think of your brand, what do they feel?

Everything you do online – the look of your website, the content you share, the way you talk to your audience – all contributes to the overall emotional connotation that forms your brand in the minds (and hearts) of customers.

Get started by answering these questions:

- *How do you want customers to describe your business?*
- *Do the answers customer give match how you want them to feel?*
- *What personality traits could you emphasize to get the desired reaction?*

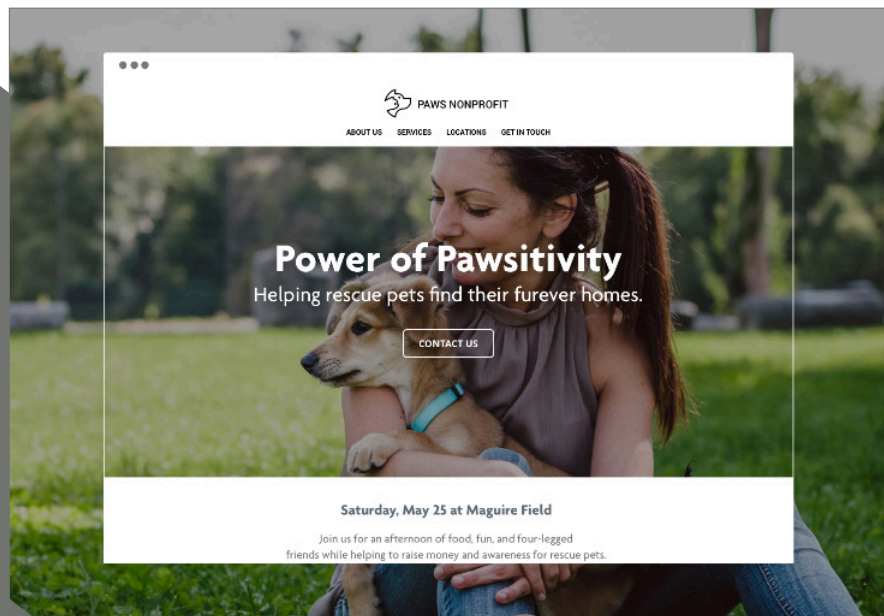


Design the right logo and look for your brand

After you uncover your brand's personality, a logo is simply the same personality in a visual representation. That personality connected to a strong visual is what customers will remember.

Stop and think about some of the biggest businesses you know: Starbucks, Walmart, Nike. They all take great care in their logos. At a glance, these logos bring the business top of mind; if golden arches against a red background make you salivate, you're not alone.

Memorable logos aren't strictly the purview of big business – your hobby, small business or side hustle can create one too! Let's take a look at three things to keep in mind when designing your logo.



1. Color influences perception

Choosing the correct colors for your logo is imperative. Various colors evoke different emotions, and you can leverage those to your advantage. What are some common connotations that different colors have? Yellow is associated with happiness, green with health and nature, and purple with royalty.

Not all colors work with all types of businesses. If you've been stressed and are looking for a soothing, relaxing spa, which one will you visit: the spa whose logo is composed of calming greens and blues, or one whose electric, neon-colored logo looks like Rainbow Brite got sick all over it?

Get market feedback on your logo's colors, by asking those in the target audience. How do the colors make them feel? What do they think of when seeing those colors? Use their feedback to refine your choices. You can also [refer to this handy infographic](#) courtesy of Fast Company.

2. Size matters in logo design

Your logo should always be featured on your website, marketing communications, and other advertising. Be mindful of your logo size and complexity, as not all of your advertising takes place on a giant billboard. If all your advertisements were that size it'd make sense to create an intricate, hyper-detailed logo, but that likely isn't the case. Your logo should be distinctive and maintain clarity when displayed on small phone screens, business cards, pamphlets, or wherever else you may advertise.

3. Choose your typography carefully

Just as with color, different fonts are associated with different emotions and business types. Think about a soft, rounded, swooping script. Would you expect to find that sort of typography used by an edgy, street-wise graphic designer? Probably not.

In fact, Wichita State University did a study to determine if different fonts were associated with emotions or personalities, and scripted fonts were perceived as being feminine and casual.

Before you decide on a font, consider doing some sleuthing. Are your competitors all using a similar font type? It may be a good idea to choose a similar font, as your audience may have already created an association between that font type and your industry.

Creating a good logo takes more than a cute design

When creating a logo for your new website, keep these tips in mind. Color, size, and type are three indispensable components of logo design. Don't get discouraged if it takes you a little while to come up with the perfect logo! After all, it's one of the first things people think of when they think of your business, so it's important to take the time to iterate and create something special.

REMEMBER:

- ▶ Match the right color to the right emotional connection
- ▶ Keep your logo simple so it can be used in various sizes
- ▶ Match your brand personality to the right font



The 3 essential website pages

THE HARDEST PART ABOUT DESIGNING YOUR OWN WEBSITE IS GETTING ENOUGH COURAGE TO HIT THAT SCARY “PUBLISH” BUTTON.

THE DOUBTS ARE ALL THERE:

“Do these pages explain what my business does?”

“Will customers know how to find what they need?”

“How do I know the website is even working?”

To get your site ready for the world, include these three essential pages. Don't just cover your eyes and hope for the best; include a Homepage, an About page, and a Contact page that all work together to do one thing: answer the questions of your prospective customers.

An effective Homepage

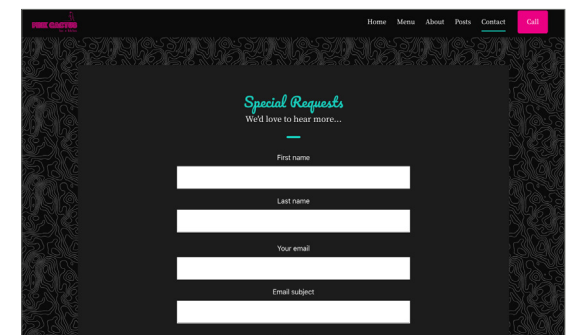
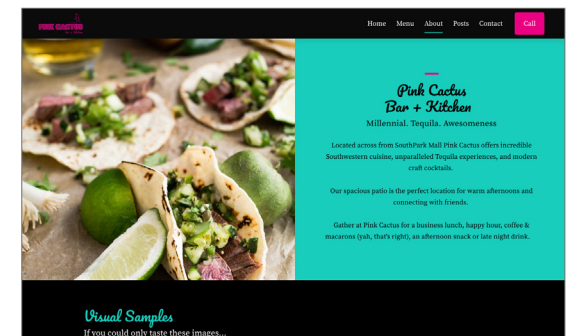
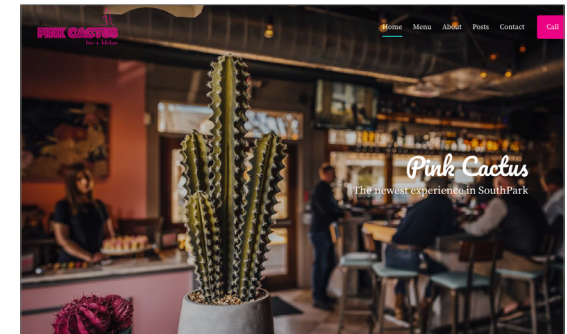
Your homepage has to do more than just look pretty, it has to answer four important questions, and look good doing it. This is the first impression, the first handshake, for a new customer visiting your site. The only way to convince them to take a chance on you is to answer these questions:

- **What is your product or service?**
- **Who is it for?**
- **How are you unique?**
- **What should visitors do next?**

You may know what your product or service is when you look at your site, but a website visitor might not. Make sure that at first glance your homepage clearly explains exactly what you do. At the same time, it should also explain who your product or service is trying to help. That way, if the website visitor matches your target audience, they'll immediately identify with your homepage and want to dive deeper.

The hardest question to answer of course is the, “So What?” Your homepage needs to quickly answer any objection a potential customer might have and at the same time show why your product is unique. What can they get from you that they won't find anywhere else?

After you've given all of this information to your visitor, you'll want to point them toward the next step. If you don't, a potential customer may take in the information and then click the back button. You need to tell them what to do next, with a **clear call to action** button like “shop now” or “learn more,” displayed directly where they'll see it.



A useful *About* page

The About page is your chance to show customers that you've already solved their problem in the past. Visitors to your About page are likely looking for a reason to buy a product or service from you. They want validation that you're experienced in the kind of help they need. Help them reach that conclusion.

If your brand has a sense of humor or an attitude, this is where you can show it off. If you're in an industry that's all about getting things done, no funny business, then use the About page to convey your professionalism and competence. Share why your business exists and how you'll help customers overcome the obstacles they're facing.

A clear *Contact* page

Website visitors go to your Contact page for one thing: to get in touch with you. Whether it's a quick answer or a potential sale, you want to make it as easy as possible for a visitor to find your contact info or they'll find someone else.

Before you list your contact info, you should briefly remind them what you do, with just three sentences or less. Then clearly list all of your contact details to answer the following customer questions:

- *Where can I find you?*
- *When can I find you?*
- *How can I contact you?*

How to know if your website is working

Your website has to have a goal so you know if your design is successful. Revenue may be the first metric that comes to mind, but there's another, equally important goal: leads.

Incoming traffic may land on your website and then leave before becoming a customer, never to return again. This is why you should offer something of value to visitors in exchange for an email address. This could be a discount, exclusive content, or access to something else they may find valuable.

Once you have an email address you now have a way to you connect with prospects and customers on a consistent basis, and give them a reason to come back to your website. Email marketing makes it easy to automatically communicate with prospects and customers, educate them about your products or services, and convinces them to buy or engage over time.

Get feedback

Ask prospects to give feedback on your website. If there are any points where they paused to read something confusing or didn't understand where to click next, you may need to make adjustments.

You have 5-10 seconds for visitors to know what it is you do from your homepage. Show them how you are going to solve their problem on your About page and how to easily contact you from your Contact page. You'll need to keep tuning and your website will build traffic that gets you noticed by a growing audience.

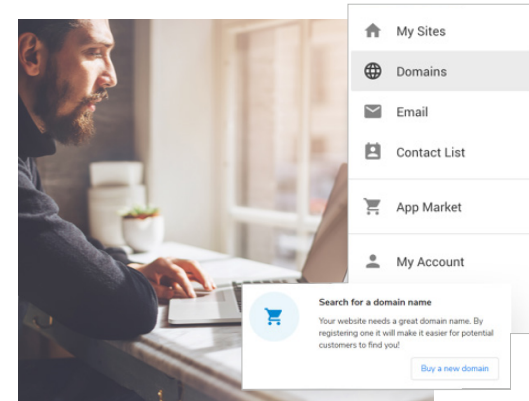
REMEMBER:

- ▶ You need a Homepage, About page, and Contact page to get started online
- ▶ Match each page's design to keep your website's look consistent throughout
- ▶ Create a lead generation form to collect the email addresses of potential customers

Look professional with a custom domain and email address

When you're just getting started online you may take advantage of a free website and a free email address to represent your business. At some point, as you build your brand, you'll want to consider **custom domain name** and a **matching professional email address** to give you or your business more legitimacy.

Add instant credibility to your brand with [your own domain name](#).



Engage your audience with a blog

THERE'S A POPULAR SAYING IN ONLINE MARKETING: **CONTENT IS KING.**

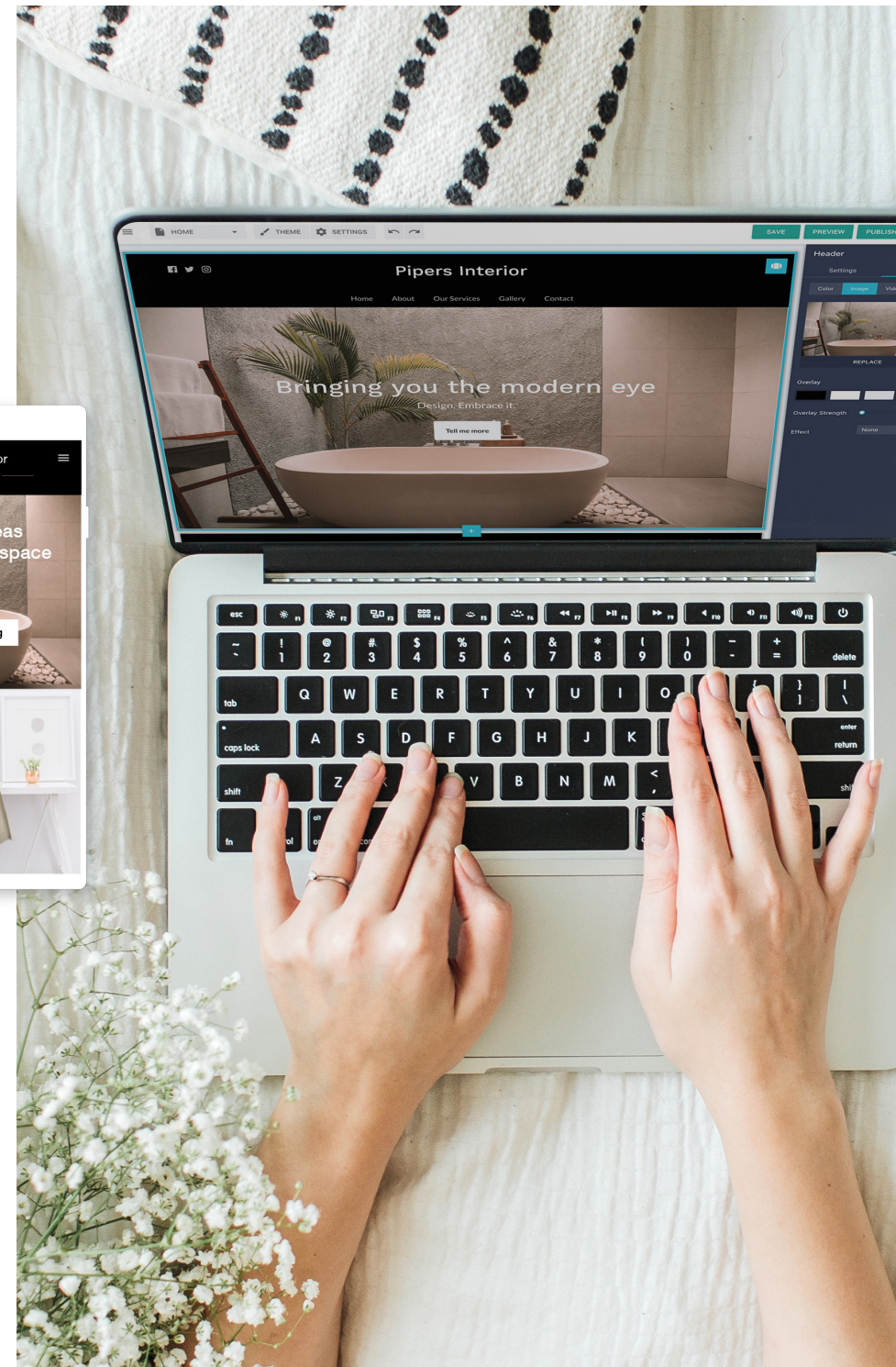
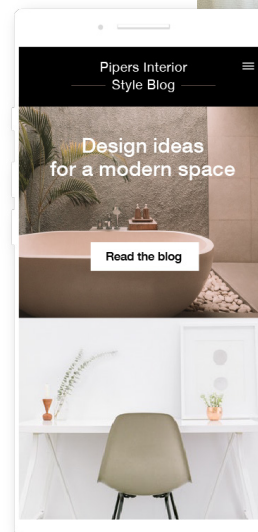
WHY IS THAT?

The answer is because the content is what people search for, consume, and share online. Many have discovered that they can reach their prospects and customers **directly through a blog** to drive engagement and sales. The better your content speaks to a customer the more return you'll see on the investment of time that it takes to create it.

With a blog, your website becomes a resource.

A blog offers you an opportunity to inspire, share tips, or answer frequently asked questions from visitors and customers. Blogs also give your customers a window into the personality of your brand, to get a better sense of whether or not they should do business with you.

The byproduct is that search engines love to see content published on a consistent basis, and so do your customers, especially if your content is valuable. Search engines also try to recommend valuable resources, which means they're more likely to suggest your website to the right audience if you're focused on helping your customers through content.



Create a schedule, stick to it

Often a blog gets added on a website, but few posts are written, and then cobwebs start forming. The only way a blog helps your business is by consistently drawing readers in, which means you need to post consistently. It can be difficult, especially during peak seasons for your business, but that's when customers will want to visit your site the most.

Create an easy to read spreadsheet or calendar that helps you plan in advance and start writing down as many blog post ideas as you can. Create a schedule that provides two posts per week if possible. It's better to start slow and increase your posting frequency, rather than starting strong and fading off into a post a year.

Keep your customers informed

There are endless topics you could write about on your blog, but make sure your posts relate back to your business. If you've just thrown a great event where customers had fun, then tell everyone about it. If you have a new product in the works, start teasing it out there and let people give their feedback so they feel a part of the process. Product releases will be more significant to a customer who feels you have listened to their needs.

Identify your target audience and structure your content around their needs. If your business focuses on teaching beginners, then write how-to content that will help them be more successful. Give a behind the scenes look of your business so they feel included, or just entertain the people of the culture your business is targeting.

Find guest contributors

If you don't have the time to write every blog post that goes up on your blog, that's ok; in fact, that's even better. Featuring guest contributors on your blog every so often will not only make it more diverse, but it can also help grow your network. The more business leaders and industry friends you can feature on your blog, the more likely you can be a guest on their blog and reach their customers.

Not only will you start growing your network of other business that you can collaborate with in the future, but you'll also save time filling your blog with content without writing it yourself. You should still edit and proofread everything that goes on your blog to make sure it fits with the standards of your business, but guest contributors can help make your blog vibrant and diverse.

Show off your brand personality

Sitting down to write a blog post might feel weird at first, especially if it's a busy time for your business, but the more people that you can attract with content, the more people you can get to shop or book with you. Think of blogging as a way to provide information your prospects and customers are looking for. Information people will want to see – and share.

Blogs also help to highlight the humanity behind your business. Your customers don't want to support and work with a faceless business. They want real people. Communicating with your audience on a regular basis builds a deeper, more intimate relationship. With another chance to show off your brand personality, customers can connect with your business on a deeper, emotional level, which makes them return to buy from you more often.

REMEMBER:

- ▶ Create a blog calendar that works with your already busy schedule
- ▶ Educate your customers to provide them with valuable content
- ▶ Rely on guest contributors to ease your blog writing workload

We'll help align your brand, website, email and logos to attract the right audience

Many elements need to come together to convey the right message to your customers: your business is the right one for them. If you take action on the advice on the previous pages, you'll be on your way to creating a memorable brand.

READY TO GET STARTED?

Get a professional, mobile-responsive site in just minutes with our intelligent [website builder](#).

