



Are you starting a...



or



That's a really important question you need to answer before you read anything else in this handout.

There's absolutely nothing wrong with hobbies! But, you participate in a business and a hobby in totally different ways.

Sometimes you just need someone to ask the right questions in order for you to find the right answers to get you moving forward with your dream. Right?

So, are you starting a business?

Starting a business requires planning, commitment and effort. If you're serious about starting and running your business, I encourage you to start by checking out the information in this handout along with my **"Top 8 Mistakes to Avoid When Building Your Website."**

Side Note

If you already have your own business, but it isn't as successful as you would like, it could be because you haven't incorporated the basic principles and concepts I'm about to share...*(just food for thought.)*



Michael's Graphics

As you're no doubt aware, the internet has exploded with all types of products and services that are just a mouse click away. In today's economy, there are more and more people starting an online business with the hope of supplementing their current income (or replacing lost income as a result of layoffs and downsizing).

Maybe you're just tired of your J – O – B

Whatever your reason for starting your own business, you need to take the right first steps!

If you're like most of my clients, your first visit to my website is just one of the steps in giving your dream a presence online.

With the proper preparations and commitment, this can be exciting and prosperous. **I believe you can enjoy great success and satisfaction in your online business if you build it with a solid foundation.**



There's no possible way for me to cover every aspect of starting and running an online business in a single PDF and I won't even attempt it. And I'm definitely not a legal or financial counselor/advisor.

So, you've got a dream and you want to turn that dream into a profitable online business



by doing some homework and check out the ["10 Steps to Start Your Business"](#) recommended by the [Small Business Administration](#) (SBA).

Once you're done with your homework at the SBA, come on back here and I'll share some more cool stuff with you...



Michael's Graphics



DOMAIN NAME

Creating a website starts with obtaining a domain name for your business. That is handled through a domain name service such as GoDaddy.com. *(You can obviously use any domain name service you choose; I just have had great success with GoDaddy.com for over 20 years.)*

Just visit GoDaddy.com and enter the domain name you want to see if it's available. If it is, setup your GoDaddy account using their easy setup instructions and purchase your domain name! It's that simple!

HOSTING

Once you have your domain name, you'll **need a service to host your domain**. Once again, you can have GoDaddy.com do this for you.

IMPORTANT: Make sure you get a hosting platform that **supports Wordpress**. I recommend selecting a hosting platform that uses a Linux operating system that is designed for Wordpress. Wordpress will provide you with the most flexibility in the creation of your website. (To learn more about Wordpress, [just click here.](#))



What a coincidence...

I can help you with all of this. [Check out the information on my website](#) to see the options for setting up your website and getting your business online.



My Top 8 Mistakes to Avoid When Building Your Website

1 YOUR WEBSITE DOESN'T TELL YOUR VISITORS WHO YOU ARE AND WHAT YOU DO (AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, WHY THEY SHOULD CHOOSE YOUR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES)

This is probably the worst mistake to make. The majority of visitors to your website will leave right away if they can't figure out what you do. **What's the purpose of having a website if you're not going to tell your visitors about yourself and your products/services?!**

2 YOUR WEBSITE DOESN'T HAVE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION (OR IT'S HARD TO FIND)

Most of your visitors are going to want to know how they can get in touch with you. Whether you give them an email, phone number or physical address is totally up to you, but you need to have it on your web pages where it can easily be found.

3 YOUR WEBSITE ISN'T SECURE (NO SSL CERTIFICATE)

If you don't see "https://" at the beginning of your web address, your website is not secure. Visitors to your website are very security conscious. Google now shows your website as "Not secure" if you don't have a Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) certificate connected to your domain. This can throw up a "red flag" for your visitors and may make them look elsewhere.

4 YOUR WEBSITE ISN'T MOBILE FRIENDLY (aka RESPONSIVE)

Almost 90% of my customers are using tablets or mobile phones to view my websites. If I build your website for you, I'll guarantee that it's mobile friendly.

5 THE BUTTONS AND CLICKABLE LINKS ON YOUR WEBSITE ARE TOO SMALL FOR MOBILE USERS TO "TAP" ON

This is especially true when you have multiple links in the same location on a web page. Make sure your links are large enough and have enough space to support tapping with a finger on a mobile device.



Michael's Graphics

6 YOUR WEB PAGES USE FONTS THAT ARE TOO SMALL (AND/OR THEY'RE FRILLY & HARD FOR YOUR VISITORS TO READ)

This is pretty obvious...If your visitors can't read what's on your website, they're going to go looking somewhere else for the products and services you want to offer them. *(Are you seeing a recurring theme here about making your website mobile friendly?)*

7 YOUR WEB PAGES HAVE TOO MANY LINKS THAT SEND THE VISITOR TO A NEW BROWSER WINDOW

This is especially bad if your visitor is on a mobile device as it gets very complicated/frustrating if they have to keep switching between pages to find what they want.

8 POOR PLACEMENT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ICONS ON YOUR WEBSITE

If the first thing your visitors see is your social icons, you're just inviting them to leave your website. This is great if they take the visitor to your Facebook page (or other social media page where they can purchase your products and services). This is not great if it just takes them to a social media web page where they start scrolling and eventually never return to your website. So, what am I saying? Put your social icons at the bottom of your web pages or in the footer section of your Wordpress theme.

So, what's next ?



Social media marketing can be used to connect with customers, generate awareness, and increase sales.



The key word is "Social." That means you need to decide if you want to invest the time to stay in touch with your followers and customers on a regular basis.

One of the fastest ways I know to learn more about Social Media and what it can do for you is to read the articles and blog posts at [Social Media Examiner](#).

But, that's a subject for another day...

It's my hope that this handout has been helpful in getting you started with your online presence for your business. Thank you so much for visiting [MichaelsGraphics!](#)