

6 Common Mistakes Newbie Website Owners Make

There are a few mistakes that many people make when setting up and adding to their websites. Here are the most common missteps to avoid.

1. Choosing the wrong platform

If you have chosen one of the more popular providers like Wordpress, make sure you choose the one that's right for your needs. Think of the purpose of your website. If you want to use your website for promoting a business, sending newsletters or selling products, you will be looking for a different package with room for customization, growth, and control (Wordpress.org or WordPress.com Business) than someone who just wants to keep a personal blog (WordPress.com).

2. Choosing the wrong writing style

Writing for websites is not the same as writing for print. Research has shown that people spend little time reading website content. They land on your page, scan it for anything interesting, and unless you can grab their attention quickly, they'll move on to something shinier.

Keep your writing simple, direct, and easy to scan. Don't use jargon or technical language or assume that your readers know as much as you do about your business.

3. Too much detail

If you have too much detail on your web pages, people will lose interest and move on to your competitors. Potential customers are looking for an overview of the most important information about your business. Keep messages short, simple, and easy to understand. Think of what you want your customer to know about your business right away.

4. Too busy

The last thing your website needs is too many graphics, photos, GIFs, or videos. Keep your web design simple and uncluttered.

5. Publishing incomplete pages

Don't hit the publish button until you're 100% happy for a page to go live. Check and re-check in preview mode until it looks right, has no spelling or grammatical errors, the images are the right size, and it communicates what you want your customer to know.

And don't ever, under any circumstances, publish a page that says, 'Coming Soon' or 'Incomplete.' Having incomplete pages on your website looks sloppy and unprofessional. While you're building your website, you can have a holding page that tells customers when the site will be launched, but once the website is live, it needs to look professional and finished.

6. Not doing your website housework

New website owners tend to forget two of the most important bits of housekeeping: doing regular backups and keeping their website and any themes and plug-ins updated. These two tasks are vital to protect your data against hackers, your own human error, or power failures.