

Time, Money & Knowledge

Breaking Down the Barriers to Success



The Barriers to Success:

Time, Money & Knowledge

The introduction of the internet bridged the gap that existed when the main advertising options were TV and radio campaigns on one end, and newspaper listings on the other. It was difficult to compete with the big brands for exposure and scale.

Over time, however, the internet has become like the phone book: there are thousands of listings and it is easy for a business to be lost in the noise of all the other advertisers clamouring for the consumer's attention. While the internet certainly lowered some cost barriers in terms of getting yourself out there in the first place, it can be even less effective than the phone book in execution as you aren't even sorted by a factor as impartial as the alphabet, instead being sorted by a Search Engine's complex algorithms which could have you displayed on the very last of a thousand pages.

Getting your listing displayed on the first page of the phone book was as simple as registering a business name that started with three As. Things are a bit more complex now, and the factors influencing how your website performs require a fair amount of technical understanding and time to execute, or else enough money to pay an expert in the field to do it for you.

Your three options for getting it right each require a different investment of time, money and knowledge. Which one is the best value for your business?



Do-It-Yourself Option

The DIY approach can save you a significant amount of money because you aren't paying for anyone else's time and expertise, but rather leveraging your own. If you are quite tech-savvy and have the time and the inclination, the DIY approach usually involves the smallest upfront costs and can give you the greatest control: you are limited only by the time you want to put in and the knowledge you have.

Knowledge:

To really get the most out of your website, the DIY approach requires a lot of knowledge in several areas. An understanding of the principles of website design, marketing, search engine optimisation and security are all essential if you are to avoid overlooking something critical. The internet is a rapidly changing and developing space, so ongoing education and an awareness of recent changes in software and development will also require consideration. There are some DIY, cloud-based platforms available that can help you create a website using drag-and-drop applications, however these solutions tend to be built on proprietary systems, are prone to vendor "lock-in", and can be limited in terms of what features and functionality are available "out of the box". If you want to appear unique, really stand out from your competitors or develop any special applications on your site that are specific to your business, then this may not be possible using the standard tools provided.

It's important to note, too, that there's more to a successful business site than just looks; be careful not to overlook key influences like an SEO strategy and appropriate security.

Time:

The DIY approach requires a significant investment of time. You will be solely responsible for researching your options, rolling them out and then testing and refining their execution. You won't be limited by anyone else's timeline; if you want to pull an all-nighter you can, and you won't be confined to only carrying out updates during business hours! This can be both a blessing and a curse.

At a glance:

Time, money and knowledge requirements



Money:

The trade-off for the amount of time you have to invest is that you can usually save your credit cards from the same overuse! If you have some technical knowledge and the time to research your options, you can shop around and essentially "mix and match" your choices for the various elements required like domain purchasing, hosting, security options and a website building/management tool. This can sometimes end up costing you less overall in exchange for the time it takes to find and cost them all out.

Agency Option

If you are poor in time but rich in funds, the agency solution is an excellent approach. While it doesn't come cheaply, a good agency provides extensive experience and a multitude of skills. They are especially effective if they integrate online marketing capabilities such as social media management and search engine optimisation. Having all elements of your online business requirements covered by one agency is convenient, saves you time and ensures a cohesive execution.

With an agency you aren't limited to templates or basic functionality. The sky is the limit: if you can afford to pay for it, you can have anything you want!

Knowledge:

A good agency will know what questions to ask you in order to determine how to create the best website for your business, and as they'll be managing the execution, you aren't required to have any particular expertise on the subject at all. Part of what you are paying for is the experience of their staff and the time they spend keeping abreast of the latest changes in the industry that could affect your website and how it displays or operates.

The drawback to this is that depending on how the site is built and what programs you have access to, you may be completely reliant on the initial designer to update and change the site as you grow.

Time:

The agency approach shouldn't require much free time on your part. They do all the work for you and should report regularly on the key metrics indicating how your website is performing. The downside to this is that as they have multiple clients, you may have to slot in to their schedule when you require updates, and anything "extra" or otherwise outside of your contract usually attracts a sizeable fee due to their hourly rate.

At a glance:

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Money:

The main drawback to the agency approach is the financial investment. The upfront costs are usually significant, and if anything changes after the initial quote, there can be unexpected blowouts on cost and time or hidden fees to pay. You will usually need to pay again each time you require the site to be updated, and creating and adding content is a key factor in a website's success, so this needs to be factored in.

Done For You Solutions

Traditionally, both of your options for creating a successful business website required you to have either money or time to spare – and in some cases, both. The reality for many businesses, especially those of a small to medium size, is that both time and money are precious and it can be difficult to find great globs of either available to invest in a website. You know the value a great website can bring to your business, but that knowledge doesn't create more hours in the day or put more money in your bank account.

There is a third solution emerging that requires only a small investment of money, time and knowledge: Done For You solutions.

Knowledge:

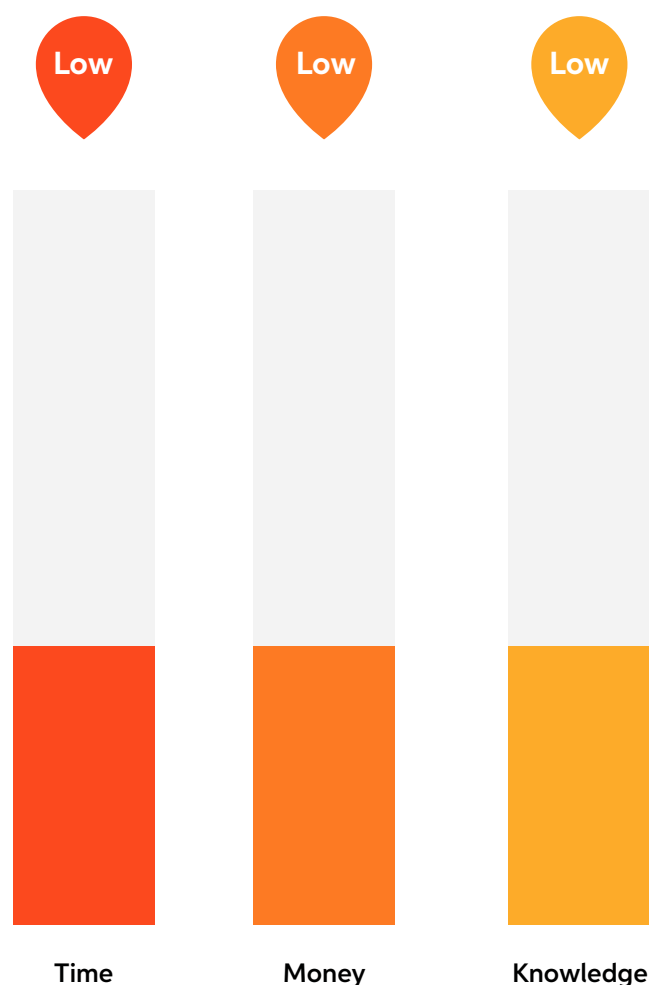
Your account manager knows the right questions to ask in order to determine the best options for you, so you aren't required to have any background knowledge of the internet, marketing or website design yourself. They will walk you through the regular reports provided on your website's performance and suggest potential changes or updates that may be required, so you remain in control but with professional advice from someone you trust.

Money:

Rather than finding a significant sum of money to pay upfront and attempting to budget for any unforeseen future expenses – how do you budget accurately for expenses when you aren't sure what they'll be and what you might need? – a Done For You solution only requires a small fixed monthly payment. Included in this fee are the initial design and setup plus unlimited updates each month. Additional packages are available if you require social media management or an advanced search engine optimisation and marketing strategy, also for a flat monthly fee. This makes it easy for you to budget.


At a glance:

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Time:

A Done For You solution only requires a minimal amount of your time a month. Your dedicated account manager, who organises the creation and launch of your site and the ongoing analysis of its performance, looks after everything else. Your new website could be up, running, and generating revenue within weeks of your first call.



Find the right solution for your business needs: request a free consultation today or refer to our free ebook, “The WebCentral Process: “The Fast Track to Success”.

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