Organize Your Website in Three Steps

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Hi, I'm Kerry. Designer and writer. Living my dream.

In my late 50s, through good luck, great friends, and a hunger to try something new, I became a website designer. The assorted skills and interests developed over a lifetime turned out to be just the right fit for a website design career that fulfilled my longing to be creative and help people.

Now I'm doing what I love as a Squarespace website designer

I spend my days learning about the businesses my clients run and the stories behind why they love what they do. Now I'm part of their stories, helping them express both themselves and their brands through an amazing Squarespace website that wows their ideal clients.

You could say I'm demystifying technology to serve the greater good

My clients are generally life coaches, consultants, wellness practitioners, artists, and writers. Their passion is giving back and uplifting others through their compassion and creativity. Up until now, if they've done anything with their websites, they've done it out of desperation, not inspiration. That's where I come in.

My passion is encouraging and supporting women who are running their own businesses and giving back to the world in their unique way. My high-tech background, coupled with my love of design and writing, serves me well in demystifying technology and leveraging it so my clients can shine online, without being overwhelmed or disheartened getting there.

"If you are looking for a web designer who invests in learning about your business and carefully crafts a website to match your mission and values, hire Kerry! Starting with the first phone call and continuing throughout the process, she is dedicated to meeting your needs and producing quality results."

- Jill Bella, BellaMattinaConsulting.com

Why I created this guide

In my years as a web designer, I've found that the hardest part of starting a new website is getting organized and getting started. Squarespace encourages you to dive in and create your trial site, but the truth is that you need to know how many pages your website will have and then write at least a first draft of the copy that's going to be placed on those pages.

Before we gather the information that will go on a website, my clients fill out a questionnaire to tell me about their immediate business goals and check off the kinds of pages and features they think they want (blog, mailing list, scheduling, etc.) and then we talk about those ideas and finalize that list. Without this initial information, we wouldn't have the plan needed for mapping out the pages of the website.

I created this guide and worksheet so you can use my three-step process for organizing the pages of your website before you or someone you hire begins writing the content for those pages. It's a starting point for everything that happens after, so it's a critical first step for staying focused and organized.

This guide highlights website pages that are typical of the service-based and creative businesses I work with. But even if your business offers something else, you can use the guide as inspiration for the types of pages that could enhance your website.

The anatomy of a website and the role of pages

A website is a collection of text and images that present the information you want your potential and existing clients and customers to know and gives them actions to take to get to know you better. Pages organize the website into clickable, separate areas so visitors can find the information they want more easily.

A page is defined as all the information you can scroll through from top to bottom without having to click a link to go to another page on the website. Some pages can be reached by clicking a word in the navigation at the top of the website; others can be reached through links or buttons.

How many and which types of pages your website needs depends both on your business and your near-term business goals. A website for a sole-proprietor services or creative business usually has anywhere from four to seven pages of information.

If there are products to sell, there may be more pages because each product has its own page and the website needs one or more Store pages too.

The three steps for organizing your website

Here are the steps I use with my own clients to organize their website structure and pages. This guide will teach you how to do it too.

1   Identify your business goals.

2   Identify the type of website you need.

3   Pick your pages.

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Step 1. Identify your business goals

As part of the information-gathering process, I always ask a new client to name a few business goals for the coming year. Their answers reveal how complex the website needs to be. The simplicity or complexity of a website isn't determined by how new you are to your business; it's based on what your near-term business goals are.

I've focused on the three types of business goals that I see most often when working with my clients. If your business goals don't match the ones listed here, make your best guess at the intentions and root problems your business goals aim to solve and choose the goal group that makes the most sense for you.

Goal group #1: Just give me the basics

Examples of goals:

- Establish a central place for your online business presence.

- Make it easy for your business to be found online.

- Make it easy for clients and customers to contact you.

- Make your business look professional and legitimate.

Goal group #2: Highlight the authority of my business

Examples of goals:

- Use your website to establish yourself as an authority in your field.

- Publish original material that is useful to potential clients and customers.

- Highlight recent projects.

- Promote your business in new markets.

- Build a following or community.

Goal group #3: Strengthen my business

Examples of goals:

- Create new income streams related to your core business.

- Develop new passive income streams such as digital products or self-paced courses.

- Host paid events or classes or sell a physical product.

- Simplify your administrative tasks with efficiencies such as online payments, automated scheduling, or online client screening or onboarding.

Your turn

These are my business goals for the next year:

1.

2.

3.

Which goal group is the best match?

☐ Goal group #1: Just give me the basics

☐ Goal group #2: Highlight the authority of my business

☐ Goal group #3: Strengthen my business

Step 2. Identify the type of website you need

Goal group #1 leads to a Business Basics website

A Business Basics website is for you if your primary goals are to be found online by potential customers and clients and to establish your business as professional and legitimate. Such a website is suitable for both new businesses and those that have been around a while.

Goal group #2 leads to an Emerging Authority website

An Emerging Authority website is for you if your primary goals are to extend your visibility to new arenas and highlight your expertise in your field. If you're new in business, you can create your first website based on this goal group. You can also apply this goal group to a business you've been running for a while if you have recently decided to expand your marketing efforts.

Goal group #3 leads to a Resilient Business website

A Resilient Business website's purpose is to generate additional income through paid events or product sales. It can also automate repetitive tasks in a growing business to handle administrative work more efficiently. A Resilient Business website can be integrated with a new or existing Business Basics or Emerging Authority website.

Your turn

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This is the type of website I need:

- [ ] **Business Basics** because I just need the basics for a great website.

- [ ] **Emerging Authority** because I want to highlight the authority of my business.

- [ ] **Resilient Business** because I want to strengthen my business with additional income or efficient processes.

Step 3. Pick your website pages

All business websites should have these three pages to describe you and your business and give potential clients a way to contact you easily.

- Home page

- About (you) page

- Contact page

Choose pages for the type of website you need

Choose the types of pages for your industry that will help you meet your business goals and fit with the type of website you picked:

- Business Basics

- Emerging Authority

- Resilient Business

Use the examples in this guide as a starting point

The examples in this guide apply to the clients I generally work with:

- Coaches
- Consultants
- Wellness practitioners
- Artists
- Writers

If you don't happen to be in those industries, you'll still get a sense of the kinds of pages that are needed for most websites. That overview will help you generate some new ideas for what you need on your website.

Pages for a Business Basics website

Examples of goals: Establish a central place for your online business presence on a web hosting platform you pay for (not a social media platform). Make it easy for your business to be found online. Make it easy for clients and customers to contact you. Make your business look professional and legitimate.

In addition to the required Home, About, and Contact pages, this website has at least one more page that describes what your business offers. This additional information makes it clear what your business is and who it serves. The table below shows you the additional required page or pages you'll need for a Business Basics website.

Business Basics website		
Your business	Required pages	Additional required page(s)
Coach	Home About Contact	One or more Services pages
Consultant	Home About Contact	One or more Services pages
Wellness practitioner	Home About Contact	One or more Services pages
Artist	Home About Contact	One or more Gallery pages
Writer	Home About Contact	Portfolio or Book page

Pages for an Emerging Authority website

Examples of goals: Going beyond the basics, use your website to establish yourself as an authority in your field. Publish original material that is useful to potential clients and customers. Highlight recent projects. Promote your business in new markets. Build a following or community.

The Emerging Authority website has at least one more page than the Business Basics website that showcases your strengthened credibility. This additional information makes it clear that you are an authority in your field. The table below shows you some optional pages you can consider for an Emerging Authority website.

Emerging Authority website		
Your business	Required pages	Examples of pages to highlight your authority
Coach	Home About Contact One or more Services pages	Blog Resources Mailing list
Consultant	Home About Contact One or more Services pages	Blog Resources Recent projects Publications Mailing list
Wellness practitioner	Home About Contact One or more Services pages	Blog Resources Mailing list
Artist	Home About Contact One or more Gallery pages	Blog Recent Shows/Awards Mailing list
Writer	Home About Contact Portfolio or Book page	Blog Publications/Portfolio Media/Press coverage Appearances Mailing list

Pages for a Resilient Business website

Examples of goals: Create new income streams related to your core business. Develop new passive income streams such as digital products or self-paced courses. Host paid events or classes or sell a physical product. Simplify your administrative tasks with efficiencies such as online payments, automated scheduling, or online client screening or onboarding.

In addition to the pages needed to build a Business Basics or Emerging Authority website, the Resilient Business website has at least one more page related to new ways to earn income or streamline your business.

Resilient Business website			
Your business	Business Basics required pages	Emerging Authority optional pages	Resilient Business optional pages
Coach	Home About Contact One or more Services page(s)	Blog Resources Mailing list	One or more Events or Classes pages Automated scheduling and payment for appointments, events, or classes Page for potential clients with forms, PDFs, or FAQs Page for new clients with forms, PDFs, or FAQs A Store page with one or more Product pages if you sell digital or physical products
Consultant	Home About Contact One or more Services page(s)	Blog Resources Recent projects Publications Mailing list	One or more Events or Classes pages Automated scheduling and payment for appointments, events, or classes Page for potential clients with forms, PDFs, or FAQs Page for new clients with forms, PDFs, or FAQs A Store page with one or more Product pages if you sell digital or physical products

Resilient Business website			
Your business	Business Basics required pages	Emerging Authority optional pages	Resilient Business optional pages
Wellness practitioner	Home About Contact Services page(s)	Blog Resources Mailing list	One or more Events or Classes pages Automated scheduling and payment for appointments, events, or classes Page for potential clients with forms, PDFs, or FAQs Page for new clients with forms, PDFs, or FAQs A Store page with one or more Product pages if you sell digital or physical products
Artist	Home About Contact Gallery page(s)	Blog Recent Shows/Awards Mailing list	One or more Events or Classes pages Automated scheduling and payment for events or classes A Store page with one or more Product pages if you sell digital or physical products
Writer	Home About Contact Portfolio/Book page	Blog Publications/Portfolio Media/Press coverage Appearances Mailing list	One or more Events pages Automated scheduling and payment for events A Store page with one or more Product pages if you sell digital or physical products

Your turn

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I chose this type of website and I need these pages:

☐ **Business Basics** because I just need the basics for a great website.

☐ **Emerging Authority** because I want to highlight the authority of my business.

☐ **Resilient Business** because I want to strengthen my business with additional income or efficient processes.

PAGES

1. Home

2. About

3. Contact

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Additional notes and questions

Get more ideas before you start

Take a look at other professionals' websites in the same or similar businesses. As you browse their websites, you'll notice similarities among them. You'll also see how they differ depending on the unique qualities, offerings, personality, and talents of the business owner.

Make note of websites you like for their vibe and their colors, as well as the types of pages they have. Having those websites to refer back to is helpful when you are looking for inspiration or for remembering the kinds of information to include on your own website.

Your turn

Notes about websites I like and don't like and why

(Include full names of websites to refer to and find later, including their URLs)

What's next?

I'll be coming into your inbox over the next week to provide some more details about specific types of pages to give you a greater understanding of the page types I've listed in this guide. My hope is that within the next week or so, you'll have gathered all the information you need to plan the pages of your website so you can begin the exciting step of creating the website copy.

And if you decide you want help with your website, reach out for a free 30-minute consultation. I can tell you more about what I do so you can decide if having me as a creative partner is of value to you and your business.

CONTACT ME

Wishing you big ideas and much success,

Kerry

P.S. If you have comments or suggestions for this guide, I'd love to hear about them. You can reach me at hello@kerryathompson.com.