

6 ABSOLUTE MUST-HAVES FOR WEBSITE MANAGEMENT


Protect Your Investment

You've worked hard to build your business into something successful. Not taking care of your website can cause it to go down – stopping your lead-generating machine in its tracks.

Downtime can lead to lost customers or unfavorable reviews. If that happens, you can say goodbye to showing up at the top of search results.

Here are six things that either you or your website manager need to have in place.

1. Backups & Uptime Monitoring



Monthly backups are better than nothing. Weekly backups are even better. But if you're making changes to your website regularly, you should be making daily backups.

Even if you don't make frequent changes, you still need to have an automatic process that monitors your uptime. No one expects you to check your own website all throughout the day, every day. But it must stay online.

Can you imagine: going to your URL and getting a *Website Not Found* error message? Or even worse, getting a call from a grumpy, thwarted customer?



2. Good Web Hosting

Many popular web hosting companies will cram your website into a server with thousands of other websites. You'll compete for space and processing power. And if those other sites are spammers, your website will share their bad reputation because you are on the same server. This will hurt your email deliverability rate and earn you penalties that keep your business from showing up in search results.

The widely-known, so-called "affordable" web hosting companies often have shady tactics. They do things like:

- double or triple the price after the first year
- require long-term contracts
- add additional services that you don't need
- charge you for services that should be free

Case in point: You get that little padlock by your website name in the browser's search bar by having an SSL certificates. Reputable hosts give them away for free. GoDaddy once charged a client of mine \$165/year for a certificate. And get this, they billed in three-year increments. So she paid \$495 for something that should have been free.



3. Malware & Security Scans

Fully half of all website visitors are bots and human hackers. If allowed, they can easily take advantage of your website's vulnerabilities to steal data, access confidential information, spam the site, inject codes, or even take over your server. YIKES.

A good website manager will install a malware scanner to analyze your website content, flag suspicious and malicious user registrations, and will notify you immediately.

There's even some risk in installing plugins that help your website work. Some developers of free plugins make their money by selling your email and phone number to data brokers, leading to you getting spammed. Choose your plugins carefully, and keep them up to date. Old software is easier to exploit.

An attack gone undetected could continue to cause damage long after the initial breach. Without security scanning, your visitors and customers could be susceptible to attacks like phishing.



4. Software Updates

There are almost constant updates to software for WordPress websites. Most notably, for themes and plugins.

Most hosting companies don't offer automatic updates, even if they claim to. Or they will update them for you, just not frequently enough.

Use a popular theme that is well-supported. Limit the number of plugins on your site, and only ones that are highly-rated.

Hackers are constantly looking for vulnerabilities to exploit in popular software. Data is worth a lot of money, and they want to get it by any means necessary.

And they often succeed. At which point software companies must update their products to "patch" the vulnerabilities. If your website is running on old technology, know that it's technology that hackers figured out how to exploit a long time ago.



5. Site Speed & Performance

Website speed is vital for both search engines and for user experience. When web pages take too long to load, people are likely to say, "nevermind!" and click the back button. They're gone, never to return.

The top 3 culprits behind slow-loading WordPress websites are:

1

Large image or video files that haven't been optimized properly. Photos for web use need to be much smaller and at a lower resolution than photos for print use.

2

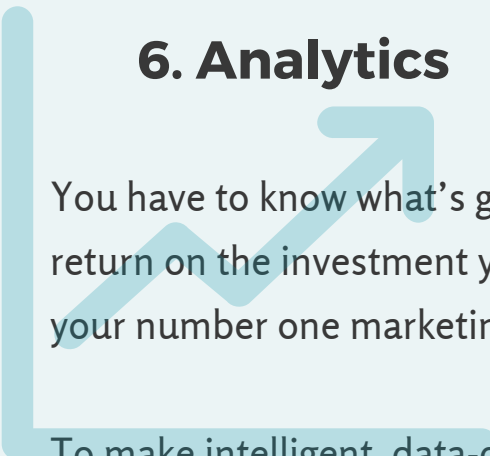
Having too many plugins installed, especially multiple plugins that do the same thing. Having inactive or outdated plugins sitting around - these not only take up space, they're a security risk.

3

Crappy hosting where minimal resources are shared among hundreds of sites. All of the companies under the EIG umbrella are in this category: Bluehost, HostGator, Network Solutions and iPage.

Bad web hosts are known to actually throttle their websites, limiting their processing speed. All the optimization techniques and best practices won't help your site speed if your host is limiting it.

6. Analytics



You have to know what's going on with your website if you want to get a return on the investment you made building it. After all, it's supposed to be your number one marketing tool, your around-the-clock salesperson, right?

To make intelligent, data-driven decisions for your business, you need to know how people are finding your website, how they are interacting with it, and if they are answering any of your calls-to-action.

Google Analytics is the most common way to track this data. It is powerful, no doubt, an absolute beast of a reporting tool - and best as an enterprise solution. But for the majority of small business owners, it's like drinking from a fire hose - just way too much data. And complicated to use.

What most small businesses want to know is which landing pages are converting well, and which has people clicking away. What are the most popular blog posts? Are people going to your contact page and then bailing on your questionnaire? Knowing this type of info enables you to make marketing decisions based on data, not gut feelings or the latest trends.

Tools like Fathom and Independent Analytics are great alternatives to consider.



Ready to start a web care plan?

If you are already seeing errors on your dashboard, you're going to love having your very own website manager. I'll take care of your WordPress website (even if I didn't build it) and give you peace of mind.

Save time, get the right data, and rest assured that your site is:

-  SECURE
-  ONLINE
-  PERFORMING

[Protect My Website](#)

About Kelly Higgins

Kelly is the founder of Savvy Digital Design, a boutique marketing company outside of Atlanta, GA.



She works with small businesses ready to shift their focus from DIY to done-for-you. Not one to just build a website and walk away, Kelly incorporates content marketing into every project. She leverages your social media platforms to help you get found online.

When not glued to her laptop, she sews costumes for local schools and community theaters. According to her kids, she also spends a fair amount of time bugging the crap out of them about homework, posture and vegetables.

