The Website Workbook

a free resource from

JANETCHUI.COM

The basics of visual branding,
web design, and SEO
for DIYers and those looking for help

For copyediting rates or a clarity session
contact janetjechui@gmail.com

Modules inside:

    1: Establishing your "look"

    2: Planning your niche and keywords for Search Engine Optimisation

    3: Planning your timeline and functions for the website

    4: Your content and budget

Module 1

Many of these boxes will contain crucial information and considerations for your website.

Fill in the boxes where you're inspired to record your answers, and don't worry if some questions don't excite you or don't apply.

First Things First

What's Your Brand Name?

Establishing Your "Look"

Let's define your audience and how to reach them.

Age range/group

Gender

Where they're found (online or in meat space)

What other things they like in addition to what you're offering them

Are they already familiar with products/services similar to yours?
If so, how do they look for those?

Let's check out your competitors in the same industry.

Who are your competitors?

How do they reach out?

What can you do better or differently? How do you distinguish what you're offering?

Why these exercises?

Visual branding is distinguishing yourself with an identity that will be carried through all your marketing materials and products, including your web site, printed materials, social media graphics, down to your packaging (if this applies). This is typically done through:

- a logo and business name
- "corporate colours", which can be anything between 1 to 4 colors (best: 1-2 colours)
- 2 to 3 different typefaces used for all text
- common style elements like text boxes, flourishes, and other graphics

Why do you need visual branding? It:-

- identifies you in the market, whether to new customers or returning ones
- establishes your professionalism and investment in effort
- influences the **perceived quality** of your products/services because of the attention paid to detail
- communicates quickly and intuitively how you're different from competitors—if you're fun, "budget", high end, trustworthy, *avant garde* or traditional. This connects you to your target customer immediately.
- establishes **consistency** of your brand that customers will be keyed to expect from your products/services.

Extra Research

Look at the logos, colours, and typefaces that your competitors/admired idols are using for their brand identity. Which ones do you most admire, and what do they convey?

Helpful Tips

Colour

Besides identifying the signature colours used in your chosen examples, you can categorise colours as:

- warm: red, orange, yellow
- cool: blue, purple, green
- bright: florescents, "full blast" pure colours
- pastel: colours that are very light, whitish or greyish
- dark: colours that contain a lot of black or are black
- neutral, earthy or metallic: greys, browns, taupe, khaki, gold, silver

Typeface

Typefaces and fonts can be categorised under:

- Formal serif fonts: Times New Roman is a good example, to convey trustworthiness. The staple typeface used by newspapers and "serious" publications.
- San serif fonts: Arial is a good example of letters without serifs (those little "tails" at the tops and bottoms of the letter strokes). It's a little less formal than serif fonts but can be hard to read in large paragraphs.
- Formal script: *Certificate Script looks like something you'd find on a certificate.*
- Informal script: Comic sans drives designers crazy. It's an example of a "handwritten" informal typeface, but there are *nice ones too that fall between formal and casual, like Dancing Script.*
- Novelty fonts (not shown): Ransom Note and Halloween fonts. These typefaces should be avoided or kept to a minimum as they can look cheesy or dated very quickly.

Now let's clarify what you'd like for *your brand.*

Would you prefer just initials or your full business name for your brand logo:

Some adjectives for the feeling your want your brand to convey:

Principle colour for the logo:

Accent colour if a second colour is desired:

A font or typeface category to use for your company name/logo:

A second font or category for longer paragraphs of text:

Module 2

Planning your niche and keywords for SEO

Let's define what you are offering to your audience.

Name of the product(s) or service(s) you're offering: (Try to keep under 5 words per item.)

Typical short description for all or any of them: (Underline the keywords if you can spot them.)

Now try another angle: What are the problems your services/products seek to address?

If your potential customers do not know anything about you, what questions may they enter into a Google search, for which you want your web site to provide the answers?

How comfortable are you writing blog articles addressing each of these questions? Or, are you comfortable with video or audio recordings of yourself answering them?

How often can you produce these features on a regular or semi-regular basis?

Module 3

Planning your timeline and functions for the site

Let's talk about how you want your site to make money!

Do you want your website to handle purchases and payments (e-commerce)?

If so, do you already have an online payment processing account such as Paypal?
(You can enter your Paypal account address here if you already have it.)

How ready are your products to roll out?

Are you planning for new products to be introduced at further stages? (Yes/No)

What *other* functions or features do you think your site may need?
(You can refer to the Possible Features table below.)

These future functions can explored more at your first one-on-one session.

Possible Features

Simple

(Low installation cost, low maintenance & lower time commitment from you too!)

- Mailing list subcription
- Free downloads/Digital content
- Links to existing social media accounts

More Complex

(Higher installation and maintenance costs, slightly higher time commitment, and some savvy with Google services/tech needed.)

- Calendar
- E-commerce
- Booking sessions/scheduling upon payment
- Paid Subscription content

You can use the following schedule to jot down your rough or ideal timeline for introducing your upcoming products and services:

Timeline	Services, products and/or functions that you'd like on the web site
In 2 weeks	
In 1 month	
In 6 months	
In 12 months	

Module 4

Content and Budget

Some questions on your web site content have been covered in Module 2.
All content helps your visibility on Google, and, helps establish your expertise and authority.
More and regularly added new content further boosts your visibility on Google and other platforms.

Content can refer to both products and informational articles. It's best to have a mix of both. Your articles should be published as Wordpress *posts* for SEO reasons.

Products, and both text and recorded audio content do best when accompanied by quality images that:

- help identify your brand because they are consistent in colour or style
- help identify and differentiate your products, feature pages and posts
- help your search engine visibility when named and used with your SEO keywords
- increase the visual attractiveness of your site and break large walls of text
- convey nonverbal cues (ie. "a picture speaks a thousand words". The right picture can save your web site visitor a lot of reading, and that's appreciated by everyone!)
- grab attention, if nothing else!

How ready is your web site content?

Do you already have photographs/images that you have the rights to use?
(Can include free stock images or paid stock images)

If not, are you open or not to spending money on quality images?
Write down your monthly/annual budget for images for your website.
(OK to put "$0" for free stock images, but note that paid images tend to be better quality and more unique.)

Do you need editing/copywriting services? Jot down your budget for this too.
(No freebies for this! But, I can advise how to write/provide your own web site material more easily.)

If you've found this workbook useful, feel free to use and share it.

To schedule your one-on-one clarity session, contact janetjechui@gmail.com.

Your answers to the workbook can be entered electronically and saved in Adobe Acrobat (and some browsers). The PDF file with your answers can be forwarded to Janet prior to consultations to optimise your time, or worked on together in person.