

# TREND INSIGHTS

Small Business Websites  
can be Integral to Overall  
Marketing Success

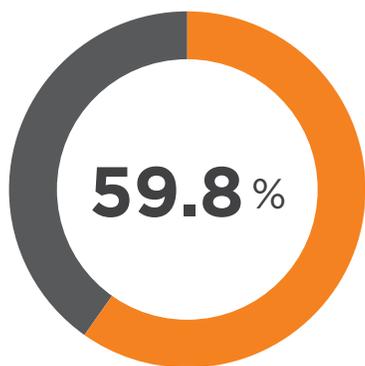


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## Small Business Websites can be Integral to Overall Marketing Success

Would you leave stacks of boxes strewn around your sales floor? Keep a sign with incorrect hours in the window? Probably not. It's certainly not a way to make a good impression on customers—and you might see them walk out the door in frustration. But if you're not paying attention to your website, you may be doing the same thing. The difference: you might not even realize they walked away.



**of customers would be less likely to make a purchase from a small business based on a bad impression of its website<sup>1</sup>**

Sources: <sup>1</sup> Vistaprint Digital, "Small Business Consumer Expectations Report," April 2017

# Today's Small Business Landscape

There are more than 18,000 large businesses in the U.S.—but more than 28 million small businesses. That speaks to the sizable impact small businesses have, but there are risks for business owners: although nearly 80% of new businesses survive one year, only about half survive five years, and even less—just a third—surpass the 10-year mark.<sup>2</sup>

Currently, more than 60% of small and medium business (SMB) owners surveyed expect sales to increase.<sup>3</sup> That, in turn, is leading to growing investments in advertising. Nearly all types of media are predicted to hold steady or see more spending by SMBs. In fact, the only platforms that are expected by more than 10% of respondents to an eMarketer survey to see decreases are radio, newspapers and print yellow pages.<sup>4</sup>

## Expected Change in US SMB Media Spending, by Channel, Jan 2017

% of respondents

	Increase	Stay the Same	Decrease
Mobile ads/marketing	52%	44%	4%
Online video	48%	47%	5%
Event marketing	47%	46%	7%
Paid search (e.g. Google Adwords)	47%	48%	5%
Online display (e.g. banner ads)	46%	49%	4%
SEO/organic search visibility (ranking higher in Google search results)	45%	54%	1%
TV	44%	51%	5%
Outdoor	41%	54%	5%
Coupons/daily deals	39%	52%	8%
Company website	38%	60%	2%
Facebook and/or other social media sites (e.g. Twitter)	37%	61%	2%
Email marketing	35%	62%	3%
Blogging	35%	61%	3%
Direct mail	33%	61%	5%
Press releases	33%	58%	9%
Radio	33%	56%	11%
Magazine ads	31%	60%	8%
Traditional newspapers	28%	60%	12%
Internet yellow pages	18%	77%	5%
Print yellow pages	18%	71%	11%

Note: over the next 12 months; numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding

Source: Thrive Analytics, "Local Pulse Report: 2017 Key Highlights," Jan 31, 2017

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www.eMarketer.com

Sources: <sup>2</sup> U.S. Small Business Administration Office of Advocacy, *Frequently Asked Questions*, June 2016

<sup>3</sup> eMarketer, "Sales Outlook According to US SMBs, 2013-2017," January 2017

<sup>4</sup> eMarketer, "Expected Change in US SMB Media Spending, by Channel," January 2017

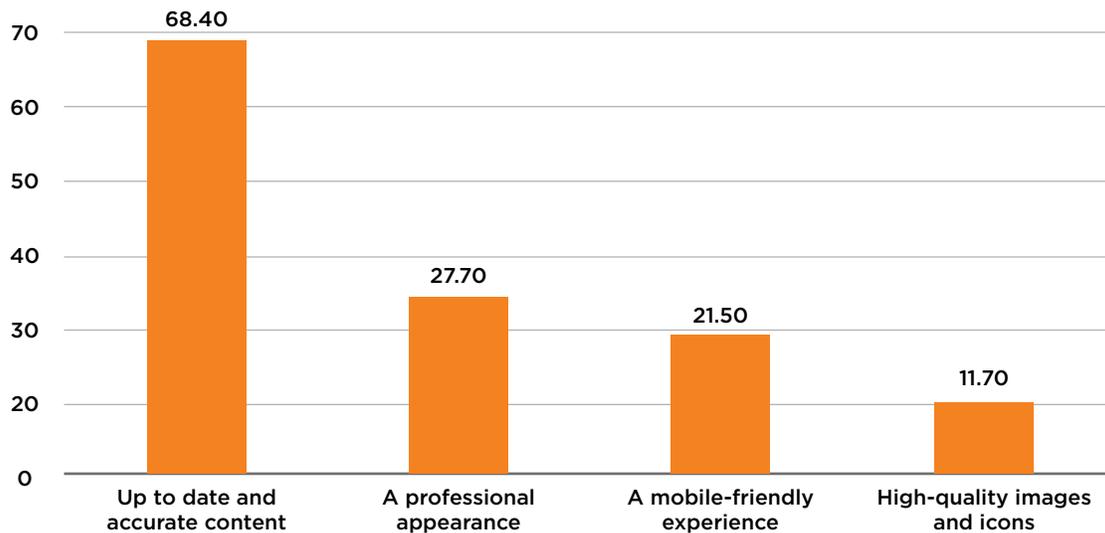
More money being spent on advertising can lead to more online searches, and that can lead to greater opportunities, if you deliver a good experience when customers find you on the web.

## The Importance of a Good Impression

There are now more than a billion websites in the world. By at least one estimate, about a quarter of them are active<sup>5</sup>, which still places your website among roughly 250 million others—if your business has a website. Overall, about 71% of businesses have websites, ranging from a high of 77% in the western U.S. to 58% in the Midwest. Among those businesses without a website, 92% plan to have one by the end of 2018.<sup>6</sup>

Whether you currently have a website or plan to launch one, consumers won't be grading it—or you—on a curve. More than half say they do not have lower expectations when visiting a small business website compared to that of a large chain. And what do they expect when they come to your website? Content, content, content.

### MOST IMPORTANT ATTRIBUTES FOR SMALL BUSINESS WEBSITES



Sources: Vistaprint Digital, "Small Business Consumer Expectations Report," April 2017

That expectation seems to align with business owners' priorities: 23% name publishing higher quality content as a top priority, followed by 20% focusing on mobile optimization and 19% aiming for a more user-friendly design.<sup>6</sup>

Sources: <sup>5</sup>[www.internetlivestats.com/total-number-of-websites](http://www.internetlivestats.com/total-number-of-websites), May 2, 2017

<sup>6</sup>[SmallBusiness.com](http://SmallBusiness.com), "What Percentage of Small Businesses Have Websites," March 2017

## Use Your Marketing to Promote Your Website

Once you have a ship-shape website, chock full of relevant—and regularly updated—content, accurate information and a mobile-friendly design, you're ready to make it front and center in your marketing strategy. Of course, your website is a marketing tactic itself (and one of the top tactics used by small businesses<sup>7</sup>), but your return on that investment comes from ensuring your other tactics give your website as much attention as your physical location. Make sure your TV and digital video commercials make it as easy to find you on the web as in person—consumers might not remember your physical address, but an easy to find website with directions to your store can solve that challenge. Use your website—and highlight specific pages—in your email and social media marketing. Don't make consumers guess where your product information, hours or testimonials are; show them.

Ultimately, your virtual presence can be as important as your physical presence, and if your advertising strategy gives both their due, you may be well on your way to success with your prospective customers.



**consumers who find local information in search results helpful are more likely to visit stores.<sup>8</sup>**

Sources: 7eMarketer, "Top 10 Marketing Tactics Used by US Small-Business Owners/Managers," January 2017

<sup>8</sup>Think with Google, "New Research Shows How Digital Connects Shoppers to Local Stores," October 2014

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