

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW

About Building Your Small
Business Website

by Toby Cryns



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YOU NEED THIS GUIDE

Hi, I'm Toby. I live in Minneapolis, MN where I do my best to bring joy to my wife, 3 kids, 5 cats, and a robot vacuum.



Above: My family (baby in the womb!)

I'm VP of Customer Joy at *The Mighty Mo! WordPress Design* - a company that helps small business owners make smarter technology investments.

For most of the web development agencies I've worked with, "smarter" means bigger, fancier, more agitated, and a sight to behold.

But to me, "**smarter**" means **simpler**, smaller, calmer, more effective.

I prefer quick, iterative releases to long, waterfall launches.

All that said... For my last decade+ in the web business, I've gotten more wrong than I've gotten right!

As you read my 9 recommendations below, **let me know** what you disagree with so I can improve this book for others!

Onward together!

THE SELF-DESTRUCTIVE PATTERN SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS FALL INTO

I see business owners repeating the same self-destructive pattern over and over again:

1. Customer needs a simple-run-of-the-mill website. I tell them as much.
2. Customer demands I build an infinitely-more-complex website - let's call it "X".
3. I build X.
4. They are unhappy with X.
5. They find someone else to build X, only better!
6. They are unhappy with the X that that company built.
7. Customer declares that the whole world is out to get them, so they promise a few Twinkies to their 12-year-old niece in exchange for her building them a new website. They are reasonably happy with the result.

Sound familiar?

This guide will help you break out of this destructive & expensive pattern.



THE MARKETING AGENCY DILEMMA

Every year, marketing & advertising agencies rake well-meaning small business owners over the coals.

The Agencies rake in millions of dollars selling things that are more complex and more costly than the businesses actually need.

You, the business owners of America, pay the price for a beautiful product that sells zilch.

“If only you do this additional thing, it’ll fix everything!” they declare.

So you pay even more and get the exact same result: more **red ink**.

“But they hold the keys!” you say.

“Who will I turn to for no-nonsense advice?” you ask.

The answer: Read on.





ABOUT THIS GUIDE

The 9 points outlined below come from my experience building websites that convert leads into sales.

A lot of my insights will be debated hotly by web design & web development professionals. As you listen to their feedback, just know that those people don't understand *business*.

Specifically, they don't understand that **profits are inversely-proportional** to the amount of time invested in your website design, build, features, etc.

The fact is: the **less time** you invest in your website, the **more money** your business will earn.

Because, as you know, **humans close deals** - not websites. (Your website sales strategy should be a [*landing page-centric*](#).)

By following my 9 simple rules below, you'll push more people through your sales funnel.

Let's get to it.



EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT BUILDING YOUR SMALL BUSINESS WEBSITE:

1. Define the *business objective*.

As you know, websites are flaky friends and cause more headaches than ice cream. Before investing thousands of dollars and months of your time in *anything*, answer this question: “Which specific metrics will I use to measure the success of this investment?”

2. Ignore design.

It doesn’t affect your business right now. Ignore everything that bugs you about your logo, web page layouts, colors, fonts, and images. A fresh, off-the-shelf template will have enough design to not lose you a sale (which is really all we can ask of a website at this point).

3. Go cheap.

You can build, design, & launch an entire site, including your custom domain in 30 minutes flat [using Google’s website service](#). If you absolutely must have something more than Google’s service, hire someone who can “quick launch” you on Wix.com, WordPress.com, or SquareSpace.com ([like this](#)).

4. Go fast.

Launch in a day. Seriously. No excuses. If you can’t get it done in a day, then it’s *your* fault (own it), and you need to simplify either your concept of what a website is *or* your process. (But know that you are not alone – we can help!).

5. Iterate quickly.

After launching your new site, you’ll get some feedback. Sleep on it a night, and then take the best bits and update content (copy, navigation menus, links) quickly. Say “no” to structural and

design changes (see “Ignore” items below).

6. **Don't do social media or blogging.**

Unless you like it and are *already* doing it. It'll be a waste of time and will kill your momentum if you don't enjoy it (and is probably a waste of time even if you *do* like it).

7. **Ignore SEO.**

It's not a reliable way to generate sales for you *right now*.

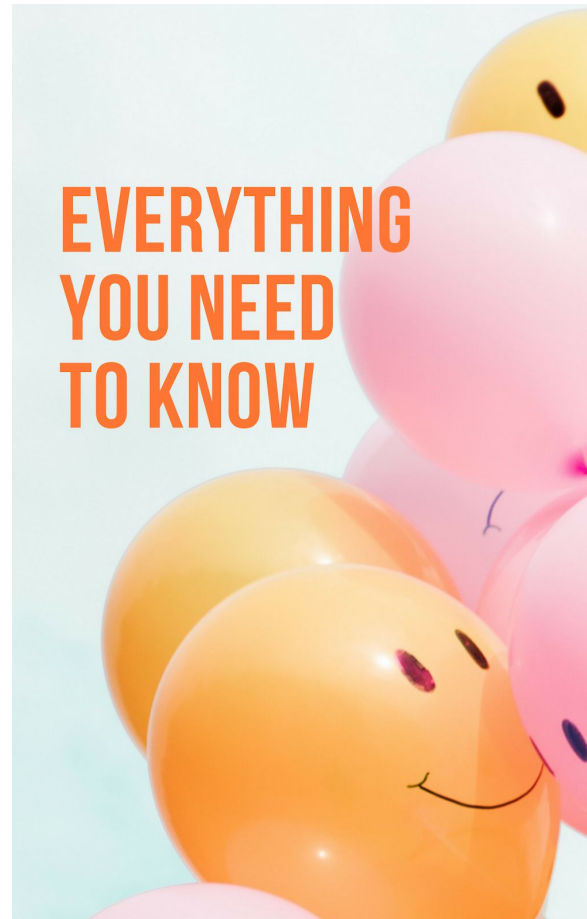
8. **Ignore your ego.**

Focus on KPIs, ROIs, goals, sales targets, etc. The trap that agencies set for you is they over-emphasize design, functionality, integrations, and other things that make you *feel* good while wasting precious resources when what you *really* need to focus on is *sales*. (And sales have very little to do with your website right now.)

NOTE: This is the hardest one for most people.

9. **Ignore the haters.**

Realize that as the owner of your business, **you have vastly-different concerns** than everyone else on your team. Are you clear on your goals? Great! Then ignore the design-related objections of your team. Ignore the eye-rolls from agency professionals & web developers. Ignore the design-related feedback you get from colleagues. They don't get what you are trying to achieve here. But the biggest hater you must ignore is *yourself*. Keep your eyes on the prize and get the job done!



NOW YOU KNOW! GO FORTH AND CONQUER!

There. So now we just saved you thousands of dollars of wasted cash, hundreds of hours of worthless work, about 1 million headaches, and some heartache.

Write the 9 headlines on an index card and take it with you to your next meeting with your marketing agency and web developer.

Ask them to prove me wrong.

Even if you decide to stick with them, you'll feel better about your investment knowing you got answers to the single question that marketing & ad agencies hate most of all: "How is what you are proposing going to lead to more dollars for *me*?"

Enjoy today!

Toby Eryns



ABOUT TOBY CRYNS

- **Blog:** tobycryns.com/blog
- **LinkedIn:** linkedin.com/in/tobycryns/
- **Bio:** tobycryns.com/about
- [The Mighty Mo! WordPress Design](#)

ADDITIONAL WP & BUSINESS RESOURCES

- [Free Beginner WordPress Course By Email](#)
- [WordPress Marketing Fundamentals](#)
- [How To Tidy Up Your Freelance Business](#)
- [Contact Toby](#) with a rebuttal, to converse about your digital questions, or to talk about the weather.

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Book cover & images created by Toby Cryns using [Canva.com](https://canva.com).

POST-SCRIPT FOR ALL Y'ALL HATERS OUT THERE

p.s. I have worked with scores of agencies and developers over the years.

They are doing the **best they can** and are mostly nice people.

But on the whole, **they don't think critically** about your *business* needs, because they **aren't curious** about business. They are designers who are curious about design!

Like all of us, they try to find the best way to promote *their* agendas.

Most creative & marketing agencies have an approach and an agenda that is steeped in condescension and assumptions about *design*, not your **business realities**. *They* are doing it wrong and *you* are paying the price.

By the way, while they'll never say this publicly, when I talk to my agency friends off the record – **they agree with me** on most points.

p.p.s. On Design:

Design matters greatly in the world. I've given lectures about the importance of design to grad students at the U of Minnesota. I generally agree with [Donald Norman's brilliant essay on the design of everyday things](#). **Good design is critically-important in our world**, but *it isn't important for your business right now*.

Published Sept. 27, 2018

Updated Sept. 28, 2018