MP FORGE

2025 Small Business Website Checklist

Your Complete Guide to Planning, Launching & Optimizing Your Website

Phase 1: Pre-Launch Planning (2-4 Weeks Before)Define Your Goals

- Identify primary website purpose (leads, sales, information, bookings)
- Define target audience and customer personas
- Set measurable goals (e.g., "10 contact form submissions per month")
- Determine budget and timeline
- List must-have features vs. nice-to-have features

Domain & Hosting

- Choose and register domain name (.com preferred for businesses)
- Verify domain ownership and DNS settings
- Select hosting provider (or confirm with developer)
- Set up business email (yourname@yourdomain.com)
- Purchase SSL certificate (or confirm included with hosting)

Content Preparation

- Write or outline content for each page
- Gather high-quality photos (products, team, location)
- Create or update logo and brand assets
- Collect customer testimonials and reviews
- Prepare business information (hours, address, phone, email)
- Write compelling calls-to-action (CTAs)
- Gather social media links

Legal & Compliance

- Draft Privacy Policy
- Draft Terms of Service (if applicable)
- Ensure ADA/WCAG accessibility compliance plan
- Cookie consent policy (if using analytics/tracking)
- Copyright notices and attribution

© 2025 MP Forge | Burlington, NJ
This checklist is provided free for small business owners planning their website launch.
Last Updated: November 2025. Written by Micah Pierce

MP FORGE

Phase 2: Design & Development (3-6 Weeks)Essential Pages

- Homepage with clear value proposition
- About Us page (your story, team, mission)
- Services/Products page(s)
- Contact page with form and map
- Privacy Policy page
- Terms of Service page (if needed)

Design Elements

- Mobile-responsive design (test on multiple devices)
- Consistent branding (colors, fonts, logo placement)
- Clear navigation menu
- Fast-loading images (optimized, compressed)
- Readable fonts and text sizes
- White space and visual hierarchy
- Professional photography or graphics

Functionality

- Contact form with email notifications
- Google Maps integration (if physical location)
- Social media links and icons
- Search functionality (if needed)
- Newsletter signup form
- Click-to-call phone numbers (mobile)
- Live chat widget (optional)

SEO Foundation

- Unique page titles (under 60 characters)
- Meta descriptions (under 155 characters)
- Header tags (H1, H2, H3) properly structured
- Alt text for all images
- Clean, descriptive URLs
- XML sitemap created
- Robots.txt file configured
- Google Analytics installed
- Google Search Console set up

© 2025 MP Forge | Burlington, NJ
This checklist is provided free for small business owners planning their website launch.
Last Updated: November 2025. Written by Micah Pierce

MP FORGE

Phase 3: Pre-Launch Testing (1 Week Before)Technical Testing

- Test on multiple browsers (Chrome, Firefox, Safari, Edge)
- Test on mobile devices (iOS and Android)
- Test on tablet devices
- Verify all links work (internal and external)
- Test contact form submissions
- Check page load speed (aim for under 3 seconds)
- Verify SSL certificate is active (https://)
- Test 404 error page

Content Review

- Proofread all text for typos and grammar
- Verify all phone numbers and email addresses
- Check business hours and address accuracy
- Confirm all images display correctly
- Review CTAs are clear and compelling
- Verify social media links work

SEO Check

- Confirm Google Analytics tracking code works
- Submit sitemap to Google Search Console
- Verify meta titles and descriptions on all pages
- Check image alt text
- Test site speed with Google PageSpeed Insights
- Verify mobile-friendliness with Google Mobile-Friendly Test

© 2025 MP Forge | Burlington, NJ
This checklist is provided free for small business owners planning their website launch.
Last Updated: November 2025. Written by Micah Pierce

MP FORGE

Phase 4: Launch DayGo Live

- Make final backup of old site (if replacing existing)
- Point domain to new hosting/site
- Verify DNS propagation (may take 24-48 hours)
- Test site is live and accessible
- Verify SSL certificate shows in browser
- Check all functionality one more time

Announcements

- Update Google Business Profile with new website
- Announce on social media channels
- Send email to customer list
- Update email signatures with new website
- Update business cards and marketing materials
- Submit to relevant business directories

Phase 5: Post-Launch Optimization (First 30 Days)Week 1: Monitor & Fix

- Check Google Analytics daily for traffic
- Monitor contact form submissions
- Fix any broken links or errors reported
- Respond to all inquiries within 24 hours
- Check site on different devices/browsers
- Monitor page load speeds

Week 2-4: SEO & Content

- Submit site to Google Search Console
- Request indexing for key pages
- Start blog (if planned) with first post
- Add fresh testimonials or reviews
- Create and share social media posts linking to site
- Set up Google Business Profile posts
- Monitor keyword rankings

© 2025 MP Forge | Burlington, NJ
This checklist is provided free for small business owners planning their website launch.
Last Updated: November 2025. Written by Micah Pierce

MP FORGE

Ongoing Maintenance

- Update content monthly (blog posts, news, offers)
- Review analytics monthly
- Back up site weekly
- Update plugins/software monthly
- Check for broken links monthly
- Refresh photos/testimonials quarterly
- Review and update SEO quarterly

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to TrackTraffic Metrics

- Total visitors per month
- New vs. returning visitors
- Traffic sources (organic, direct, social, referral)
- Most popular pages
- Average session duration
- Bounce rate (aim for under 60%)

Conversion Metrics

- Contact form submissions
- Phone calls (if tracked)
- Email signups
- Quote requests
- Sales/transactions (if e-commerce)
- Conversion rate (aim for 2-5%)

SEO Metrics

- Organic search traffic
- Keyword rankings
- Impressions in Google Search Console
- Click-through rate (CTR)
- Backlinks acquired
- Domain authority score

© 2025 MP Forge | Burlington, NJ
This checklist is provided free for small business owners planning their website launch.
Last Updated: November 2025. Written by Micah Pierce

MP FORGE

Pro Tips for Success

Content Tips

- Write for humans first, search engines second
- Use clear, benefit-focused headlines
- Include strong calls-to-action on every page
- Add customer testimonials and social proof
- Keep paragraphs short and scannable

Design Tips

- Prioritize mobile experience (60%+ of traffic)
- Use high-quality, professional images
- Maintain consistent branding throughout
- Make contact information easy to find
- Use white space effectively

SEO Tips

- Target local keywords (e.g., "plumber in Burlington NJ")
- Optimize Google Business Profile completely
- Get listed in local directories
- Encourage customer reviews
- Create valuable, original content regularly

Conversion Tips

- Make it easy to contact you (multiple options)
- Display trust signals (certifications, awards, reviews)
- Offer something valuable (free quote, consultation, guide)
- Reduce friction in forms (ask only essential info)
- Test different CTAs and layouts

© 2025 MP Forge | Burlington, NJ
This checklist is provided free for small business owners planning their website launch.
Last Updated: November 2025. Written by Micah Pierce

MP FORGE

Common Mistakes to Avoid

- Launching without mobile testing
- Using stock photos that look generic
- Hiding contact information
- Slow page load speeds
- No clear call-to-action
- Missing or poor-quality content
- Not setting up analytics
- Forgetting about SEO basics
- No SSL certificate (not secure)
- Ignoring accessibility

Need Help?

MP Forge specializes in small business websites that generate leads and drive growth.

- Visit: mpforge.com
- Email: micah@mpforge.com
- Location: Burlington, NJ
- Services: Web Design, Development, SEO & Digital Marketing

Free Consultation: Schedule a no-obligation consultation to discuss your website project.

© 2025 MP Forge | Burlington, NJ
This checklist is provided free for small business owners planning their website launch.
Last Updated: November 2025. Written by Micah Pierce

MP FORGE

Launch Day Checklist

Print this and check off on launch day:

- ☐ Site is live and accessible
- ☐ SSL certificate active (https://)
- ☐ All links work
- ☐ Contact form tested and working
- ☐ Mobile responsive verified
- ☐ Google Analytics tracking
- ☐ Announced on social media
- ☐ Google Business Profile updated
- ☐ Email sent to customer list
- ☐ Backup of site created

© 2025 MP Forge | Burlington, NJ
This checklist is provided free for small business owners planning their website launch.
Last Updated: November 2025. Written by Micah Pierce