

CATHY MELLETT



FIVE CRUCIAL THINGS TO DO TO SUCCEED ONLINE

CATHY MELLETT WALKS YOU THROUGH THE CRITICAL STEPS THAT WILL ENSURE YOUR BUSINESS IS SEEN, HEARD AND FOUND ONLINE.

One of the things I've witnessed, time and time again, is businesses spending large amounts of time and money to be seen and found online. In many cases, it is not having the impact and not working as well as they want.

I am a numbers person and have spent the past 13 years working with tradies, franchises and larger enterprises. Prior to founding Net Branding in 2009, I had spent

30 years in information services management and advisory. Early on, I recognised both the potential and pitfalls for businesses in regard to social media and websites. Here are five crucial things that businesses can do to be seen, be heard and be found online.

1. STICK TO A SOLID STRATEGY

It is so easy to get in 'to-do list mode' as a business owner,

especially when it comes to online marketing and digital presence. If you carry out a marketing activity without being able to pinpoint how it fits in with your other marketing endeavours, then you have a problem.

The fundamental is that all your online platforms need information: it is never 'set and hope'.

Digital marketing is a continual endeavour to share relevant information and optimise that information for consumption. In effect, you have to feed your website and other digital presences.

I suggest you perfect the basics such as email and Google search optimisation as a starting point, get the foundations right, and grow your strategy with you.

2. WATCH OUT FOR MYTHS

One of the things I see a lot of businesses do at various stages of their business journey, is rely on what I call 'hope marketing'. These are efforts with no predictable outcome. For example, free posts on Facebook, boosting posts and Facebook Lives without efforts to give them a longer life.

The same is often done with websites with the "Build it and they will come" philosophy.

I often hear clients say, "Someone said I need to do PDFs and downloads."

Yes, having an eBook or PDFs can build credibility, but if they are not being read they can be time wasters. At the very least, be sure to have a funnel in place to capture emails if you are giving away a digital product for free.

The same can be said for videos if people feel like they 'should' do videos but do not have a strategy around that. We want to increase visibility with websites and videos, but we need facts and figures to make sure that when it goes live it works.

Ask yourself, "What can I do with

my Facebook Lives to give them a longer life?"

3. OPTIMISE YOUR ASSETS.

If you are going to present something online, always spend the extra effort and consider optimisation. This may be as simple as optimising video content to appear in search results.

Optimisation can also take some fine-tuning, like when ensuring your images look great after compressing them to improve loading speeds. It is also a good idea to optimise your text content for searchers on Google.

All these small optimisations add up and ensure that your website can be found and be seen.

4. TRACK YOUR CONVERSIONS

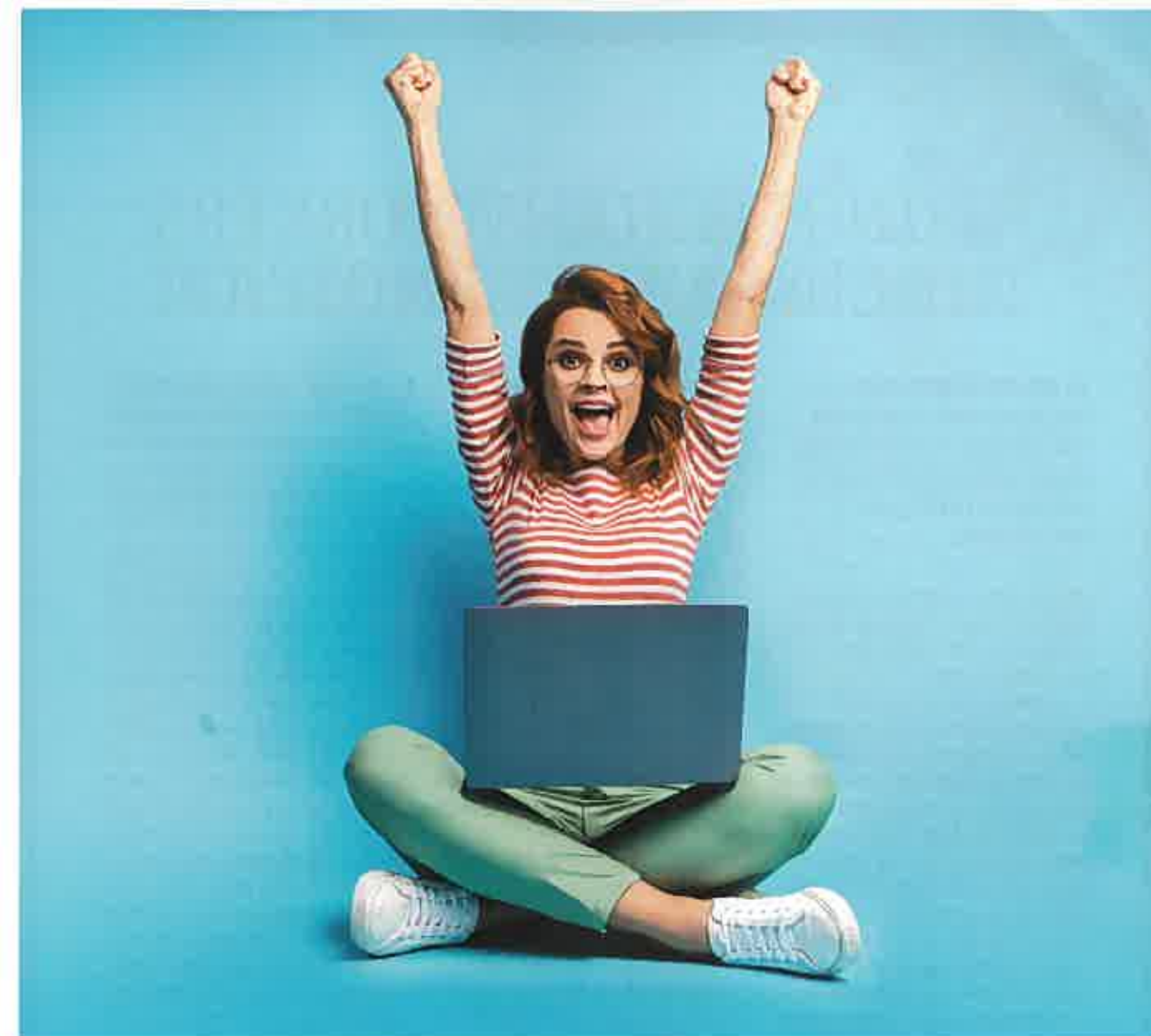
Control the assets that are logically part of your environment. Understanding the complete user journey may be done via a tag manager, or even phone tracking. At the end of the day, great analytics and conversion tracking enhances your ability to repeat your great online successes and reduce the effort on activities that fail to produce results.

5. LOOK OUT FOR SHINY PROMISES

There are so many things to consider when it comes to online presence. If you choose to partner with a company to handle your digital marketing, it is crucial to find someone that knows their stuff and is in it for you. Do your due diligence and make sure that the company that you align with is taking care of your brand.

When someone says, "I'm going to get you on the first page of Google," find out what does that mean? What strategy will they use? Which actions will they emphasise? How will this impact how your business is perceived?

Many people have been burned, lost five figures, and still not seen results. We still encounter businesses



"RANDOMLY JUMPING AT THINGS THAT LOOK LIKE THE NEXT GLITTERY BALL IS NOT GOING TO GET YOU THE END GOAL. IT NEEDS TO ALL BE PART OF THE STRATEGY."

that do not have ultimate control over their website and profiles, yet still spend thousands on these.

It is also important to realise that a website that is 'not working' does not always need to be re-developed. Revisiting the business intentions, identifying gaps and making changes can be effective with the right strategy in place.

With that said, it's good to be aware that changing your plan or

having no strategy can be distracting and devastating for a business. ■

For NZBusiness readers, Cathy is offering a Website and Digital Asset Analysis report to ensure your website can be seen, heard and found online. Just \$99+GST if you mention NZBusiness magazine when you book at: <https://netbranding.co.nz/product/website-analysis-report/>

BE SEEN, BE HEARD, AND BE FOUND

Here are some of the areas businesses need to work on to be seen, be heard and be found online:

- SEO titles and meta tag assessments.
- Search engine indexation.
- Rankings.
- Domain ownership review.
- Local check and assessment.
- Social media high level check.
- User experience evaluations.
- Broken links and images.
- Duplicate content.
- Mobile usability.
- Heavy pages and scripts.
- Website linking and restriction.

CATHY MELLETT IS DIRECTOR OF NET BRANDING, A KEYNOTE SPEAKER, DIGITAL MARKETING CONSULTANT, AUTHOR AND FOUNDER OF THE I'M ENOUGH CHARITABLE TRUST.