
Dont Give Up If You Want To Build A Web Business But Dont Know How To Code

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Ostriches can't fly. To add insult to injury, they're one of the largest bird species out there. They have to hobble around looking for something to do while their avian counterparts swoop into the air in boundless directions.

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If you can't code and aspire to start a web business, odds are you feel just like the ostrich. Despite spending years in school and hours at the workplace, you can't *create* your vision. You're left with two options: learn to code (a worthy investment of your time if you can afford it: [Codecademy](#)) or find a programmer (which warrants an article in and of itself). Given the frustration, many would-be entrepreneurs give up on their vision without giving it a real chance. A real pity.

Based on my own experience, this article provides some tips to help you flap those stubby little wings and turn them into airlifting power.

Simulate your vision through visual tools

[Recommended Tools: PowerPoint, Balsamiq, iMovie]

As an entrepreneur, your goal is to assemble the necessary resources (money, talent, etc.) to create your idea. Finding talent and money means selling your vision. The first knee jerk reaction is to write a business plan. Although useful, a business plan is not the best communication tool. It can be jargonny, dense, overly-complicated, and simply put, it doesn't *showcase* your idea (if writing anything go for a 2-3 page executive summary).

Instead, I recommend building a website mockup. Show each page's function and simulate how they behave by linking them to one another. PowerPoint is a great tool for this since you can link buttons to each slide easily. I recommend investing in a mockup tool (my personal favorite is Balsamiq), which is very user-friendly given its drag-drop functions. If done properly, your mockups can have the look and feel of a real website. Now friends, investors, or potential co-founders can see your vision instead of reading a long inanimate document. If you want to take this to the next step, make a video by "screen recording" your mockup (I use Snapz Pro) and adding some narrative and music using a basic movie editing software like iMovie.

Create a prototype using widget-based website creators

[Recommended Tools: Weebly/Wix/Wordpress, Google Analytics, Qualtrics, Visitor Analytics & SEO Tools]

Prototyping is all about validating individual portions of your concept. Use widget-based website creators to quickly and easily put together a prototype. Weebly, Wix, and Wordpress (just to name a few examples) can be very powerful when mixed with a



little creativity. Letting potential users interact with “something” will give you valuable data, which you can easily capture using data analytics. My favorite is Google Analytics because it’s free and easy to implement (it just got a great new upgrade too). If you can’t capture particular data, use surveys (Qualtrics is a fantastic tool which lets you capture 250 surveys for free) to prompt users. How do you get users? Put it up on your Facebook wall, blast through e-mail, offer a raffle or a perk (i.e. first to get access to your site once it’s built). Having data in your pocket will both educate you and provide compelling information when you’re trying to recruit others or raise funds.

Brand Your Vision

[Recommended tools: Crowdspring/99designs, Launchrock, FaceBook, Bleu7, twitter, Be found - Be connected]

We live in a world where the smallest startup can look and feel like the biggest companies out there. Make sure you snag a good domain site and create an attractive logo, which you can cheaply outsource to sites like 99designs or Crowdspring. Once you have some visuals and an identity, cover your bases: Create a landing page for your site (launchrock is a good tool for that), set up a Facebook page (claim your facebook.com/yourbrand), and start developing an audience through twitter. Family and friends will want to support you, and potential clients will be interested in learning about your company. Having an online presence gives you a stage where others can share in your journey. You’ll have a community of eager users ready to support you faster than you think.

Enjoy Your Launchpad

Your company is now live. You’ve established a presence and have powerful tools to sell your vision. If you want to hire talent, you now have something to point applicants to. If you need support, you can show family and friends what you aspire to build. If you hope to raise money, you can go on Kickstarter or Angellist with a bit more credibility (and hopefully a mockup video in hand).

Spread your wings my fellow ostriches (share other tips and tricks #ostrichesunite), because the sky’s the limit!

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