# Anatomy of a Website

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# Learn the Parts of a Website to Better Participate in Your Website Project

## Understanding Your Website

A website is made up of a combination of files, software, theme templates, content blocks, plugins, settings, and media like images and video stored in a database — and all of it fits together like the pieces of a puzzle to generate the final pages on your website.

Learning the different parts of a website, what they are used for, and how you can leverage them can be a daunting task. Trying to understand and use all the technical jargon and terminology to communicate effectively with designers and developers can also be over-whelming.

**That's we have this Anatomy Of A WordPress Website guide for you!**

In this guide, you'll learn about the different parts of a website, how they're used, and what to start thinking about when it comes to your own website. In the back, you'll also find a glossary of common website terms so you can learn the lingo a bit more and feel confident speaking with anyone about your site, its design, its features, or its functionality.

The hope is that the information, examples, and screenshots included clarify your vision for your site or give you new ideas — and the glossary helps you participate fully in the process of creating your new website.

# Responsive Web Design

## Beautiful Design On All Devices

Responsive websites are flexible and fluid, meaning the page layout automatically adjusts based on the size of the browser window or device.

Your audience, clients, and customers expect to be able to browse your website as easily on a mobile device as they can on a desktop or laptop computer — and they expect to be able to do it at portrait or landscape view, on any device without any degradation in experience!

Search engines want the same thing. Search engines reward sites with helpful, fast, easy to use, clear mobile experiences that deliver parity with the desktop experience by awarding those sites higher search rankings.

## Responsive Web Design Affects Design Decisions

Responsive web design is a responsible approach to building websites where a site is designed to respond to, resize, or adjust itself based on user behavior and the viewing environment (type of device, screen size, resolution, orientation).

Instead of creating a separate mobile site to work at one size, the entire website is designed and built using flexible, fluid layouts that adjust and resize at specific "break points" or sizes. Think iMac, MacBook, iPad, iPad Mini, and iPhone to just name a few.

What's important to understand is that this flexibility also means that it affects design decisions and even how content is formatted on the site. For example:

- There may be design elements or features that look awesome on a large screen, but don't work well on a small screen.

- In most cases, there can be no hard line breaks to force content to break to the next line at the exact spot you want because every screen will see something slightly different.

- Forcing specific design requirements may require A LOT of extra custom code to make it work across devices — if we run into that issue, we'll have an open, honest conversation about that feature, the options available, and the budget and/or timeline implications so you can make a decision you feel good about.

- When adding images and graphics to content on pages and blog posts, image sizes and alignment must be considered to avoid weird gaps and awkward white space. Word wrapping doesn't always play nice on small screens, which is why many newer websites go with large images that span the full width of the page content rather than small images aligned to the right of left.

**Bottom Line:** Because the website adapts and changes based on the size of the browser window or device, you can't control every little content formatting decision in a responsive website like you can a print marketing piece.

# Website Home Page

## The Virtual Front Door For Your Business

The overall goal of your website is to persuade visitors to act — book a call, buy a product, sign up for a program, register for an event, join a membership, or hire you for services.

The goal of your home page is to get visitors to click past the home page into your site and check out your others pages and your offers.

While visitors may enter your site for the first time through a blog post, podcast episode, or landing page, your home page is the true virtual front door of your brand. When someone visits your site using your main URL, it is the first page they will see and the first opportunity you have to make an impression.

Visitors need to be able to quickly figure out, in just a few seconds, if they are in the right place and your site is what they have been looking for.

**A Mini Snapshot Of Your Entire Website**

The home page provides a brief overview of your entire website on one page. Think of it as a one-page website that captures attention, teases your offers, and makes people want to know more.

With this approach, the home page design, from top to bottom, mirrors the website's navigation menu — the links at the top of every page. This way the home page provides a similar experience as clicking through the navigation one page at a time but is a highly condensed way.

This approach also makes site owners who will be writing their own website copy nervous because it puts a lot of pressure on you to write killer copy for your home page and that's hard! Luckily, there's a secret pros know that makes it much easier: **Write your home page copy last.**

When you have the copy for your website pages done, then work on your home page. This gives you the ability to leverage, tweak, and reuse the copy you've already written to tease those pages more effectively.

# How To Create An Effective Website Home Page

Here are a few website home page design tips to help you get started:

- **Keep It Simple And Clear**
  Don't try to tell your entire story and communicate everything you think someone needs to know in one never-ending home page. Keep your content simple, focused, and crystal clear, and invite visitors into your website to explore and learn more.

- **Use Simple Language And Familiar Words**
  Don't try to be too creative, clever, or cutesy. Clear win out over cute and clever every time. Focus on making sure a first-time visitor can understand what you do and how you can help them as quickly as possible.

- **Make It About Your Clients And Customers**
  Most people visiting your website are there for a reason. They have a problem to solve or a desire to fulfill and something caught their eye about your message, marketing, or offer. They are wrapped up in their needs and wants so make the home page all about them by answering the questions: Is this what I am looking for? Am I in the right place? What are my options?

- **Treat It Like The First Step**

Once someone reached your home page, the first step is to help them figure out if they are in the right place and have finally found what they have been looking for — not to shove a free offer in their face! It's too early for that!

- **Provide Multiple Paths Into Your Website**
  The goal is to welcome ideal buyers and provide convenient, easy, obvious, irresistible paths past your home page to your most valuable pages. Be sure to create clear paths (funnels) through the site to your conversion pages and tell them exactly where to go and what to do next with crystal clear calls to action.

- **Use A Lot Of Visuals**
  No one wants to read an essay online and photos capture attention faster than text, so use strategic visuals that reinforce your message to add interest to the page.

- **Prioritize Information**
  Everything on your Home page can't be big and bold and crammed at the top of the page, above the fold. If you tried that, nothing would stand out. Instead, once you have decided exactly what your home page must communicate, prioritize the information so you know what needs the most attention, and what needs the least.

- **Don't Think About The "Fold"**
  In the modern web, there is no "above the fold." That's an old term leftover from newspaper days and the early days of the web when people weren't used to scrolling. Today everyone scrolls. Instead, consider highlighting your most captivating, compelling message at the top of the page and giving it room to breathe.

# Navigation Menu

## A Navigation Menu Is A List Of Links

At the most basic level, a menu is nothing more than a collection or list of links. Menus can be displayed in a website's header, sidebar, content area, or footer. Menus are most commonly used to create and display the navigation menu — the links at the top of every page that help people move through your website.

Here are the important basics you need to know:

- Each link is called a menu item not a tab.

- Some menu top-level or primary menu items may have sub-menu items or second-tier menu items displayed in a drop-down menu.

- Occasionally, a menu item like "Get Started" can also be a call to action. In this case it may be displayed as a button so it stands out.

- Most often, a website menu is displayed in a horizontal line, across the top of the website, to the right of the logo. But that isn't your only option! Your logo can sit in the center of the page with the navigation split on each side or it could be displayed vertically down the left side of the page.

- Some websites have two menus stacked on top of each other — a primary navigation menu and a secondary navigation menu. The primary menu contains link to the most important pages and is the most prominent. The smaller, less noticeable secondary menu contains links for things like the shopping cart, help desk, contact details, search, and even small social media icons.

- For brands that want their navigation menu to remain visible at all times, the menu can be made "sticky" so it sticks to the top of the browser window when a visitor scrolls.

Your navigation menu will include links to the most important pages on your website — those that move visitors through the buyer's journey to a conversion. It will not include links to every page on your website.

- **When a page should go in your navigation menu:**
  If the page is a part of your main sales funnel and contains vital information to helping a visitor make a buying decision, it belongs in your navigation menu.

- **When a page should NOT go in your navigation menu:**
  If the page contains information about your brand or business, is used primarily for marketing, or content that may distract a visitor from taking action, it should stay out of your navigation menu and instead, be linked to elsewhere on the site, like in the website footer, at the bottom of the page.

# Hero or Header

## Hero Or Header

The Header Reinforces Your Brand

Like the website navigation menu, the header or hero area sits at the top of a web page — sometimes above the navigation menu and sometimes below the navigation menu. The main difference is that the header or hero may only be displayed on the home page or select pages rather than displayed across the top of all pages.

The purpose of a header or hero is to promote your brand and make your site instantly recognizable to those who are already familiar with you. For many businesses, this area is the perfect place to convey a bold statement about what you do, who you do it for, and why you're the best choice.

## Website Header Design Considerations

- **Branding A Person**
  If you're building a personal brand and you'll be the celebrity or spokesperson for the brand, consider including your logo, photo, name, and title. Using a photo will help visitors connect with you and feel like they know you — and smiling, friendly photos are more welcoming than a logo.

- **Branding A Business**
  If branding a business, consider only including your logo and tagline at the top of the page and using the hero area to make a bold statement that helps new visitors figure out if they're in the right place and extend an invitation to learn more.

- **Branding A Thing**

  If branding an event, product, program, or service, consider creating a logo for the offer and share the most important details at the top of the page. For a product, address the problem it solves. For an event, share the dates and what attendees with get.

It's also important to understand that not all websites have header or hero areas. It's a very popular design trend but not a requirement. Some brands don't want a massive hero area to take up value real estate at the top of the page and push the rest of the content out of sight. Plus, full-width headers with photos of people aren't always the best solution for mobile-first websites or responsive websites.

# Content Area

## The Primary Content Region On A Page

The content area is the main content region on a page. It can contain all different types of content, from text and images to video and audio. It is where the content and media you provide will be added and formatted.

**The Amount Of Content You Need**

While you don't need to write a novel or even an essay, you do need to consider that content is the main tool used by search engines to scan and index your site — and then determine what ranking your site deserves.

If you barely have any content on your pages — 400 words or less — search engines see your pages as nearly empty and not valuable to searchers and they won't display links to pages and sites they have deemed not valuable. With this in mind:

- It's better to NOT add a page to your website than it is to add it as a "coming soon" placeholder or to add it with only a small amount of copy.

- It's better to have fewer, longer, more robust pages than to have a lot of short pages. This also provides a better user experience because it requires fewer clicks to access your website content.

The more page content a web designer has to work with, the more they are able to do with the page design and content styling! So, if you want your website to use beautiful page layouts that vary from page to page, remember that you need content to fill those layouts.

## Website Content Tips

It is very difficult for people to read long, heavy, dense paragraphs of text online, especially when it's one paragraph after another. When writing your website content, consider:

- Writing content in short paragraphs of two to four sentences.

- Including headlines and subheadlines to break up the text.

- Using bullet and number lists instead of comma separated lists in paragraph form.

- Finding just the right images to reinforce your message.

- Getting your content done and good enough to get your site launched — then using real world feedback to refine it.

- Asking for help, input, advice, and feedback if you need it.

- Launching with just what you need to help visitors make a buying decision, then adding other supporting content later.

# Content Blocks and Patterns

## The Block Editing Experience

The modern website page building experience uses a block-based content editor. In the editor, you can add, combine, rearrange, modify, and delete a variety of content blocks to create new web pages and posts.

This editing experience provides the ability to build complex and interesting page layouts and display your content in paragraphs, in columns, and with images or without. Blocks allow you to easily add videos, image galleries, maps, quotes, calls to action, image grids, and other types of content to your website.

**Content blocks give you power over the layout and structure of the content on a web page.**

While most website templates and themes now support block-based editing, not all of them do it the same way or include the same blocks. Depending on the site requirements:

- Many sites require the default blocks to be customized or extended with additional design options and features.

- Some sites require the design and engineering of custom content blocks to support custom design and layout options of special third-party integrations.

When the final content is added to your website, it will be designed, formatted, and styled using a combination of blocks, patterns, layouts, and of course, your theme/template. Here's what each of those items refer to:

## Content Block:

A block is a piece of content contained in a single block that can be added or moved around a web page and combined with other blocks to create unique page layouts.

- Blocks are the smallest, individual content elements that can be added to the content editor to layout content and create pages on a website.

- Each item added to a page or post is a content block: a headline, subheadline, paragraph, bullet list, video, quote, menu, number list, image gallery, audio element, button, list of posts, and more.

- Blocks can be static (an image) or dynamic (a list of posts that changes). They can also be used in any order and any configuration to create unique designs.

## Block Patterns:

Block patterns are groups of blocks combined to create predefined content sections that serve specific purposes. Think of a pattern as a row of content on a page and everything within that section or row that creates the design.

- Examples are a testimonial section, call to action section, hero section, featured posts section, three columns section, form section, or team members section.

- Pre-built patterns provide the ability to add complex section layouts to pages and posts without adding each block one-by-one.

## Page Layouts:

Layouts are groups of patterns and/or blocks that have been combined to create and design an entire page or post. Once the content for a single page is added and styled on your

website, it is a layout. Depending on the theme or template used, layouts can be replicated across your site to quickly build pages without starting from scratch.

- A predefined page layout — like a home page layout, sales page layout, webinar registration page layout, or about page layout — gives you a beautifully designed and well-thought-out page template to start from so creating new, unique pages and posts is fast and easy.

- When full site editing is adopted, layouts will include the header, footer, and global or repeating block areas, like sidebars.

## Website Theme/Template:

Website themes and templates are strategic collections of layouts combined with structural design elements like the website header and footer to create the container and visual presentation for an entire website.

- Themes/templates simplify and accelerate the process of creating a new website by bundling blocks, patterns, and layouts that are needed for a website. Most web designers and developers use a commercial starter theme/template — or over time, have created their own — to ensure the sites they build meet strict quality standards.

- Themes/templates apply a unifying visual design style to all parts of a website, so it has a uniform, consistent design on every page and post.

# Website Sidebar

## The Reality Of A Sidebar

A website sidebar is a vertical column or vertical bar of supplemental content that is displayed alongside the main content region of a page.

- While the sidebar can be placed on the left or right side of the website, the standard is placing on the right to ensure the page content is the first thing a visitor engages with.

- More and more website owners are choosing to simplify their websites, reduce clutter, remove distractions, and get rid of sidebars completely. Eliminating the sidebar keeps a visitor's attention on the content, your message, and the call to action.

- Some sites use a hybrid approach, removing the sidebar from pages that are part of the main sales funnel and keeping it on pages and posts that are used for education and brand positioning.

Ultimately, whether a sidebar is used on your website or not will depend on your business goals, website objectives, and conversion strategy — which we'll map out together.

## Website Sidebar Strategy

If using a sidebar, we recommend looking at it as an opportunity to provide more value to your visitors and to help them move through your site and access your most important content faster and easier. Don't add lots of things just because you can. Instead, ensure each item has a purpose.

**Here's what to ask yourself before adding anything to a website sidebar:**

- Will this move visitors into my sales funnel?
- Will this guide visitors to a conversion or is it a distraction?
- Will this keep visitors on my website longer or send them away?
- Will this improve my website or clutter it up?

While the typical website has one standard or default sidebar that is the same on every page, you're not limited to one sidebar. You can have different sidebars that each contain different content and display them on different pages.

**For example:**

- An author website that a page dedicated to each book they have written may use a unique sidebar for each book page that includes reviews for the specific book and links to purchase the book.

- If you do public speaking and plan to include a speaking page on your website, consider using a unique sidebar that contains a menu of links to notable interviews, as seen on logos, or a list of past or upcoming speaking gigs.

## Sidebars And Social Media

Adding social media icons, badges, counters, widgets, and buttons to your website sidebar, is not always the best choice.

- For some blogs, websites, community-driven sites, media sites, and hobbyist sites, adding social media icons, buttons, badges, and widgets makes sense.

- For other websites, this is a terrible choice because every social media icon, widget, badge, counter, and button is a link taking people away from your website to a social media site and inviting them to forget about you.

**Remember:** Making sales and growing your email list are more important than sending people to your social profiles and pages.

# Website Footer

## The Footer Ends Your Web Pages

A website footer is the bar across the bottom of a website that includes, at minimum, the copyright information and links to the site's Privacy Policy and Disclaimer pages. The footer is typically the same across the entire website and displayed on all pages and posts.

**Depending on a site owner's business goals and website objectives, the website footer may also contain things like:**

- Brand logo

- Business contact information

- Log in links for customers, clients, members, attendees, or students.

- Links to the site's main pages.

- Links to second-tier pages and administrative pages.

- Social media page/profile icons with links

- List of recent podcast episodes or blog posts

- Short bio and photo

- Email marketing opt-in invitation

- Affiliate program information and access.

That list contains a lot of items, not because they all belong in your website footer, but because they are options available. Be careful when adding content to your footer — you don't want it to overpower your website content!

**Consider the principles of content hierarchy:** The website footer will contain important content, but it should have the lowest visual priority of the page.

# Blog/Podcast

## Let's Talk About Pages And Posts

Websites are built with a combination of pages and posts, or sometimes, just pages.

- Pages, like your About page, your Contact page, and your Home page, are static more permanent fixtures on your site that don't change very often. They are hier-archical and organized as child and parent pages.

- Posts, like blog posts, articles, and podcast episodes, are pieces of content listed in reverse chronological order on your site by publish date that also display an author bio and in some cases the ability to leave comments. They are organized using the taxonomies category and tag.

**The blog page on your website provides access to an archive of blog posts.**

- For custom content types like a recipe library, a custom post type can be created. This provides the ability to create a unique design for the content and custom tax-onomies like ingredients, meal type, and diet to organize the content.

## A Digital File Cabinet

All posts of a specific type — blog posts, podcast episodes, or recipes, for example — are grouped and organized within a content archive. That archive is a digital filing cabinet.

**Let me explain by using blog posts as an example:**

- The blog page on your website is a digital file cabinet that stores a variety of pieces of content — articles, reviews, videos, interviews, stories, opinions, how-tos, re-

sources, tips, tutorials, insights, case studies, and more — and makes them easily accessible by anyone who visits your website.

- The categories are like the large drawers of your digital file cabinet, each representing a large, overarching theme or topic that blog posts are assigned to or stored in.

- The tags of your blog are like the individual labeled file folders inside the drawers. Tags narrow down the larger overarching topics into smaller specific sub-topics. Just as one file folder can't go in two different file cabinet drawers, a tag should only be directly relevant to one category.

- The main blog page on your website displays the archive of all blog posts. Depending on your website strategy, archive pages can be "turned on" for each category and tag as well. Building out robust, keyword rich category archive pages can be a great SEO strategy for sites with a lot of niche content.

- For sites that have multiple authors writing and publishing blog posts, you can also enable author archive pages. The work just like the main blog page and the category and tag archives pages, adding a unique author page to your website that displays all the archive of posts written by that specific author.

Again, while the examples above focus on blog posts, this approach is the same for creating a podcast, a recipe library, a book review site, and other custom content types.

## Common Post Features

While web pages typically focus on a single content region, posts have many more design and content options to consider because they are geared toward content marketing, education and brand positioning, and engagement.

**Here's a list of common post features to consider:**

- **Featured Image:** A large, full-width image that sits at or near the top of the post and is displayed with the post title when shared across social media.

- **Author Byline:** The name of the author, typically displayed at the top of a post and if there are multiple authors on the site, linking to their author archive.

- **Publish Date:** The date the post was published or the most recent significant update date.

- **Author Bio:** A "box" at the end of the post that displays the author's photo and short bio.

- **Call To Action:** A compelling invitation to take the best next step. Typically, this is an email marketing list-building offer that invites visitors to opt-in for a free offer and subscribe to your email newsletter.

## Post Comments Yay Or Nay?

If adding a blog archive, podcast archive, or any other custom content type to your website, you'll need to decide whether to turn comments on and give visitors the ability to comment on your posts to turn them off and invite people to engage with you elsewhere.

In the past, blogs nearly always had comments turned on. This stemmed from its origination as online journaling software, where bloggers interacted with and engaged with their communities through their blog comments.

Today, however, far more brands are using content marketing to expand their reach and grow their sales. This means more businesses than ever are creating content and leveraging content like blogs and podcasts for branding and marketing — and comments aren't always appropriate.

Many businesses have shifted their approach and removed comments from their websites for a few very important reasons that you must consider too:

- **Very few people comment on business websites.**
  Very few website owners want to display the option to leave a comment and have post after post show no comments. Having no comments makes it look like no one is visiting your website or engaging with your content, even if that's not the case.

- **Bots constantly flood website comment systems with spam.**
  Website owners who leave comments enabled now have another website maintenance responsibility: managing and moderating comments to approve legitimate comments, respond to comments, and delete spam comments.

- **Comment sections often turn into free support/help channels.**
  When you allow anyone and everyone to leave a comment or ask a question, there is a good chance that a small number of people will use the opportunity to pick your brain and get free consulting and free technical support.

- **Social media has taken over.**
  Many brands are moving the conversation over to their social profiles, pages, and accounts to boost engagement and organic reach on those platforms.

For your business, if you'll be engaging in content marketing, you'll need to decide if you want to disable or enable comments.

# Email List Building Opt-In Offer

## More Than An Opt-In Box

The objective of an email marketing opt-in offer is to capture leads (email addresses of people interested in hearing from you) and grow an email marketing list of people who are interested in what you do, care about what you have to say, want to learn from you, and plan to someday hire you or buy from you.

When opt-ins first became popular, simply offering an email newsletter subscription worked great for conversions, because at that time, having an email newsletter was unique. Today, everyone has an email newsletter, and everyone is trying to get in your already crowded inbox.

This meant marketers had to get more creative about convincing someone to subscribe and share their email address. Website owners were forced to up the ante and, as a result, the ethical bribe was born and exploited.

## The Irresistible Free Offer

An ethical bribe, also called an irresistible free offer, is a high-value free gift you offer to website visitors in return for their name and email address.

The best free offers address a desire your ideal clients have, provide a solution to a problem or challenge, and are so valuable that giving it away for free becomes questionable — that's what makes them irresistible.

When creating an irresistible opt-in offer, some website owners lead with their newsletter and use their free offer as a bonus gift:

"Sign up for my FREE email newsletter with industry insights and valuable tips on XYZ, plus receive my brand new video training: "10 Ways to Achieve Big Results' as my gift to you."

Other website owners choose to lead with their free offer as the primary tool to build an email list, and offer their email newsletter as a secondary gift or bonus:

*"Sign up today and get instant access to our brand new free 3-part video series: "10 Ways to Achieve Big Results!' Plus receive our complimentary weekly email newsletter full of valuable tips and resources."*

## A Quick Heads Up:

If you actively market to or sell to clients or customers in the EU, or you provide list building offers to residents of the EU, your opt-in offers need to be GDPR compliant.

This means that you need to get explicit consent for BOTH the irresistible free offer AND your newsletter separately. You can do this by adding an unchecked checkbox to your opt-in form. This way a visitor can enter their email to opt-in to receive the free offer only, or also check the checkbox to also receive your email newsletter.

## A Website Opt-In Typically Includes:

- **An Attention-Getting Headline**
  Use exact-match keywords — keywords that match those most commonly used by those searching for the same topic your offer addresses.

- **A Description Of What They Will Receive**
  If they will also receive your email newsletter or ongoing email marketing, make sure you let them know upfront.

- **The Word "FREE"**

  Reinforce the fact that you're asking for no money and the tool you are sharing is free.

- **An Image Of What They Will Receive**

  Pictures make the offer more real and increase conversions.

- **Next Steps Instructions**

  Tell the visitor exactly what to do next. If they need to enter their email and click the button, tell them to do so. Leave nothing to chance.

- **An Opt-In Form**

  Use as few fields as possible and consider only using an email field.

- **A Call To Action Button**

  Make the call to action powerful.

- **A Privacy Statement**

  Promise they won't get spammed.

- **A checkbox for your email newsletter**

  Give them the option to also get your newsletter and provide specific consent.

A website opt-in is a great tool to help you build an email list full of leads that want to learn from you and hear from you on a regular basis — a list of people who may not be ready to hire you or buy from you right now but might be in the future.

**ANATOMY OF A WEBSITE**

# Common Terms Used When Speaking About a Website

## Learn The Lingo

As a WordPress website owner, understanding the terminology used when talking about the site is important — especially when communicating with your creative partner, designers, developers, and your team members who will be helping you with your website.

Knowing and using the correct website and WordPress terms will help ensure your directions and requests are clear and easy to understand, and it will help you communicate accurately and get things done faster.

While we have already covered many of the key terms you need to understand in this guide, there are a few more we recommend you learn!

## Website Terms And Definitions

- **ACCESSIBILITY:** The ability of a website to be used by people with disabilities, including visually impaired visitors using screen readers, hearing impaired visitors using no sound, color blind people, or those with other disabilities.

- **ADMIN BAR:** The admin bar is a bar that appears at the top of your browser screen just above the site content that includes links to key parts of your WordPress dashboard. It only appears when you are logged in to your site if you have the option enabled.

- **ALIGNMENT:** The positioning of the elements in your design. These elements can be aligned to both the page and to each other. For example, this paragraph of text is aligned to the left margin, whereas the lines depicted in the image below are aligned to the right.

- **ALTERNATIVE TEXT:** Alternative text, also called alt text, is the text in HTML code that describes images on web pages.

- **ANCHOR TEXT:** The text a link uses to refer to your site. This can make a big difference in your site's search engine results.

- **AVATAR:** A graphic image or photo that visually represents a user.

- **BACK-END:** The part of a website hidden from view of regular website visitors. The back end generally includes the information structure, applications, and the CMS controlling content on the site.

- **BACKLINK:** Links from other websites back to your own. Backlinks have a huge impact on your sites search rankings. Lots of backlinks from high-ranking sites can greatly improve your search engine results, especially if those links use keywords in their anchor text.

- **BACKUP:** A duplicate of your website. There are different types of backups, including incremental, differential, and full backups, each serving a different purpose. When backing up your WordPress site it's important to back up the database (settings and content) and all of the website files, including theme files, photos, plugins, and more.

- **BLOCK:** A container filled with a specific type of content, typically displayed as a "row" of content on a page or post. Blocks can be used for content, lists, images, video, audio, galleries, columns, and more.

- **BOUNCE RATE:** The percentage of people who leave the site from the same page they entered the site, without clicking through to any other pages. This can be a good indicator of how good a website's navigation is, as well as an indicator of the quality of the site's content (a very high bounce rate doesn't bode well for either of those things).

- **BREADCRUMBS:** Breadcrumbs are the bit of navigation elements that generally appear near the top of a give web page that show you the pages and subpages the appear before the page you're on. For examples, on a blog, the breadcrumbs might look something like: Home > Category > Year > Month > Post (or they might be a lot simpler that that). The breadcrumbs term comes from the fairy tale "Hansel and Gretel."

- **BROWSER:** The software used to view web pages — Chrome, Safari, Firefox, Internet Explorer, Safari for iOS, and Chrome for Android. Since each is different, websites, pages, fonts, and colors can vary in appearance depending on the browser.

- **CACHE:** Cached files are those that are saved or copied (downloaded) by a web browser so that the next time that user visits the site, the page loads faster.

- **CLICK-THROUGH RATE**: The ratio of impressions to clicks on your URLs.

- **COMMENTS**: A blog feature that allows readers to respond and share thoughts, feedback, and comments about posts. You can control various settings and filters for comments on your site, as well as choose whether you want to moderate your comments (approve them before they are published publicly).

- **COMPRESSION:** Reducing a file size by eliminating excess data. Particularly helpful when emailing or saving large image files.

- **CONFIRMATION PAGE:** Only needed if you use a double opt-in form. The confirmation page thanks visitors for giving you their name and email but lets them know that to complete the sign up, they must check their email and click a link to verify their email address and confirm they want to sign up.

- **CONTENT EDITOR:** The area where you create and work with page content and/or post content, including text, images, graphics, video, and audio.

- **CONTENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM:** A backend tool for managing a site's content that separates said content from the design and functionality of the site. Using a CMS generally makes it easier to change the design or function of a site independent of the site's content. It also (usually) makes it easier for content to be added to the site for people who aren't designers.

- **CONVERSION RATE:** The ratio of visits to conversions. The conversion rate refers to the number of visitors who take a specific action on a page.

- **CSS:** Code that is used to designate the look and feel of a website, separate from the actual content of a web page. A CSS framework is a collection of CSS files used as the starting point to make XHTML and CSS web sites quickly and painlessly. They usually contain CSS styles for typography and layout.

- **CUSTOM POST TYPE:** A custom post type is a type of post that is different from a regular page or post within WordPress. A custom post type is typically used when the content for a specific type of post requires a different design or format, or a different way to work with the content.

- **DASHBOARD:** In WordPress, the Dashboard is the main admin screen for the site you see when you login. It is the central location of the WordPress admin area where you can access all areas of your WordPress site.

- **DATABASE:** A series of tables where the content and settings for your website are stored.

- **DNS:** Stands for Domain Name Service (alternately Domain Name System or Domain Name Server). Basically, it's the thing that converts IP addresses into domain names. DNS servers are provided with the IP address of your web server when you assign your domain name to those servers. In turn, when someone types your domain name into their web browser, those DNS servers translate the domain name to the IP address and point the browser to the correct web server.

- **DOMAIN:** the name by which a website is identified. The domain is associated with an IP address. Domains can be purchased with any combination of letters, hyphens (-), and numbers (though it can't start with a hyphen). Depending on the extension (.com, .net, .org, etc.), a domain can be anywhere up to 26 to 63 characters long.

- **DOMAIN REGISTRAR:** This is the company where you purchased your domain name. This may or may not be the same company as your website host.

- **ECOMMERCE:** Short for electronic commerce. It's the buying and selling of goods online, through websites. Products sold through e-commerce can be physical products that require shipping, or digital products delivered electronically.

- **FAVICON:** Tiny, customizable icons displayed in the web address bar in most browsers next to the web address. They're either 8-bit or 24-bit in color depth and are saved in either .ico, .gif or .png file formats.

- **FRONT-END:** The opposite of the back-end — the components of a website that a visitor to the site can see (pages, images, content, etc.) Specifically, the interface that visitors use to access the site's content, also sometimes referred to as the User Interface.

- **FTP:** Short for "File Transfer Protocol." FTP allows you to send files (HTML documents, graphic images, spreadsheets, etc.) from one computer to another via the Internet. A user ID and password are needed to use FTP, unless Anonymous FTP is allowed. Some hosts require secure FTP.

- **GRADIENT:** A design technique where one color fades into another color.

- **GRAVATAR:** A globally recognized avatar or graphic image or photo tied to your email address. Gravatars show up automatically on websites and blogs when you leave a comment with your email address and often in the author bio box after a blog post.

- **HEX CODE:** A code used in HTML and CSS to designate a specific color, often appearing after the pound sign (#). Hexadecimal numbers are used to determine (and standardize) colors on the web. For example, the hexadecimal equivalent for the color white is #FFFFFF, while black is #000000

- **HTML:** Hyper Text Markup Language (HTML) is the code that provides the structure for your website. It is the language that all websites used to display pages in a browser.

- **HTTP:** Acronym that stands for Hyper Text Transfer Protocol. HTTP is a set of rules for transferring hypertext requests between a web browser and a web server.

- **HTTPS:** Acronym that stands for Hyper Text Transfer Protocol over SSL (Secure Socket Layer) or Hyper Text Transfer Protocol Secure. Like HTTP, it's a set of rules for transferring hypertext requests between browsers and servers, but this time it's done over a secure, encrypted connection.

- **HYPERLINK:** A link from one web page to another, either within the same website or from one website to another website, that are underlined or highlighted. The inclusion of hyperlinks are the "hyper" part of "hypertext."

- **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI):** A measurable value that indicates how well an activity — like marketing and advertising efforts — is achieving a goal.

- **LANDING PAGE:** A page where a visitor first lands on or enters a website. Landing pages are often used to drive a very specific action or conversion, usually in connection with an advertising or marketing campaign).

- **LAZY LOADING:** A way of deferring the loading of an object until it's needed. This method is often used to improve page speed.

- **MEDIA LIBRARY:** Where media (images, audios, videos, PDFs, documents, etc.) is stored in WordPress. Whenever a new file is added to a page or post, it is also added to the media library. The media library allows you to access all media previously uploaded to your website, to create galleries, to reuse images and files, and even edit existing images.

- **MENU:** A menu is a list of links to help a website visitor navigate through a website. Typically, the primary navigation menu of a website is displayed next to the logo at the top of the website in a row. Menus can also be displayed in a website sidebar and footer.

- **METADATA:** The data contained in the header that offers information about the web page that a visitor is currently on. The information contained in the meta data isn't viewable on the web page (except in the source code). Meta data is contained within meta tags, which are HTML tags that are used to include meta data within the header of a web page.

- **META DESCRIPTIONS:** HTML elements that describe the contents of the page that they're on. Google sometimes uses these as the description line in search result snippets.

- **MOUSEOVER/HOVER:** Mouseover refers to any kind of action that occurs when a user places their cursor (that arrow you move around your screen) over a button, but before anything is clicked. The actions can be anything from a simple change in color to an intricate animation.

- **NAVIGATION:** The system that allows visitors to a website to move around that site. Navigation is most often thought of in terms of menus, but links within pages, breadcrumbs, related links, pagination, and any other links that allow a visitor to move from one page to another are included in navigation.

- **ORGANIC:** Earned placement in search results as opposed to paid advertisements.

- **PAGE:** Used to present general, static information and traditional-style website content. Common pages include Services, Products, Programs, Portfolio, Speaking, Media, About, Testimonials, Contact, etc.

- **PAGE SPEED:** The speed at which a page loads. Page speed includes number of equally important factors, including first contentful/meaningful paint and time to interactive.

- **PAGEVIEW:** A pageview is a request for an entire web page document from a server by a visitor's browser. In other words, for each page view your site had, someone (or a search engine spider) looked at that page.

- **PERMALINK:** A permanent URL for a page, post, or piece of content. Pretty perma-links — site.com/this-is-a-pretty-permalink instead of site.com/?p-7345 — are pre-ferred for better search engine optimization (SEO) because they are easier for people to read and use, and they provide a better SEO benefit as well.

- **PHP:** The dynamic code language used in WordPress that provides flexibility for many different types of functions.

- **PIXEL:** The smallest element of an image on a computer.

- **PLUGIN:** Third party code used in conjunction with a CMS or blogging platform to extend the functionality of a website without having to redo the core code.

- **POST:** A content type with specific publish dates, attributed to a specific author that is organized within an archive by categories and tags or other custom tax-onomies.

- **POST STATUS:** Post status refers to the status of a blog post as set in the Write Post panel for a post. Status settings include Published (everyone can see it), Draft (incomplete post, not visible to the public), or Private (visible only to users with administrator access.

- **REALLY SIMPLE SYNDICATION (RSS):** A standardized XML format that allows content to be syndicated from one site to another and visitors to receive updates via a feed reader.

- **REDIRECTION:** When a URL is moved from one location to another. Most often, redirection is permanent (301 redirect).

- **RESOLUTION:** The physical number of pixels displayed on a screen (such as 1280x1024). When discussing imagery, resolution refers to the number of pixels or dots per inch on a computer screen within an image. When discussing display resolution (the resolution of a monitor or display), it refers to the physical number of pixels displayed on a screen.

- **ROBOTS.TXT:** A file that suggests which parts and pages of your site search engines should and should not crawl.

- **SCHEMA.ORG:** Code that "wraps around" elements of your web page to provide additional information to search engines. Data using schema.org is referred to as "structured" as opposed to "unstructured" — in other words, organized rather than unorganized.

- **SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION (SEO):** Search engine optimization is the collection of actions to get a website found and indexed by search engines. It is the process of affecting the visibility of a website or a web page in a search engine's organic (un-paid) search results, as well as creating opportunities to gain natural, free, and organic traffic to a site.

- **SITE ICON:** A 512x512 pixel icon that is resized and reused for items like the small image on a website browser tab (favicon) and the icon for your site in smartphones.

- **SITEMAP:** A file or page on your website that contains a list of URLs on your site that crawlers can use to discover and index your content.

- **SSL CERTIFICATE:** A "Secure Sockets Layer" is used to encrypt data passed between the web server and browser of the searcher.

- **STYLESHEET:** The CSS file, also called a stylesheet, is where the design and structure of your site come together. In every template file, there are HTML elements wrapped around your template tags and content. The CSS file, or stylesheet for your theme contains the code that controls the design and layout of each HTML element — it sets instructions for how they are displayed. Without these instructions, your page would simply look like a long-typed page of text.

- **TEMPLATE:** A template is a file used to create a consistent design across a website. Templates are often used in conjunction with a CMS and contain both structural information about how a site should be set up, but also stylistic information about how the site should look.

- **THANK YOU PAGE:** The destination page a visitor is taken to after completing a conversion action on your website. For example, after filling out your Contact page contact form, after opting-in for your email newsletter or free offer, or after filling out a free strategy session web form. The Thank You page is where you deliver on the action taken by the visitor and set expectations for what happens next.

- **THEME:** A WordPress theme is a collection of files and templates that work together to produce the structure of a website. A theme modifies the look and feel of the site, but not the core WordPress code. If WordPress is the wood framing of a house, a theme is the exterior siding, roof, and paint.

- **TITLE TAG:** An HTML element that specifies the title of a web page.

- **URL:** Stands for Uniform Resource Locator. A site's URL is its address, the item that specifies where on the Internet it can the found.

- **USABILITY:** How easy it is for a visitor to use your site in its intended manner. The practice of making navigation, content, forms, images, and any interactive elements easy to use and functioning the way they were intended.

- **VISUAL HIERARCHY**: A design principle that visually orders and emphasizes different parts of your content's message by using colors, sizes, and layouts.

- **WEB PAGE:** A single document, generally written in HTML/XHTML, meant to be viewed in a web browser. Web pages also include other coding and programming languages.

- **WEB STANDARDS:** Specifications recommended by the World Wide Web Consortium for standardizing website design and making it easier for designers and those who create web browsers to make sites that will appear consistent across platforms.

- **WEBSITE HOST:** This is the company that provides the space where your website and all associated files, software, and applications are stored online. When you purchase website hosting, you are purchasing a small space on the internet.