

# THE COMPETITION CRUSHER

By David Jenyns

melbourne**SEO**services.com

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## We Have a Problem...

We're way past the point where you can successfully argue that your business doesn't need a website. Even if the primary thrust of your business is offline, you simply must have an online presence. I could write a dozen pages providing you with dozens of reasons, but here are the main two:



1. **Customers expect you to have a website.** If one of your clients wants to know your opening times, or wants to find your phone number, they're now more likely to search for your website on their laptop (or their smartphone) than they are to look you up in the Yellow Pages.
2. **People are searching for local services online.** Search for a specific type of business on Google Maps, and you'll find a dozen suppliers within your locality. If your customers can't find you online, then they'll go to your more visible competitor.

But you already know this. You wouldn't be reading this report if you didn't already understand that whatever market your business is serving, you need to have an Internet marketing strategy that involves more than just a one-page website.

And this is the problem that you share with every single one of your competitors. Internet marketing is not a one-time task; it's an ongoing endeavour that can easily turn into a full-time job. Spend twenty minutes researching the subject and you'll quickly be overwhelmed with the prospect of trying to tackle autoresponders, blogs, link building, podcasting, Pay-Per-Click, RSS, search engine optimisation, social media, video marketing, webinars, and an ever-growing array of new marketing technologies.

Little wonder that many business owners simply give up, insisting that their business is the exception to the rule and that they don't need to be involved with the online world. I understand this way of thinking, but I genuinely believe that these businesses, in the long-term, are doomed to failure.

Running away from a problem is not an answer; as with most things in life, when things get tough you just need to have the sense to seek advice from someone with experience.

This is the good news that you've been waiting for. I know that internet marketing can be a daunting prospect, but I also know that it isn't necessary to become an expert to be able to start using and benefiting from it. I can show you on which areas you need to focus, and in each case, just a few simple changes or additions will be enough to keep you abreast with your competitors... or in many cases, light-years ahead!

This report contains a 7-step system that I've personally used to grow my own business and establish a solid online presence. Each section is just 2-3 pages in length and at the end I've provided you with a clear set of steps to follow. You can work your way through them at your own pace but, for example, if you aim to complete just one per week, in less than two months your business will have the online presence that it deserves.

Turn the page to get started, and if you have any questions along the way, please don't hesitate to contact me.

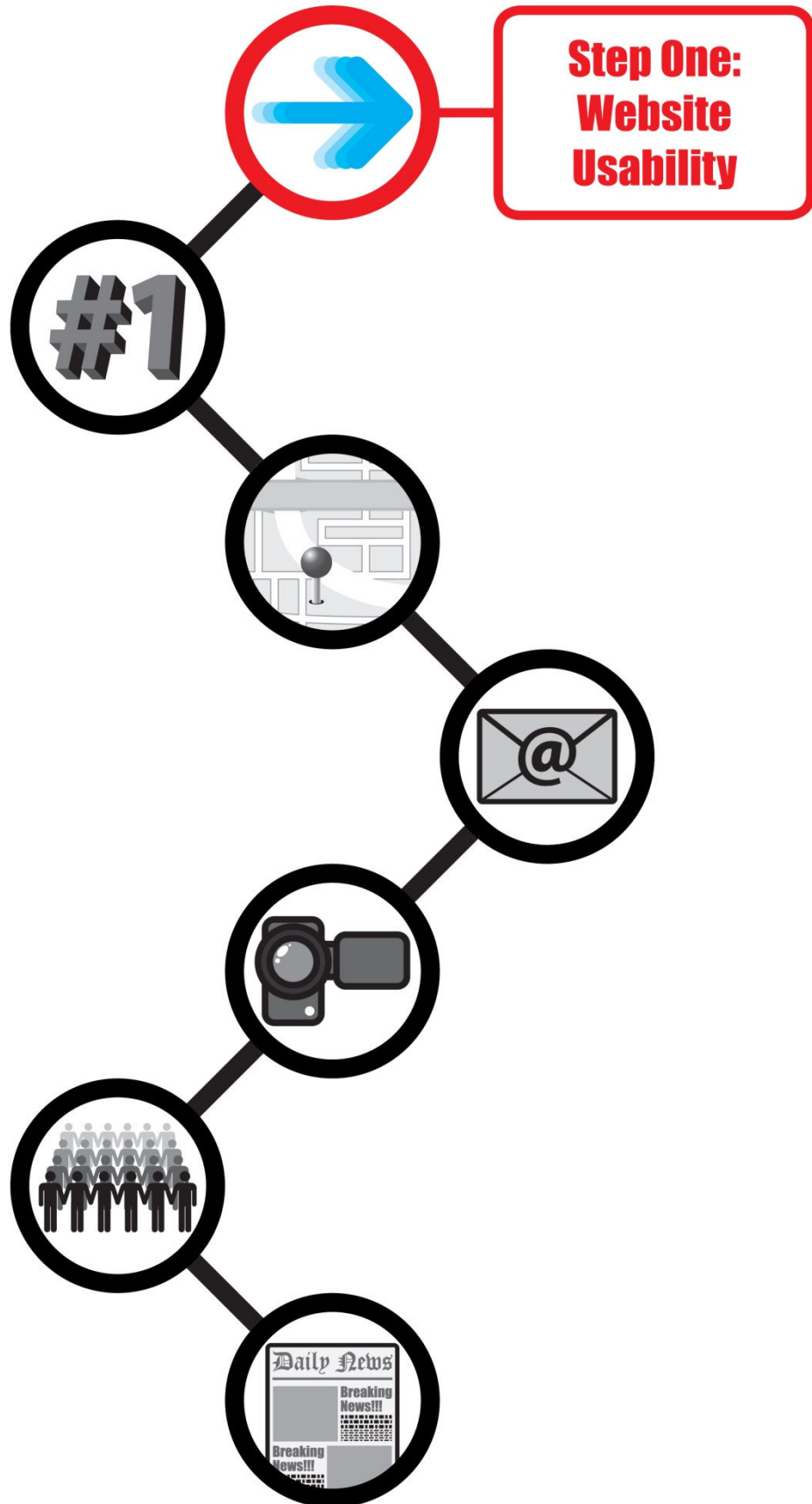


David Jenyns  
Director of Melbourne SEO Services

Melbourne SEO Services  
(03) 8060-5131

Support: [www.davesupports.com](http://www.davesupports.com)





## Step 1: Website Usability

If I asked 100 website owners for the one thing they need more of, over 90% would say “traffic”. This sounds like a smart answer, but it actually reveals one of the most basic misconceptions about online business. What you’re about to read is the most important lesson you’ll learn from this chapter and it forms the foundation of everything that follows. Are you ready?



***The purpose of a commercial website is to make money.***

My apologies if that sounds obvious and condescending, but please take a moment or two to really think about what that means. Most business owners know that the above is true, but they don’t act as if they really understand it. Instead, their actions indicate a belief that the purpose of having a website is to obtain as many visitors as possible, or worse, simply to be able to say that they have a website.

You could have the prettiest, most technologically advanced website in the world, and a million visitors a day, but if none of that translates into sales, then really, what’s the point?

Yes, getting more traffic might result in more clients, but it’s usually far easier, and much faster, to increase the percentage of your existing traffic that turns into paying customers. For example, if you’re receiving 300 visitors a month and 2% of those turn into customers, you might only need to spend less than an hour making a few small tweaks to your website to turn that into 4%. To achieve the same success through increasing traffic, you’d need to double your traffic, an exercise that would likely cost you a great deal more time and effort.

Over the next couple of pages I’m going to reveal the most important aspects of your website that you should adjust or improve to increase the conversion rate of your website.

### **What do you want your visitors to do?**

If you answered that question with “spend money”, then you’re absolutely spot on; you’re definitely thinking along the right lines.

But I want you to go back a step and figure out the first step that your visitors must take to start along the path towards becoming a customer. It might be reading your sales page, watching your videos, putting their email address in your autoresponder form or something else. Before you change anything on your

site, you must be absolutely clear on what you want your visitors to do when they arrive.

In the case of my site, [www.melbourneseoservices.com](http://www.melbourneseoservices.com), it should be pretty clear that I want visitors to do one or more of the following:

- Watch the introductory video.
- Download the free SEO report.
- Call me to get a quote.

All three options are clearly visible on the homepage, above the fold (viewable without having to scroll down the page) and aren't obscured with a lot of unnecessary text and images.

Go, right now, and visit your own homepage. Imagine that you're a first-time visitor and make an honest assessment of what you see. Are you quickly and easily drawn to taking the desired action that is the primary purpose of your site?

The easiest way to improve the success rate of whatever it is that you want your visitors to do is to simplify your design. If an element of your homepage is superfluous to the primary goal then remove it, reduce the size of it or place it below the fold.

The idea is to reduce the number of options available to the visitor, almost to the point where the only thing left to do is take the desired step that places them on the path to becoming a customer.



"I'm lazy, don't make me think."

## Usability is key

Long gone are the days when you could get away with a slow, clunky website. If there is anything - and I mean anything - about your content or the way in which it is formatted that makes it awkward to read, your visitors won't struggle on... they'll just hit the "back" button and check out your competitors. When it comes to keeping visitors on your site, usability and readability are crucial.

If you're lucky you might be able to get away with tweaking your existing template, but if you think it's worth completely redesigning your front end, then hire someone who knows what they're doing and don't scrimp on the cost; this is one area where you get what you pay for. Find a Web designer who is capable of creating a simple, clean, uncluttered layout.

Once you have a Web design that you're happy with, then it's time to take a really good look at the text on your pages. Great copywriting is essential - and we'll cover that in a moment - but it's just as important to ensure that the text itself is easy to read. It's no good having scintillating copy if the act of reading it is a chore. I could write a whole chapter on this subject, but suffice to say that a large proportion of your visitors will skim your text rather than read it word by word. To enable them to do this comfortably, without missing anything crucial, keep the reading area narrow, use short paragraphs, and include plenty of subheadings.

For similar reasons you should try and have just one goal for each page, whether it be to teach one main point or to reveal one important benefit about your product. It's better to have lots of webpages than to try and cram too many different elements onto one page (it's also better for search engine optimisation). Try breaking up individual webpages and spreading the content over two pages, or more if necessary.

None of the above comes with any specific formula so if you're concerned that you don't really have a feel for this, then again I'd encourage you to hire a Web designer who has good credentials in this area. If you want to be 100% sure that your adjustments are having the desired effect then you can always split-test your changes and see which style converts better.



Some split-tests are easier to predict than others.

## Direct your traffic

Good sales copy writing is an art that is well worth taking the time to learn. It will improve your ability to sell, not just on your website, but in the offline aspects of your business as well. There are some suggested resources at the end of this chapter, but let's start with a few areas on which you can begin working right away.

Let's start from the very beginning (a very good place to start): The headline. The large, bold text at the top of every page is perhaps the most crucial aspect of your copy, so take some time to get this right. The best headline is the one that convinces the visitor to keep reading and move on to the main body of text.

Compared to tweaking a headline, improving a whole page of sales copy can be a daunting prospect; but improving your style in this area is

much easier than you might think. Simply remember that, if given the choice, people prefer to buy from people rather than from faceless corporations. When writing your copy, imagine you're writing an email to a single, potential customer. Be polite, be professional, but make sure that your style is relaxed and friendly. Your natural warmth and humour should shine through. The easiest way to accomplish this is to tell stories about yourself or your business; a good anecdote is fun to read, memorable, and adds a human touch to your site. Even if you don't fancy yourself as a copywriter, you can massively improve your results with this approach.

There are plenty of other copywriting rules, but the following are the two that I consider to be the most crucial:

**Benefits, Not Features:** You might have heard it expressed as "sell the sizzle, not the steak". Essentially this is about telling the customer what your product or service will do for them, personally. People won't care that your energy drink is high in glucose, but they will care that your product can give them the energy that will enable them to beat their opponent on the tennis court.

**Call to Action:** No matter how obvious it might seem to you, once you get to the end of your page make sure you spell out what you want your visitor to do next. It might be to complete a contact form, pick up the phone, or simply click through to the next page; whatever it is, make sure your visitors are always clear on the next step.

Last but not least, although there is generally less anxiety than in the past about purchasing online, you should still go out of your way to reassure your visitors that you are a legitimate and trustworthy business. Testimonials, guarantees, and trust seals are all good ways to instil confidence and are a fast way to add a measureable difference to your conversion rate.

## Action Steps

Hopefully at this point you already have in mind 2-3 things that you can tweak to improve the effectiveness of your website. To help you decide where to start, each chapter in this report concludes with a brief checklist of items which represent the areas that I believe will get you the best results in the shortest space of time.

## Three things you can do now:

1. Update the headlines on your pages so that they grab your visitors' attention and compel them to read further.
2. Email your best clients and politely request a testimonial that you can add to your website.
3. Edit the last paragraph on your main pages so that they include a "call to action".

## Three things you can outsource:

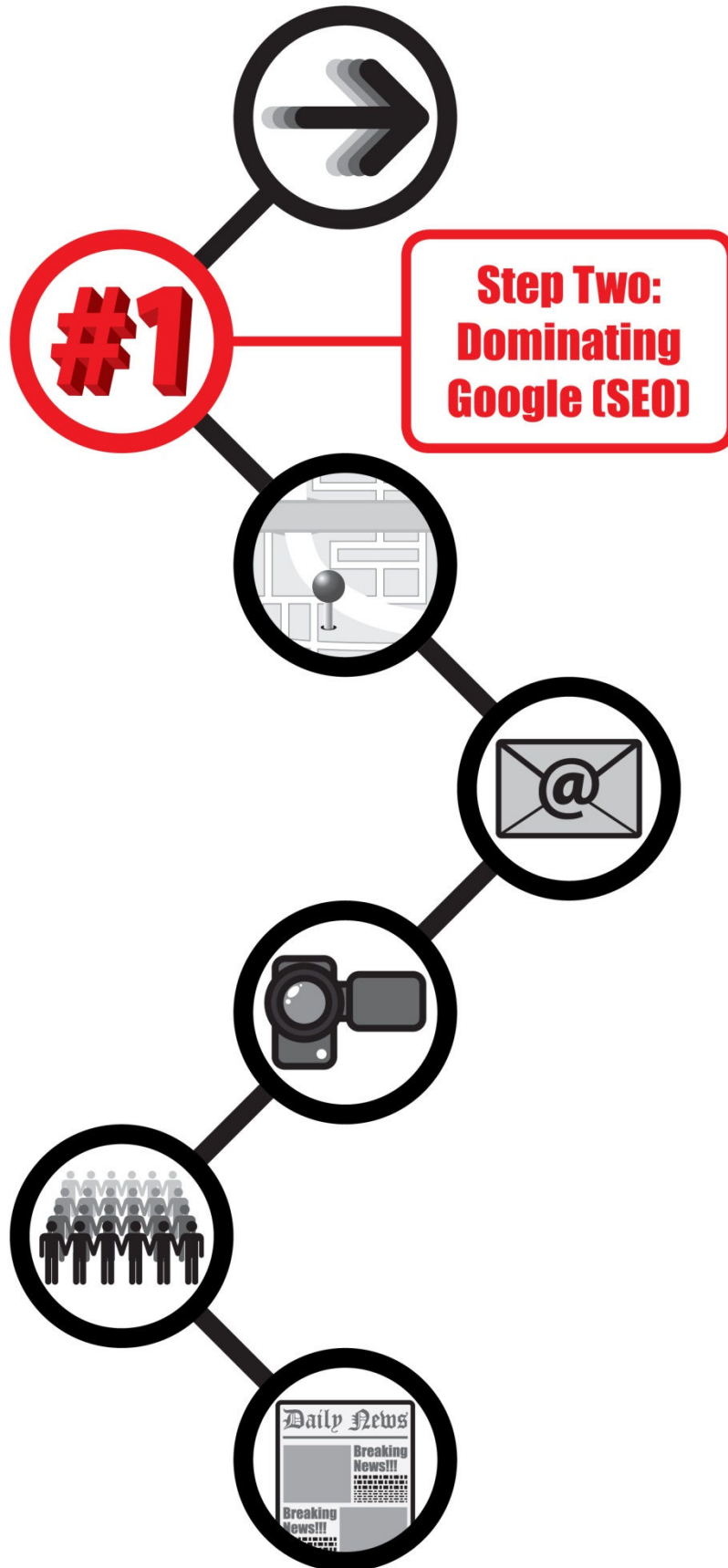
1. Hire a web designer to streamline your template (or create a new one).
2. Hire a copywriter to improve your sales copy.
3. Hire a writer/editor to improve the readability of your content.

## Additional reading and support

If you want to learn more about improving the effectiveness of your website and writing great sales copy, visit the links below:

1. Samples of sites with usability in mind:
  - Dave's SEO company - [www.melbourneSEOservices.com](http://www.melbourneSEOservices.com)
  - One of Dave's trading websites - [www.freetradingsystems.org](http://www.freetradingsystems.org)
2. A tool you can use for split testing your website's design elements:
  - [www.daveapproved.com/vwo](http://www.daveapproved.com/vwo)
3. A course from a copywriting legend to help improve your web page copy:
  - [www.daveapproved.com/simple-writing-system-review](http://www.daveapproved.com/simple-writing-system-review)
4. Services where you can get help from web designers or writers:
  - [www.daveapproved.com/remotestaffau-review](http://www.daveapproved.com/remotestaffau-review)
  - [www.melbourneseoservices.com/odesk](http://www.melbourneseoservices.com/odesk)
  - [www.melbourneseoservices.com/vworker](http://www.melbourneseoservices.com/vworker)
  - [www.daveapproved.com/need-an-article-review](http://www.daveapproved.com/need-an-article-review)

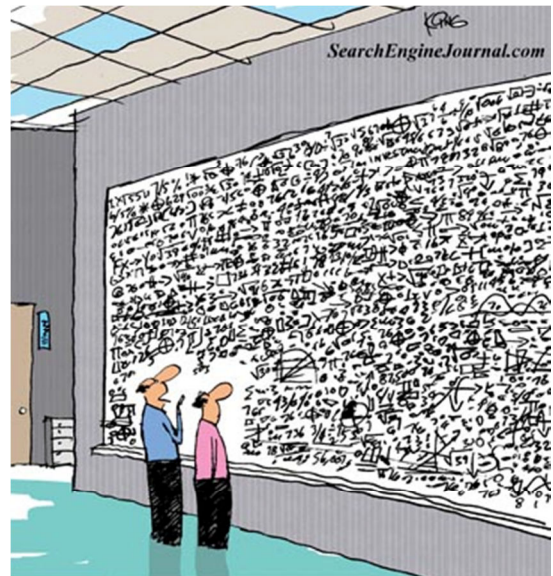
If you have any questions about the content of this chapter, please don't hesitate to contact me at [www.davesupports.com](http://www.davesupports.com).



## Step 2: Google SEO Domination

It's impossible to understate the importance of ranking well in Google. It's a huge source of traffic, obviously, but you also shouldn't underestimate the credibility that comes with being able to say that you're ranked number one on Google for a search term that's relevant to your business.

As with much of online marketing the perceived complexity of search engine optimisation (SEO), along with the presumed high level of competition, discourages many businesses from tackling this area. This is to your advantage. Although SEO can be a deep subject, the basics are simple and, especially in the local search arena, because many businesses are doing little or no SEO work there is the potential for you to dominate in short order.



*...And that, in simple terms, is how you increase your ranking on search engines."*

You might think I'm overreaching to try and teach you SEO in a couple of pages, but I promise you that it can be done. In fact I can summarise the whole thing in just two words:

### ***Be Popular***

The secret and mysterious Google search algorithm might involve hundreds of factors, but generally it boils down to putting the most popular websites at the top of the results. There are a few minor details to take care of, but after that the bulk of SEO is about building the popularity of your website through links. And here's the secret that will allow you to achieve this far quicker than you imagine: a few good links will nearly always beat 100 average links.

Look at it like this. If I told you that my family and friends like Melbourne SEO Services, then why would you care? But if I told you (I'm just making this up, but it might be true) that Google software engineer, Matt Cutts, likes Melbourne SEO Services then that would make you sit up and take notice. Why? Because Matt is an expert in his field and his opinion carries weight.

Google works in much the same way. If you have a lot of links, then this is a good indication that your site is popular and worthy of a *good* ranking. If some of those links come from sites that Google already ranks well, then this is a good indication that your site is popular with the people that really matter and is worthy of a *great* ranking.

That's really all there is to it. There's a whole sea of minutiae that are important if you're in a highly competitive, international market, but are mostly unnecessary if you simply want to dominate a local niche. Follow the three simple steps over the next couple of pages and I'll be shocked if you don't quickly see improvement in your Google rankings.

## **Step One - Understand your market**

This is primarily about choosing the right keyword phrases that are specific to your area. For example, if you're a dentist in Toowoomba, your primary keyword might be "dentist toowoomba". If you're more confident and want to spread your net a little wider, you might prefer "dentist brisbane". Whatever you choose, this is going to be the keyword for your homepage. After that, choose one appropriate keyword for each of the other pages on your website. If you have a page about teeth whitening, your keyword could be "teeth whitening toowoomba", a page about cosmetic dentistry would be "cosmetic dentistry toowoomba" and so on.

## **Step Two - Onsite Optimisation**

Once you have a target keyword for each page on your site, optimise each page accordingly. This simply means using your keyword in all the appropriate places. This should include your "Title Tag", your "Description Tag" (ask your webmaster if you're not sure how to edit tags), the headline of your page and at least a couple of times in the main text.

Using your keyword should never make your text sound unnatural or awkward; you should still use the marketing techniques described in the previous chapter. Here's an example of how to insert your keywords naturally:

### **Title Tag:**

*Cosmetic Dentistry in Toowoomba.*

### **Description:**

*We provide a full range of affordable cosmetic dentistry to residents in the Toowoomba area and beyond. Our services include teeth whitening, reshaping, veneers and dental bridges.*

### **Headline:**

*Affordable Cosmetic Dentistry Services*

It isn't usually necessary to make a point of including your chosen keywords in the text on your page because, provided you've chosen the appropriate phrase, it should occur naturally. If it doesn't then you need to spend some time adjusting your page so that it's carefully focussed on just one subject.

## Step Three – Link Building

The final step is to build incoming links to your sites. If your content is good, then over time you should find that people link to you without you even needing to ask, but don't rely on this; you need to be proactive in this part of the process. Below are a number of strategies you can use to generate links. Regardless of which techniques you focus on, there are three golden rules that you must always follow:

**Golden Rule #1:** Make link building a long-term process. The number of incoming links to your site should grow gradually because if too many appear, all at once, this could create the impression that you're trying to cheat the search engines.

**Golden Rule #2:** Vary where the links point to. The majority are going to be aimed at your homepage, but you also want some links to go to your other pages. Aim to focus about 50% of your links on your homepage, with the other 50% to be spread across your other pages. If you get this part right then you'll start to see lots of your pages ranking in Google, and not just your homepage.

**Golden Rule #3:** Use your keywords in the text that links to your page, and inject some variety. The words that are hyperlinked to your site are called the "anchor text"; you won't always have control over this, but when you do make sure you take full advantage. Come up with several variations that include the keyword you've chosen for that destination page and, again to maintain a natural appearance, use some that don't. For example:

*Toowoomba dentist*  
*Dentist in Toowoomba*  
*Local Toowoomba dentist*  
*Local dentist in Toowoomba*  
*www.yoursitename.com*  
*Click Here*

The fastest and easiest way to obtain a few links is to ask your friends, family and long-term clients if they'd be willing to link to your site from their website, blog, or preferred social media site. After that I recommend submitting your site to free directories. Different directories have different waiting periods, so the appearance of your links will be naturally staggered, and although they don't carry as much weight as some of the other options I'm about to show you, they'll lay an excellent foundation.



Submitting content to article directories, leaving comments on blog posts related to your niche and posting comments on relevant forums are also good ways to generate links and, at the same time, create some real variety to where your links originate.

The links that will carry the most weight are those that come from sites that are considered to be authorities of some sort. These websites have usually been around for a long time and receive high volumes of traffic. Charities, organisations and well-established blogs related to your field are usually good candidates. There's no magic trick for obtaining links from these sources, so simply write a polite email, or even better, make a few phone calls and try and come to some arrangement. You can offer some kind of exchange - such as writing a unique article that they can use - but sometimes a friendly but professional request is enough to see results.

Last, but definitely not least, take a look at the links that are pointing at your competitors' websites. This is a fast way to find lots of places from which it's possible to get a link of your own. To gather this data, simply go to Google and search "link:" followed by a Web address. For example:

*link:www.melbourneseoservices.com*

Watching your Google rankings rise and the surge of traffic that often accompanies it, is a genuine thrill. I fully appreciate that you might still be sceptical of the idea that you can improve your rankings on Google through such a simple process, to which I can only respond by recommending that you put it to the test. If you've absorbed everything from the last three pages then it's likely that you know more about SEO than 90% of your local competitors. Search engine success is yours for the taking if you do what your competition won't... take action.

### **Three things you can do now:**

1. Optimise each of your pages for just one keyword phrase.
2. Email your friends, family and favourite clients to ask for a link back to your website.
3. Obtain additional ideas for places to generate links by going to [www.google.com/alerts](http://www.google.com/alerts) and monitoring keywords related to your niche.

### **Three things you can outsource:**

1. A good quality directory submission service will submit your site to hundreds of directories (I use [www.directorymaximizer.com](http://www.directorymaximizer.com)).
2. Hire an article writer to create content that you can submit to article directories.
3. Hire a researcher to examine your competitors' sites and create a list of possible sources for creating links to your site.

## Additional reading and support

If you want to learn more about search engine optimisation and some of the tools that can help you to get results, visit the links below:

1. The SEO Method 2 training DVDs:

- [www.melbourneseoservices.com/seo-products/seo-training-course-dvds](http://www.melbourneseoservices.com/seo-products/seo-training-course-dvds)

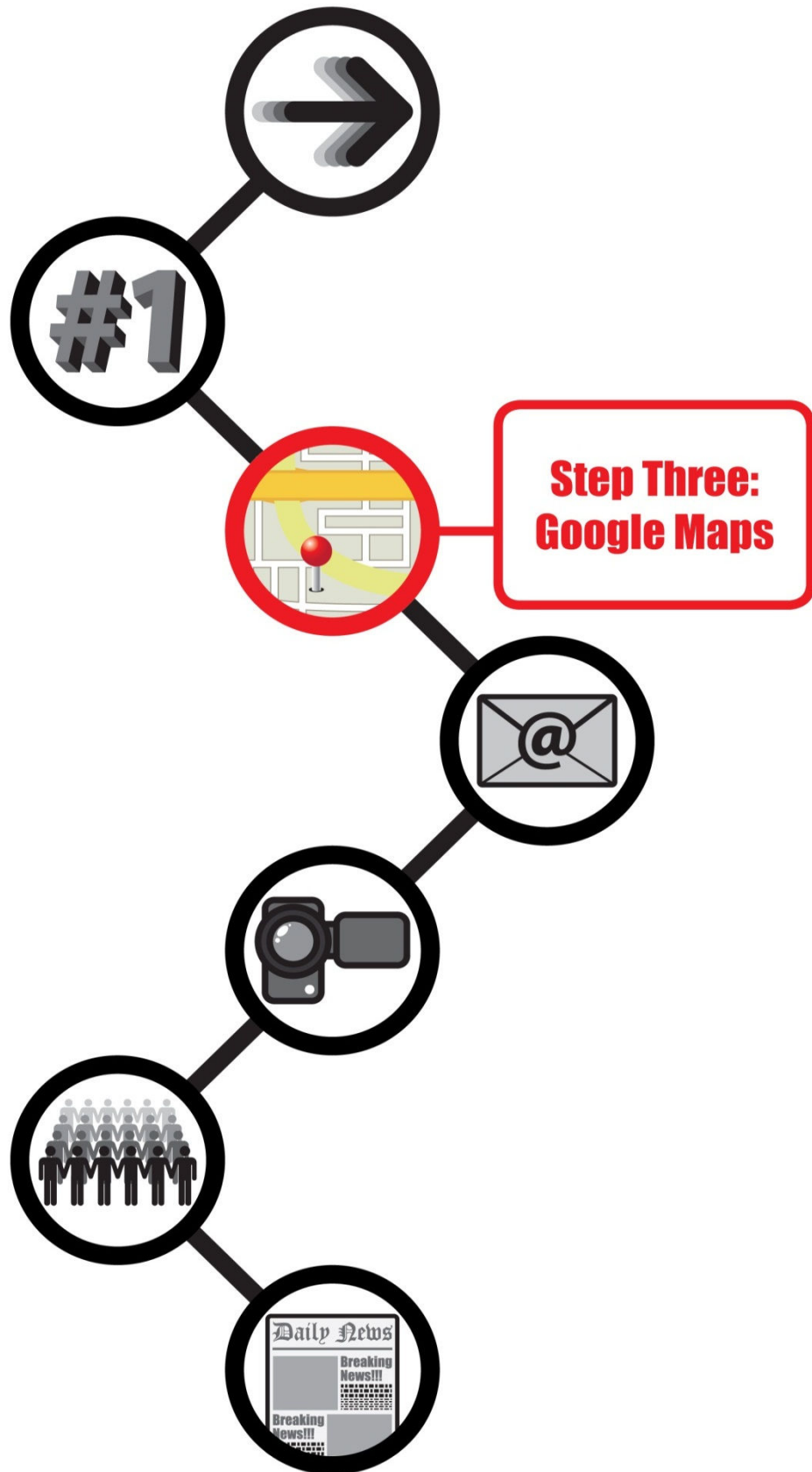
2. Free SEO training videos:

- [www.youtube.com/theseomethod](http://www.youtube.com/theseomethod)

3. Reviews of SEO services and tools:

- [www.daveapproved.com](http://www.daveapproved.com)

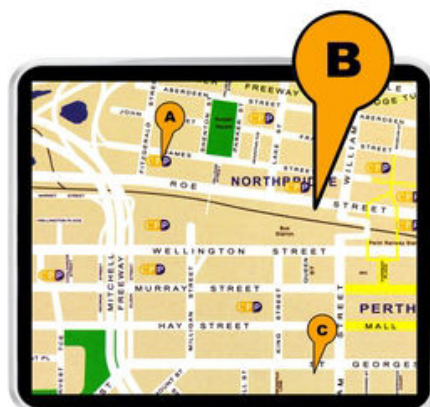
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## Step 3: Google Maps Domination

Google Maps has generated a lot of headlines over the last couple of years. The introduction of satellite images has allowed everyone with Internet access to view our planet in a level of detail that you'd previously only see on television. Street View advanced the technology still further, although not without courting some controversy along the way.

Yet through all of this progress, as a business owner, the most significant change brought about by Google Maps is the way that it has pushed Yellow Pages to the verge of extinction.



Despite the globalisation of business brought about by the Internet, people still like to buy from local companies. In fact, particularly in the service industry (dentists, restaurants, mechanics, etc.), customers will always have a need for businesses that operate on their doorstep. You'd be forgiven for assuming that this is good news for the online Yellow Pages, until you realise that Google Maps has successfully inserted itself into the search process, making - in my opinion - Yellow Pages redundant.

Before you think I've gone crazy, I'm not claiming that everyone searching for local businesses are visiting Google Maps over Yellow Pages, but it is true to say that people are so confident in Google's ability to provide results, they are simply entering their local search terms into their favourite search engine. The result is that Google has been given the opportunity to steer people to Google Maps by inserting content directly into the search results.

Google's presentation keeps changing (presumably until they find the most effective style), so you'll have to try it for yourself, but at the time of writing, performing a search on "dentist melbourne" looks like this:

Notice the huge Google Maps image on the right-hand side? It's hard to miss, right? But that's not all. Scroll down a little further and Google lists the website, address and telephone number of seven local dentists, with this information being pulled directly from Google Maps or Google Places (more on this site in a moment). Sometimes these results even appear at the very top of the page, above the top ranked sites for that search term.

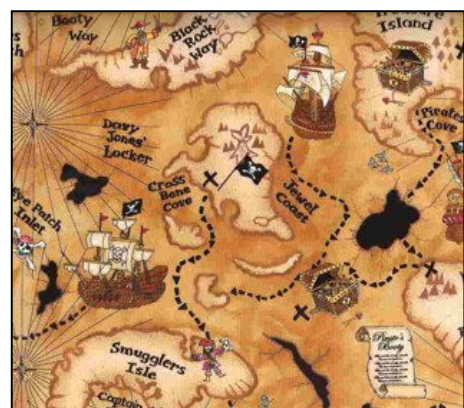
Can you see what Google has achieved here? To locate a local business, you don't need to visit Google Maps, you don't need to visit Yellow Pages, and you don't need to rely on individual companies properly optimising their sites for the search engines. You can simply perform a regular Google search and you have instant access to a range of suitable suppliers.

Sorry to be the one to break it to you, but if your business relies on local trade, traditional search engine optimisation is no longer enough. The good news is that making sure your business is featured on Google Maps is much easier than you think. In fact, there's a good chance that your business is already in Google's database and it simply remains for you to claim your listing, make sure it's accurate, and polish it until it stands out from the crowd.

Google Places is used to populate the data on Google Maps and allows you to add photos, hours of business, telephone numbers, and so on. I have a video available that walks you through the process (see "Additional reading and support" at the end of this chapter), but it's a very straightforward process, so if you're confident then head over to [places.google.com](https://places.google.com) and search for your business to see if it's already on there, waiting for you to claim it. If not, then it's simply a matter of registering your details and Google will do the rest.

Creating content for your Google Places entry is primarily an exercise in common sense, but make use of your marketing skills to write appealing descriptions, choose the appropriate categories and use targeted keywords. There's no need to try to do anything too clever, and I certainly don't recommend trying anything tricky in the hope of boosting the visibility of your listing. If you want to go that extra mile, try adding coupons or special offers that will encourage people to pay attention to your listing.

Beyond that, the most important aspect of your listing is the reviews. It might be tempting to ask some friends and family to post comments to get the ball rolling, but abusing the review facility is extremely risky and could result in your listing being removed altogether. There's nothing wrong, however, with inviting your regular customers to post a review. Create a shortcut link ([bit.ly](https://bit.ly) works well) for your Google Places listing, print it on a business card or flyer, and pass it around. Is it



going too far to offer incentives to customers in exchange for posting a review? I'll leave that for you to decide.

Local search is definitely here to stay and as more and more people become accustomed to using the Internet for... pretty much everything, the need to ensure your business is visible through this kind of search will become increasingly vital.

### **Three things you can do now:**

1. Perform a local search on Google Maps or Google Places to see if your business is listed.
2. Create an entry for your business; if an entry already exists, click on the "Business Owner?" link to claim your listing.
3. Fix any errors in the business details and add a compelling description of your services.

### **Three things you can outsource:**

1. Hire a photographer to take some high-quality pictures of your business premises that you can add to your listing (they're bound to look better than the Street View image that Google is using as a placeholder).
2. Hire a researcher to identify local business listing websites and update your details so that they match your Google Places entry.
3. Update your promotional literature to include a link to your Google Places listing, along with an invitation to leave a review.

### **Additional reading and support**

If you want to learn more about local search, visit the links below.

1. Video session on how to claim your Google Places listing:
  - [www.smallbizinternetmarketing.com.au](http://www.smallbizinternetmarketing.com.au)
2. Google Places:
  - [www.google.com/places](http://www.google.com/places)
3. Service for optimising Google Places listings:
  - [www.melbourneseoservices.com/seo-services-australia/google-places](http://www.melbourneseoservices.com/seo-services-australia/google-places)
4. Local citation finder for other business listings:
  - [www.daveapproved.com/whitespark-review](http://www.daveapproved.com/whitespark-review)

If you have any questions about the content of this chapter, please don't hesitate to contact me at [www.davesupports.com](http://www.davesupports.com).



## Step 4: List Building Secrets

Wouldn't it be fantastic if someone arrived at your site, already convinced that they need your product? All they want is a quick look over your prices, confirmation that you have a money-back guarantee, and they're ready to purchase. This kind of success is eminently achievable, providing you have a system in place to build your customers interest and trust in your business.



For a moment, compare your website to an offline clothing store. Occasionally someone will come into your store who, for whatever reason, is in a rush to make a purchase. A smart salesperson won't get in the way; they'll simply guide the person to the checkout so the sale can be completed. But what about everybody else? If your visitors are just there to browse, how do they get to the point where they're ready to commit to a purchase?

Generally speaking, to reach the point of sale, a visitor has to make a series of steps that might include: finding a section of clothing that interests them, choosing something they like, and finally trying on the garment in the changing room. If you're working on the shop floor, you're aware that once your customer enters the changing room, the likelihood that they'll make a purchase greatly increases, so your goal is to make it as easy as possible for your customers to move from one step to the next, until they finally enter that cubicle.

This illustration corresponds nicely to your online business. A well-designed and intuitively organised website will allow your visitors to find something that interests them, slick sales copy will create a desire for whatever it is you're selling, and... what then? How can your visitors try on your product for size? What's the digital equivalent of a changing room?

The answer - if you hadn't already figured it out from the title of the chapter - is an autoresponder.

An autoresponder allows you to email your visitors on multiple occasions, building trust, establishing your expertise and, hopefully, creating a likeable persona that the recipients will associate with your website. When used correctly an autoresponder will lead a healthy proportion of your customers to the point where they become the person described in the opening paragraph on this page. They'll return to your website, convinced that they need your product, and ready to buy.

In a moment we'll talk about the kind of emails you can send to your customers, but first let's tackle the issue that discourages many online business owners from making use of this tool... how difficult is it to install an autoresponder on your site?

Relax. It's incredibly simple. Even if you don't have a webmaster, as long as you can paste a line of code onto your website then you have what it takes to create your own autoresponder.

## Installation

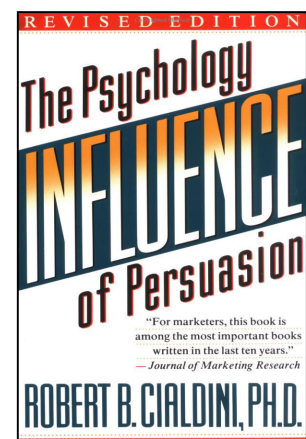
The smart solution is to use a third-party autoresponder provider. Not only does this make the setup process and ongoing management easier, but the emails that you send are far more likely to actually reach your subscribers. It's all to do with the relationship that email management providers have built with the major Internet Service Providers (ISPs), allowing your messages to get through without being erroneously flagged as spam.

By all means shop around, but I'm going to recommend Aweber ([www.aweber.com](http://www.aweber.com)) as your autoresponder provider. It provides a great service all around, but it's especially accessible to beginners since it created a step-by-step "wizard" that walks you through the process. The end result is a simple, eye-catching form that will allow your visitors to register their name and email address.

## The Hook

"Complete my autoresponder form so I can email you" is not going to be a good enough reason to convince your visitors to subscribe. You need to offer some kind of free gift, such as a free report, to entice your customers to hand over their contact details. Not only will this increase the percentage of your visitors that agree to receive your emails, but this also hits two core elements of marketing influence.

The first of these is "authority". The very fact that you're publishing something useful is enough to establish you, to at least some degree, as an expert in your field. This produces something called the "Halo Effect" where the positive effect of your report will influence the perception of the quality of your products and services. The second element of influence you're establishing is "reciprocation". By giving away quality information, without charge, on some level your customer will feel that you've done them a favour. This will come in handy when it comes to asking for the sale.



If you want to learn more about influence and sales psychology, it's well worth reading Robert Cialdini's book, "Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion", but for now I just wanted to touch on this subject to help you understand the power that an autoresponder provides if used correctly.

Choosing an appropriate free gift will depend on your niche, but a report containing valuable information works in almost all cases. If you provide a service, then a “white paper” (basically an education report or guide) is a good way to go. If you’re a plumber, you could offer a report on how to reduce the risk of blocking your drains.

If you sell a product you might have to do a bit of lateral thinking but the principle is the same. For example, if you sell wedding favours, then there’s a good chance that your visitors will be interested in a report called “7 Things Most People Forget to Do Before Their Wedding Day”.

## Emails

A mailing list is always useful if you want to broadcast a message that announces a sale, or a new product, but the core purpose of your autoresponder is to deliver an email series that you’ve created in advance.

What style of email works best? Unless you have an audience of one, there isn’t going to be a single approach that works for everyone. Sure, you can split-test your emails and figure out that a relaxed, conversational style gives you a whopping 10% click-through rate, but what about the other 90% of your readers?

To reach the broadest possible spread of your readers, mix up the tone and style of individual emails. Use various, attention-grabbing subject lines. Include links to videos and audio presentations to catch the attention of your visual and auditory minded customers. Try some quizzes or games that might appeal to your kinaesthetic learners. Throw in some short “teaser” emails. Test out long, information-packed messages. Above all, don’t make assumptions about the people on your list. Be creative with your approach and use Aweber’s comprehensive tracking tools to monitor and learn from your results.

The best advice I can give you, however, before you even start to craft your emails, is to make sure you get the “from” field correct. Regardless of how good your subject line is, people are far more likely to open an email if it’s from someone they know and trust. It takes time to build confidence in your brand, but your efforts will be for nothing if you don’t make the contents of your “from” field something that people will recognise and associate with your business. You can use your personal name if you’re well-known and easily associated with your company, but a brand name is the smart choice, and don’t even think about using something generic, like “Webmaster”.

Think of an autoresponder as an opportunity to “court” your customers. Rather than asking them to buy your product purely on trust, you’re inviting them to get to know you better and sample your expertise. An autoresponder is a taster; it represents a much smaller commitment, but it brings your customer one step closer to making a purchase.



## Three things you can do now:

1. Come up with a hook – a free gift to encourage people to subscribe.
2. Open an account with Aweber and add a subscribe form to a private page that you can test.
3. Make a list of ideas for emails you can add to your autoresponder sequence.

## Three things you can outsource:

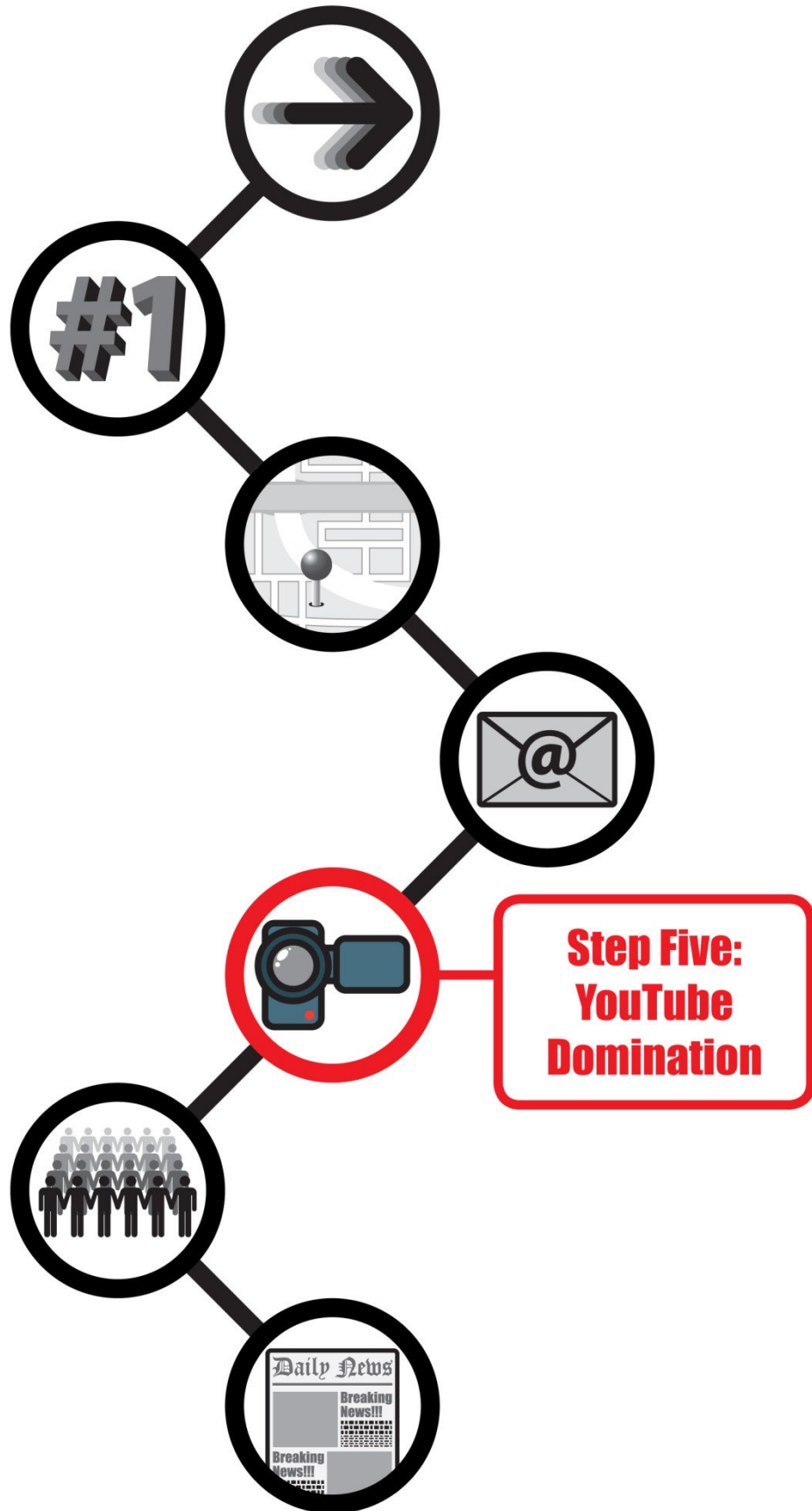
1. Hire a ghostwriter to create a report that you can use as your hook.
2. Hire a copywriter to write your email series. Make sure they understand the importance of varying the style and tone.
3. Hire a webmaster to install your autoresponder form.

## Additional reading and support

If you want to learn more about autoresponders, visit the links below.

1. Sample white paper:
  - [www.melbourneseoservices.com/#manifesto](http://www.melbourneseoservices.com/#manifesto)
2. Reviews of autoresponder services:
  - [www.daveapproved.com/aweber-review](http://www.daveapproved.com/aweber-review)
  - [www.daveapproved.com/getresponse-review](http://www.daveapproved.com/getresponse-review)
3. A tool you can use to survey your list:
  - [www.daveapproved.com/survey-monkey-review](http://www.daveapproved.com/survey-monkey-review)

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## Step 5: YouTube Domination

For the generation of Internet marketers that grew up writing sales pages, the introduction of video as a sales tool was uncomfortable. Objections vary from fears about expense, to lack of expertise, to simple camera shyness. But the power of videos to increase sales is an argument that is too powerful to ignore, and the ubiquitous nature of video recording devices means that adding video to your marketing arsenal is well within your grasp.



You may have already read case studies that demonstrate the power of online video. The Old Spice commercials, for example ([www.oldspace.com/videos/](http://www.oldspace.com/videos/)), are reputed to have doubled product sales. However, it isn't necessary to create something as glossy and ambitious as those produced by multi-million dollar campaigns. Online video works primarily because people like to do business with a person, rather than a faceless corporation. Using video to put a face on your website allows you to add personality to your business, and the process is far easier than you think.

Creating video is an exercise that is best learned by doing. Grab a camera, sit in front of it, and start talking about your business. What makes your business special? Why are you enthusiastic about your field of expertise? What kind of experience can you offer to your customers? Find the elements of your business that stoke your passion and make those the subjects of your videos.

Are your first attempts at creating video going to be polished and professional? Probably not, but don't stress over it. You're on a learning curve and the quality and effectiveness of your videos will improve over time. The main thing to aim for from the outset is authenticity. Don't overreach, or try to be too clever. Just look into the camera lens and enthuse about your business.

### Planning

Once you're feeling a little more comfortable with talking to a camera, although it might sound counterintuitive to the concept of authenticity, I would still recommend writing a script. Without advance planning your video will be muddled and filled with word whiskers (erm, so, like, you know... etc), which are easily overlooked when talking to someone face to face, but will be very noticeable on film.

Try to write a script that sounds like natural speech, practice it until you can deliver it confidently, and then put it away before you start recording. You may find it helpful, rather than memorising the script word for word, to learn the key points that will help you to keep your speech in a logical order. If you struggle to record the entire video

without “messing up”, instead of starting from the beginning every time, simply change the camera angle or zoom length and go again from the last natural pause. Later on, you can edit the footage together so it has the appearance of one seamless piece.

When you’re planning the content of your video, the structure should be similar to that of creating a sales page. Instead of a headline, come up with an attention-grabbing title graphic or opening statement. Don’t just list your product features, talk enthusiastically about the benefits of what you’re offering. Conclude the video with a “call to action”, and if you have a Web address to promote then include it in a graphic that displays at the bottom, throughout the video.



## Equipment

High-definition cameras seem to be included as a feature in almost every modern gadget. The camera in your iPhone, for example, is easily good enough to get you started. If you enjoy some success with your videos and you want to step things up by using a high-end camcorder, then select a model that has a microphone port. The improvement in sound quality when using a microphone is tremendous.

Lighting is always an issue with video production. If you’re fortunate enough to live in a part of the world with clement weather, then recording outside is an easy way to produce a video that has good quality, natural light. Failing that, pick up two or three decorator’s lamps, and you’ll have all the light you can handle. Just be careful; high-wattage lights tend to get very hot, very quickly.

Movie editing software can be very expensive, but for the kind of videos we’re talking about here, all you need is the ability to cut and splice the content together, and add some music and text. Windows Movie Maker (or iMovie if you’re an Apple-aficionado) will serve you just fine. If you want to add some real flair to your video then you can purchase royalty-free stock footage and motion graphics at [www.videohive.net](http://www.videohive.net).

## Positioning

The most obvious location to add video to your website is on your homepage. Describe a problem that your visitors have and then offer them a solution. Keep it simple, and keep it short. Your “About” page is a good place to relate the story behind your business, and if you can persuade some of your clients to record a video for you, this will make a powerful addition to your “Testimonial” page. Beyond that, identify your most visited pages, and add relevant videos to each one.

YouTube is a good place to host your videos. It's free to use, and you can embed your videos on your site simply by pasting a few lines of code. YouTube is also a great way to get more viewers and attract more people to your website as a result. YouTube marketing is a subject that could fill a book on its own, but the main thing to remember is to take special care when completing the upload form. Make sure you use your main keywords in the title, description, and tags. It's also sensible to use your Web address at the very beginning of your description so that it's visible even if the viewer doesn't expand this section of the page.

These days, the Internet is all about social interaction; that's why Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube are among the most popular sites in the world. It's crucial that your website has an inviting, personable feel to it, and video accomplishes this in a way that a text-only website never will.



### Three things you can do now:

1. Grab a camera, hit record and practice talking about your business.
2. Transfer your recording to a movie editing software application and see how easy it is to edit your footage and add music and text.
3. Upload a sample video to YouTube (you can keep the video private if you don't want to share it with the world).

### Three things you can outsource:

1. Ask your 13-year old son/nephew/cousin to help you make some videos (trust me; he's got plenty of experience).
2. Hire a video production company to turn your raw footage into a polished video.
3. Hire a service provider to add your videos to all of the popular video sharing websites.

### Additional reading and support

If you want to learn more about video marketing, visit the links below.

1. Web video training workshop:
  - [www.melbourneseoservices.com/seo-products/web-video-training-workshop](http://www.melbourneseoservices.com/seo-products/web-video-training-workshop)
2. Sample video testimonials:
  - [www.melbourneseoservices.com/seo-specialist](http://www.melbourneseoservices.com/seo-specialist)
3. Sample YouTube channel and videos:
  - [www.youtube.com/theseomethod](http://www.youtube.com/theseomethod)

4. Video editing software:

- [www.melbourneseoservices.com/imovie](http://www.melbourneseoservices.com/imovie)
- [www.melbourneseoservices.com/moviemaker](http://www.melbourneseoservices.com/moviemaker)

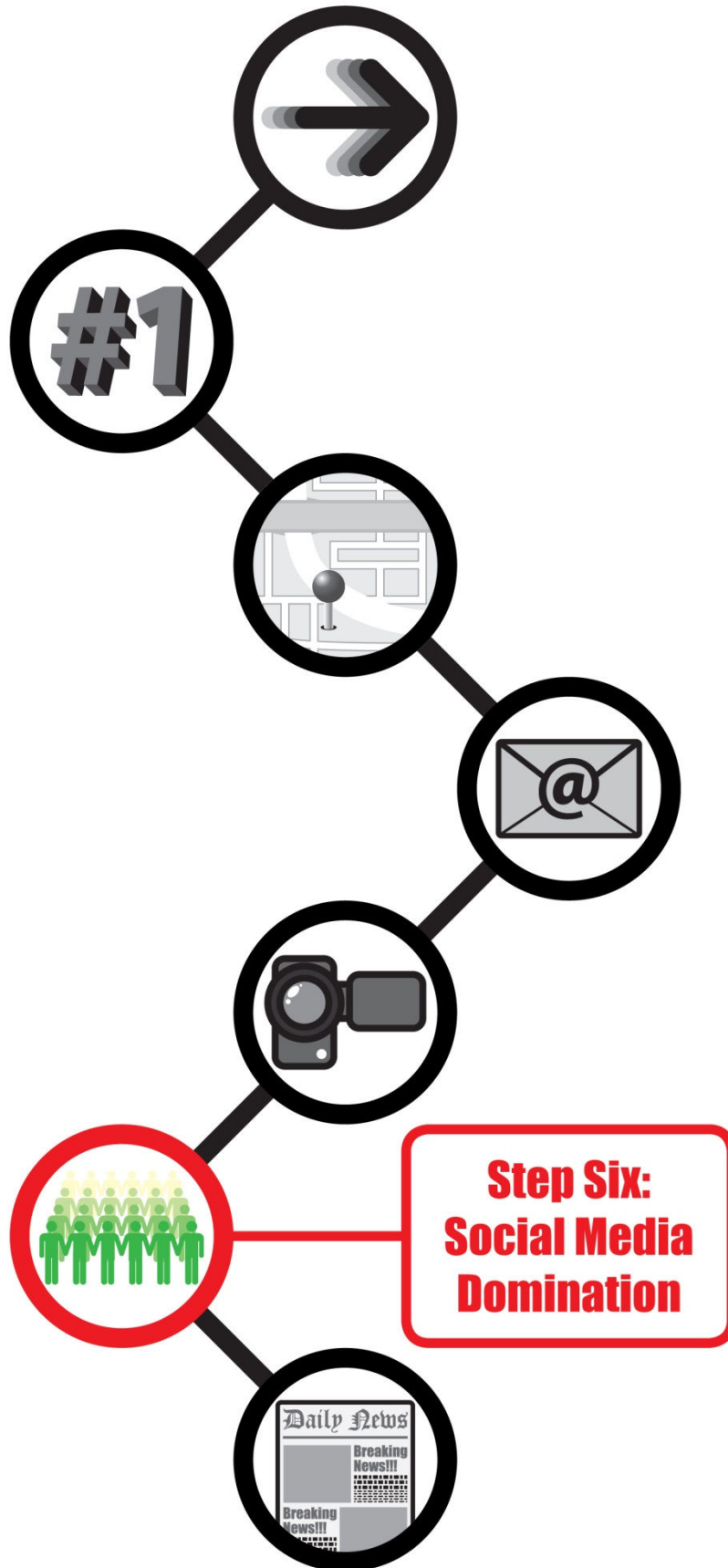
5. Reviews of other web video tools:

- [www.daveapproved.com/videohive-review](http://www.daveapproved.com/videohive-review)
- [www.daveapproved.com/animoto-review](http://www.daveapproved.com/animoto-review)
- [www.daveapproved.com/screenflow-review](http://www.daveapproved.com/screenflow-review)
- [www.melbourneseoservices.com/camtasia](http://www.melbourneseoservices.com/camtasia)
- [www.melbourneseoservices.com/istockphoto](http://www.melbourneseoservices.com/istockphoto)

6. Recommended done for you video service:

- [www.MelbourneVideoProduction.com.au](http://www.MelbourneVideoProduction.com.au)

If you have any questions about the content of this chapter, please don't hesitate to contact me at [www.davesupports.com](http://www.davesupports.com).



## Step 6: Social Media Domination

Welcome to the trendy part of crushing your competition. If you're, shall we say, of a certain demographic, this is probably the part of this report you've been dreading. Facebook, Twitter and the like might have a reputation for being trivial time sinks, but their popularity means they cannot be ignored. When you start to see major corporations producing adverts that feature their Facebook page, instead of their official website, then you know you've reached the point where businesses can no longer afford to ignore these platforms.



The good news is that social media marketing is nothing to do with celebrity gossip, cat photos, or even the Trololo Guy; it's about engaging with your clients. Like so much of smart internet marketing, social media is an opportunity to change the perception of the online part of your organisation from an impersonal entity hiding behind a laptop screen, to a tangible, likeable business with which people can relate.

Given the importance of social media to your Internet marketing strategy, you might be wondering why it's featured towards the end of this report, rather than at the beginning. The reason is because social media is also a valuable tool for driving traffic to your website, but there is little point in doing so if you haven't already optimised your website, set up your autoresponder and created some videos. Satisfy yourself that you've made all the necessary changes and additions to your website before you spend time planning your social media strategy.

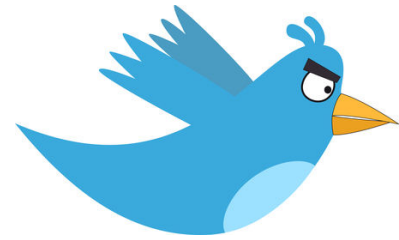
And I don't use the word "strategy" lightly. Don't think for a minute that you can simply create a Facebook page and then you're done. In fact it would be counter-productive if people try to reach out to you through your social media accounts, only to find that it's not been updated in months and that no-one's around to reply to their message. Ongoing management is essential, and although there is a moderate amount of time involved, it's well worth the effort and there's nothing to stop you from outsourcing aspects of the work.

There are many different varieties of social media, but I suggest you focus on the two most popular: Twitter and Facebook.

### Twitter

The easiest way to understand Twitter is to imagine a blog that only lets you make posts (tweets) of 140 characters. If other Twitter users are interested in your tweets, they can subscribe (follow) to your account and follow what you have to say. They can even reply to your tweets, enabling you to engage with your followers directly.

The really exciting feature of Twitter is that, when someone shares your tweet (retweets) with their followers, your message can gain exposure that is wider than just your immediate followers. Retweets can be passed around indefinitely, meaning that a single tweet can end up on the screens of, theoretically, millions of people. Okay, that scenario is rare, but the potential to broaden your marketing reach is there, and the opportunity to communicate directly with existing clients and future customers is a powerful one.



Figuring out what to tweet about is where many businesses come unstuck. Posting nothing but self-promotional content will turn people away, whereas information that is too trivial or personal can appear unprofessional. There isn't one tone that is right for every industry, but generally you should aim for something in between the two. Tweet about things that are relevant to your business, and to your industry as a whole, but don't be afraid to put some personality and opinions into the mix. Whether or not you want to occasionally tweet about the great movie you saw last night is up to you, but just ensure that trivia doesn't dominate your offerings.

Take care of the above, and you'll have a solid Twitter page that you can link to from your website, but if you want to be more deeply involved in the Twittersphere, then it's time to start following others. Find people relevant to your industry, get involved in the discussions that they're having and retweet some of the content to your own followers. It's more crucial than ever that when you're engaging with other people in this way that you don't try to sneak in any self-promotion. You won't gain any friends that way. If you add value to a discussion then people will follow you and find out about your business in a natural manner. This is far more effective than "spamming" other people's Twitter pages.

## Facebook

Although there are some similarities with Twitter, Facebook posts are not character-limited, there is a much greater emphasis on photos and videos, and you'll need to choose between a personal account and a "page". I recommend creating a personal account for keeping in touch with friends, family and work colleagues, but I encourage you to use a "page" for your business instead. This seems to be standard practice at the moment.



Your approach to Facebook should be similar to the one I described for Twitter. Pitching should take a distant second place to engaging with your subscribers through conversation and mutual interests. Try to think of your page as a community that just happens to be hosted by your business. If your page becomes a place where people come to discuss and share things related to your industry, then you've nailed it.

If you're already a regular Twitter or Facebook user, then really you have no excuse not to have active accounts for your business. If this is all new to you then I hope I've convinced you that this is worthy of your time and that it's far easier to get started than you probably imagined. Stop thinking of social media as a time-waster for teenagers; social media is rapidly becoming the lens through which people - of all ages - view the Internet. If you want your business to be in plain view, then this is where you need to be.

### **Three things you can do now:**

1. Open Twitter and Facebook accounts and make your first tweet/post.
2. Set up some Google Alerts ([www.google.com/alerts](http://www.google.com/alerts)) for search terms related to your industry. This will give you inspiration for things to post.
3. Add links to your Facebook and Twitter pages from your website.

### **Three things you can outsource:**

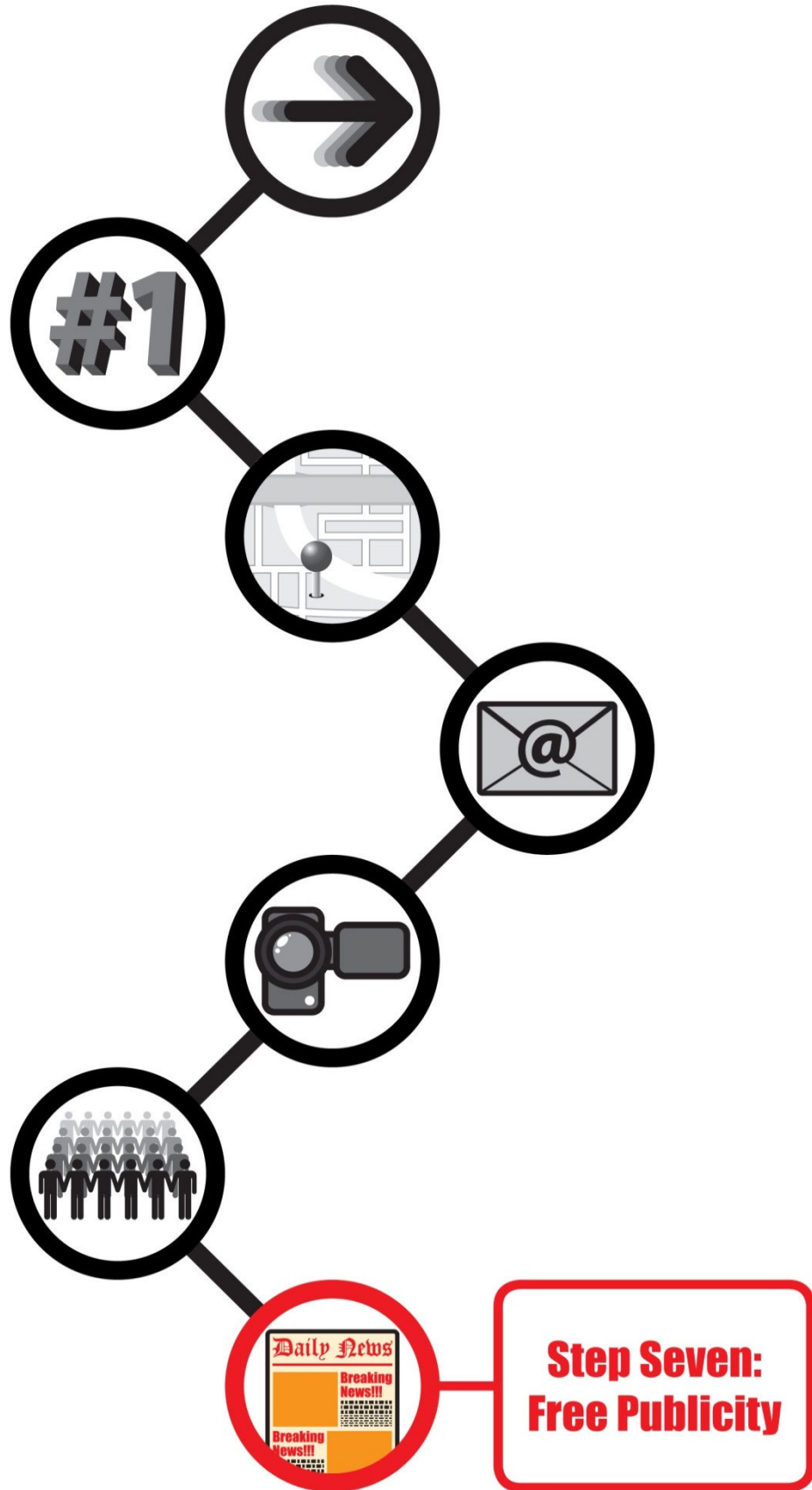
1. Hire a graphic designer to create custom Twitter and Facebook page designs.
2. Hire a ghostwriter to write a series of interesting tweets/posts related to your industry.
3. Hire an assistant to monitor your social media accounts and interact on your behalf.

### **Additional reading and support**

If you want to learn more about social media, visit the links below.

1. Sample social media accounts:
  - [twitter.com/davidjenyns](https://twitter.com/davidjenyns)
  - [www.facebook.com/seomastermind](https://www.facebook.com/seomastermind)

If you have any questions about the content of this chapter, please don't hesitate to contact me at [www.davesupports.com](http://www.davesupports.com).



## Step 7: Free Publicity

If you've taken most, or hopefully all, of the previous six steps, then your website should be like a funnel. Your website is the top, and your design, videos, sales copy and autoresponder will allow your visitors to slide smoothly to the bottom, coming out on the other side as satisfied and loyal customers. All you have to do now is direct people into the top of that funnel.



Google Maps, search engine optimisation and social media are all a part of that process of pulling traffic towards your site; the final step in this report is going to multiply that stream of traffic and, as a bonus, position you as an expert in a way that will amplify the desirability of your products and services. If the idea of being seen as a "guru" in your space is not appealing, I quite understand. Not everyone likes the idea of being in the spotlight. But you should still pay careful attention to this chapter. Just one success story in this area can be enough to expand your business, so quickly, it'll make your head spin... along with the numbers at the bottom of your bank statement.

As the title at the top of the page has already indicated, this step is about effective use of press releases. You might have heard of press release distribution being used to build links for the purpose of search engine optimisation, but although this is another residual benefit, it's not the main reason why you should be writing and distributing press releases.

The primary goal that your press release is aiming for is to be noticed by a reporter who will then write or talk about it through his publication, radio station or TV programme. Not only does this mean free advertising for your business, but it also creates the same kind of "Halo Effect" that we talked about in Step Four. Simply being considered important enough to be referenced by a media outlet will have a positive effect on how your business is perceived by those who see or read the report.

Before you panic about the idea of seeing your face on televisions up and down the country, let me reassure you that national coverage, although entirely possible, doesn't happen that often. What you're most likely to experience is an editorial in an industry publication, or some local newspaper and radio coverage. It's not nearly as terrifying as you think, and if you prefer, you can always assign your business partner or one of your employees to be the "face" of your business.

## Writing a Press Release

If you Google around you'll find plenty of templates, but the most important part of your press release is the head line and the opening paragraph. And you won't be able to write either effectively until you understand what it is that your press release should be designed to achieve.

I've actually already hinted at this, but the purpose of your press release is to get the attention of a journalist. You're not going to accomplish this by promoting yourself, your business or your latest special offers. You're ONLY going to catch a reporter's eye by giving him something that he needs. Put yourself in his shoes for a moment.

Imagine that your job is to find stories that your editor can use to fill space in their newspaper. Are you really going to take a story to your editor about a sandwich shop that's giving away free coffee with every purchase? Of course not. How about a story of a sandwich shop that's created the world's most expensive cheese sandwich (this is a real story - <http://bit.ly/bU431d>)? Now that's more like it. It's an intriguing, fun story, and the reporter doesn't even have to find an interesting angle because the work's already been done for him.

When you write your press release, you're effectively trying to sell your story to the reporter. The opening paragraph, and especially the headline, should grab the reporter's attention by giving him something he can use, straight away, without having to spend a lot of time working out an interesting angle. Realistically then, you have just two choices. Perform a publicity stunt that makes your business newsworthy, or take an everyday fact about your business and create an interesting angle.

The first option might sound like more work, but it's really just a matter of learning to think laterally. Take a look at stories that are already popular, and come up with an interesting angle. I did this with Melbourne SEO Services by creating a parody of the popular Old Spice commercials and then writing a press release about the power of viral videos (<http://bit.ly/fft5ba>). A press release about viral marketing would have been lost in the crowd, but by connecting it to the already successful Old Spice promotion, it created an angle for the story that made it more newsworthy.

## Make contact

When you start out issuing press releases, you'll be sending them to as many people and places as you can. Eventually you'll build relationships with reporters who will become your first point of contact. Making friends with a reporter is a worthwhile endeavour because, not only does it ensure that your press releases will get a little

Herald Sun, Friday, March 12, 2004



Rarity: David Jenyns with bench seating from the Ponsford Stand. Picture: PETER WARD

### Bench mark of success

A FORTUNE is being made from MCC paraphernalia the Melbourne Cricket Club gave away.

When the Ponsford Stand was torn down in 2002, almost all its green bench seats were dragged away by the wreckers and recycled into wooden flooring.

Fortunately for footy fans, David Jenyns tracked down the wreckers and saved 25 seats.

Mr Jenyns, 21, had been reading about Paul Hartzman — an American who made a fortune selling pieces of the Brooklyn

Liam Houlahan

Bridge — when the penny dropped. "I heard that story, I was going past the MCC as they were pulling down the stand and it was just the fireworks went off in my head," Mr Jenyns said.

The young Glen Iris man paid "a little under a grand" for the 25 benches and a piece of the MCC's

In November last year the MCC made \$600,000 from a members-only auction of Members' Pavilion furniture and fittings.

But it is clear the club underestimated the demand for any MCC relics — regardless of where they were from.

W.N. Ponsford's son, Bill Ponsford, 25, said his father would not mind Mr Jenyns' venture.

"I reckon he would've thought whoever showed the foresight and the go-getting — well good luck to them," he said. "He would've thought it's only a bit of wood."



more than the usual attention, but you'll also reach the point where reporters are contacting you for stories and quotes.

The first place to start is [www.helpareporter.com](http://www.helpareporter.com). Enter your details and you'll be added to a list of people who have indicated themselves as available to reporters who are looking for quotes and articles. When you receive an invitation, bend over backwards to be helpful and you'll increase the likelihood of receiving future invites.



Again. Just a metaphor.

The next step is to create your first press release and distribute it as widely as you can. PRWeb.com is a good service for reaching multiple outlets, but do your own research as well. Visit the websites of local newspapers, radio and TV stations, and other media relevant to your industry, and most will provide instructions on where to send stories in which they might be interested.

It's a little known fact that many reporters and researchers are deluged with dull and repetitive press releases and they often struggle to fill the space in their content schedule. Send them a story with an angle that will be interesting to their audience and there's an excellent chance that, not only will they feature it, but they'll be so grateful at having something they can use that they'll remember you the next time you have something to send them. Craft your press releases carefully, just as you would with a sales page, and your submissions will soon rise to the top.

### **Three things you can do now:**

1. Go to [www.helpareporter.com](http://www.helpareporter.com) and register your details.
2. Visit the recent news section of PRWeb (<http://bit.ly/bMswqz>) and see which press releases most readily catch your eye. Study them to get ideas for your own press releases.
3. Research Google News (<http://news.google.com>) to find popular stories; come up with new angles that you can relate to your business.

## Three things you can outsource:

1. Hire a PR expert to craft your press releases.
2. Hire a researcher to find contact details for media outlets to whom you can send your press releases.
3. Promote your most outgoing employee to be the “face” of your business.

## Additional reading and support

If you want to learn more about press release marketing, visit the links below.

1. Free internet marketing training for small business owners:

- [www.crusherworkshop.com](http://www.crusherworkshop.com)

2. Press release service:

- [www.melbourneseoservices.com/seo-services-australia/seo-press-release-service/](http://www.melbourneseoservices.com/seo-services-australia/seo-press-release-service/)

If you have any questions about the content of this chapter, please don't hesitate to contact me at [www.davesupports.com](http://www.davesupports.com).

## Where to From Here?

There's an expression that goes "overnight success takes ten years". It isn't meant to be a joke. Many highly-successful businesses have experienced the phenomenon of going from modest growth to exponential overdrive in just a matter of days, but what most people don't take into account is that the modest growth period can last for years before the accumulation of hard work reaches a tipping point.



If you've been in business for five years and you've yet to see an explosion in profit, this doesn't make you a failure. You just need to make sure you're heading in the right direction. Be proud of the fact that simply staying in business is more than most people achieve, and be confident that "overnight success" is on your horizon. And if I may be so bold as to suggest it, follow the steps in this report and you could cut years off that building process.

To make a real success of your online business I believe that all of the seven preceding steps are essential, but it certainly isn't necessary to do everything at once. Concentrate on one step at a time. Do it well. Really well. And finish it completely before moving on to the next step.

One more, final piece of advice: even if you're a hands-on, micro-managing kind of person, resist the urge to try and do everything personally. Outsource as much of the work as you can. Be involved in the setting up process and make sure your employees know exactly what your requirements and expectations are, but don't make yourself the beating heart of your business. You should be able to step away from your business for a 2-3 week (month?) vacation without everything falling apart in your absence.

Of course, if you really want to streamline your online marketing development, then I warmly invite you to take a look at the services that [Melbourne SEO Services](#) provide. Whether you're looking for some additional guidance, a fully-managed service or something in between, I'd love to have the opportunity to help you get ahead of your competition. My contact details are below; please feel free to contact my team for an informal chat.

Or you might even look at getting a one on one consultation with me so, together, we can create a rock solid online marketing plan for you and your business.

<http://www.melbourneseoservices.com/seo-services-australia/internet-marketing-consulting-services/>

Whatever you decide your next step to be, I wish you every success in “crushing” the competition!



David Jenyns  
Director of Melbourne SEO Services  
[www.melbourneSEOservices.com](http://www.melbourneSEOservices.com)

Melbourne SEO Services  
(03) 8060-5131  
Support: [www.davesupports.com](http://www.davesupports.com)

Ps. Want to find out a little more about me? Watch this:



[www.melbourneseoservices.com/seo-experts/](http://www.melbourneseoservices.com/seo-experts/)