



Content is king on the web

So you've made the decision to get a website for your mortgage broking business. You may have even decided what you want the site to look like and who is going to build it. But what information are you going to have on it?

Listed below are 10 important points worth considering about the content, structure and design of your website.

A website provides the only marketing opportunity for your business to be on par with the big players in the market. Take advantage of this by getting the best site you can. After all, you are assisting people with perhaps the biggest financial decision of their life; convey your understanding of this by presenting them with a professional and useful website.

1. Ensure that all the content on the site, while being informative, brings the client back to you and your business. You may list the types of loans available and the benefits and possible disadvantages of each. However, most clients feel more comfortable choosing their loan after speaking with a mortgage broker. You're the expert – lead the client back to you.
2. Make sure your website displays your contact details on every page and that you have a 'contact us' form. Make it easy for your client to contact and find you. You should include Google maps in your contact details. Every little bit helps.
3. Increase your credibility and branding on your site. By using the logos of the lenders on your panel and those of the industry bodies that you are a member of, you can gain leverage from the huge marketing budget available to these organisations.
4. Keep the structure simple. As a rule of thumb, do not have less than four or more than 10 major links or subject tabs on each page of your site.
5. Always ensure the content is relevant and useful to the reader. You want to provide just enough content to inform but not confuse the reader. It should be written in a way that encourages them to contact you.
6. Speak to your audience. Do not make the information too technical or use industry-specific jargon that the reader may not be familiar with.
7. The mortgage industry has its own terms and phrases. Providing a glossary on your site is a must and the reader will find it useful and beneficial.
8. Balance the content on your site with visual appeal. It is no use having the best information if the site has no visual appeal and visitors lose interest and click away from your site. Professional and different photos on all pages, small amounts of flash graphics (too much and you lose the ability for Google to rank your site effectively) and a well thought-out layout will vastly improve the experience for your client.
9. Prospective clients come to your website to literally check out your business and what you can do for them. Interest rates are quite often an important consideration for them. Have the current interest rates on your website as a starting point and make sure that they are updated regularly.
10. Checklists are a useful tool for both your business and the client, whether it is a document checklist, property inspection checklist or loan repayment checklist. They save you repeating the same information over and over again and provide the client with a simple means of understanding what is required of them during the loan process and so on. Provide the checklist in a format that can be downloaded, e-mailed and printed from your website. It should not cost you an arm and a leg to get a fantastic looking and informative site. The investment should not be more than the upfront commissions you receive on an average loan of say \$250,000 – not a huge cost considering you will have this site for life! ■

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