

How to...

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Create

a website



A Microsoft Guide for Small Businesses

Microsoft[®]

Introduction



With a well-designed website, you can generate customer interest, develop a good relationship with customers, help them select from your products, and even sell your products and services online.

Think of your website as your company's shop window – it needs to be interesting and inviting. You really want people to come inside and look around so take some time to look around your competitors websites and try and analyse what works and what doesn't. There is also plenty of advice on the Internet about what makes a good site, so there is no shortage of information available.

Remember, you don't have to be a webmaster to create the site yourself. With Microsoft® FrontPage® you can use familiar functionality from other products – such as Microsoft® Word – to create a professional, interesting and dynamic site.



Create

the site structure

Once you have planned your site, it's easy to create it in Microsoft FrontPage 2003.

- From the **Getting Started** task pane, choose **Create a new page or site**.
- Under the **New Website** heading, choose **More Website templates**.
- Choose **Empty Website** and click **OK**.

Now you need to add some pages to your site, and the quickest way to do this is in Navigation View:

- Go to the **View** menu and choose **Navigation**.
- Just above and to the left of the big blank area, there is a toolbar. Click the **New Page** button to create your homepage.
- Click on the homepage, and then press your **Insert** key on the keyboard to create new pages underneath the homepage. Repeat for as many sub-pages as you need.



Now label the pages:

- Click on the homepage again and press the **Tab** key on your keyboard.
- Type in a name for page 1 and press **Tab** again to name the next page.

To start working on a page, simply double click on it and it will open up. To return to this view, click the **Website** tab at the top left of the page.

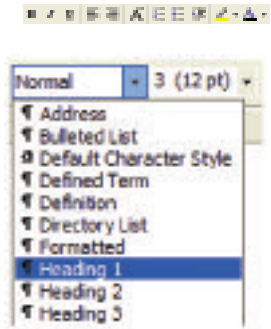


Add content

Text

Adding content to your pages can be as simple as typing text and formatting it. You'll notice that in many ways it looks and feels just like Microsoft Word. You can also select text and apply formatting to it in just the same way.

If you already have text typed in a Word document, you can copy and paste it onto your page, or even just drag and drop the whole file directly onto the page.



Formatting using a theme

A FrontPage "theme" allows a designed format to be applied to your whole website for a professional, co-ordinated look. When using a theme, it is a good idea to make sure your headings and sub-headings are formatted using the heading styles. This will enable the theme to pick them up and format them accordingly. To apply a theme:

- Go to the **Format** menu and choose **Theme**.
- Browse the available themes in the **Theme** task pane.
- Click on a theme to apply it to the current page.

You can also create your own theme, or customise one of the existing ones by choosing other options in the **Theme** task pane.



Make your site

usable and interesting

Formatting using a theme

Pictures will add visual interest to your website, but do make sure they are not too large. The larger they are, the longer they will take to load on your customer's screen. To insert a picture, go to the **Insert** menu, choose **Picture**, and then select **From File**.

- To see how long a page will take to load for a visitor on a slow dialup connection, look at the right hand side of the row at the bottom of your screen.
- If you have lots of pictures you want to display on the same page, try the Photo Gallery option. You can find this if you go to the **Insert** menu and choose **Picture**.



Navigation

To make sure users can navigate to different pages on your site, you will need to add some navigation bars. Choose **Navigation** from the **Insert** menu for options.

Other web components

There is a whole variety of other content you can add to your website such as a hit counter to display the number of times the page has been visited, or a marquee effect to make text scroll across the screen. You can find these options and more if you choose **Web Component** from the **Insert** menu.



Consider

E-Commerce

It's not as big a leap as you might think to actually sell and accept payments online through your website. It can be a huge advantage to your customers to be able to buy your products or services 24 hours a day, but there are a few things you should consider before you set-up your site for online trading.

Is your product suitable for selling online?

Specialist products which are difficult to find are perfect for selling on the Internet, since you are not relying on a local market, but anyone interested in that speciality. Many Internet users are young and technically minded, so if your product is aimed at this type of person, you should be successful selling it online. In addition, consumers seem happy to buy products that can't be touched (e.g. travel and information) on the Internet.

However, if your product is the type of item that customers like to see and touch, or requires a high level of personal customisation such as a wedding dress, then it may not be ideal for selling online.

What to do next?

It is sensible to seek expert advice to set up your Internet shop. You will need some "shopping basket" technology and facilities for processing payments. There are many online shopping applications available which integrate perfectly with FrontPage.

Your next step will be to do some background reading on the Internet about the different options available to find out which will suit you and your business the best.

Publish

your site

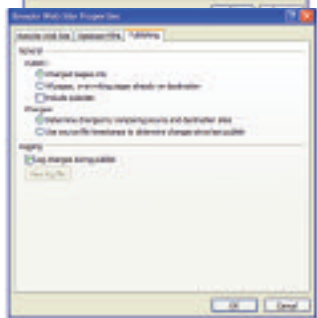
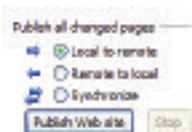
It is technically possible to publish your website on a machine of your own, but an obvious downside to this is that you will have to make it available to prospective visitors on the Internet all the time. That gives you a whole host of other issues to contend with, including hardware and security.

The best place to start is to get a technology provider or your ISP to host your site for you. They can also help you register and purchase an address for your website (this is called a domain name).

Once you have a host and a domain name, the rest is easy.

Simply choose **Publish Site** from the **File** menu and choose the method for publishing as instructed by your ISP. You may also be asked to supply a username and password provided by your ISP.

You can also publish and manage your website through the **Remote Website** view which you can display from the **View** menu.



Market

your site

The next step is to make sure your customers know about your site, and visit it time and time again. Of course, you'll be including your website address on all of your marketing literature and business stationery, but there are other things you can do too.

Encourage repeat visits

Your website can be a great way of connecting with your customers and here are some really simple things you can do to encourage your customers to come back to your site:

- *Test it on a slow connection to ensure it is usable by all visitors. They won't rush back if they know the homepage takes two minutes to load.*
- *Keep it up-to-date. There is nothing more frustrating than a site that is clearly not maintained properly.*
- *Answer questions on your site. Encouraging visitors to email questions to you and publishing the answers can be a great way to find new customers and provide useful information. It also shows you are a caring company, with expertise in your field.*
- *Keep an eye on your competitors' sites to make sure that you compare favourably.*

Register your website with a search engine

Potential customers who do not know you exist will have to search for the products and services you offer using a search engine such as Google or Yahoo. Making sure you appear in such searches isn't necessarily as simple as it first appears, so read up on the Internet to ensure your site has the best possible chance.

Exchange links with other companies

Why not find some other businesses who might be willing to trade links with you? This means you display a link to their website, in exchange for them linking to yours. Suitable candidates for link exchanges could be companies that offer complementary services to your own or simply other businesses who have the same target audience as you.

Find the help and support you need on Microsoft UK's products and services

Software support: There are a number of ways you can get help, advice and support from Microsoft. Microsoft® bCentral™ is a great starting point to guide you to the help and support you need and includes links to the specific areas listed below.

www.bCentral.co.uk/help/support.asp

Technology: This area provides information on how you can get more from your software investments, as well as help with specific tasks you're trying to carry out.

www.bCentral.co.uk/technology

Security: This section covers information and support on protecting your system including anti-virus options, networking systems and secure online purchasing.

www.bCentral.co.uk/technology/security

Unresolved or specific technical support queries: Microsoft has a dedicated website with centralised support resources. Here you can download software, review common issues related to your product, search the technical database (Knowledge Base), join a newsgroup and check the status of an ongoing query.

www.support.microsoft.com

Newsgroups: This page provides access to Newsgroups across a range of topics. Discuss issues with others who use Microsoft Products, including advice from Microsoft® Most Valuable Professionals (MVPs). Read interesting posts, search for specific topics, answer a question, or post your own question to any of the many groups.

www.support.microsoft.com/newsgroups

Free support calls: Retail customers may be eligible for two telephone or online support incidents at no charge. To find out if you are entitled, either telephone us on **0870 60 10 100 (8am – 6pm Mon-Fri)**, or submit your technical support incident online via the Microsoft UK support site to see if it is validated.

Links to other Microsoft resources from: www.bCentral.co.uk/help/microsoft.asp

Microsoft has a large number of websites designed to help you get more from your software, as well as keep it up-to-date and reliable. From this page you can follow the links to:

- **Microsoft UK home** – the place for everything Microsoft with information and resources on the entire Microsoft product range (including Microsoft® Windows®, Microsoft® Office and Servers) as well as the latest news and community offerings.
- **Office update** – to ensure you have the latest add-ons, security features and other tools on your PC.
- **Windows update** – similar to the Office update site, the section is dedicated to Windows.
- **Office for Macintosh** – find out more about how Microsoft supports the Mac and what's available – from help to the latest products available.
- **Licensing Compliance** – be sure you're using the right software.
- **Technet** – an information and community programme for IT professionals providing valuable free resources packed with technical answers and insights.
- **MSN** – for the latest consumer news and views.

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