The ultimate DIY guide to your stunning WIX website / How to create a WIX Website in 7 easy steps

Are you a small business owner, consultant, photographer, event company or restaurant? Are you a professional who wants a stunning resume or portfolio displayed online? Do you need a website that can leverage the power of Internet marketing for you without costing you a small fortune? Look no further; your answer lies with WIX.

What is WIX?

WIX is an all in one solution to your web development needs. Prior to WIX if you wanted to set up a website you would:

- Need to purchase a domain and an hosting solution like GoDaddy
- Find a designer and web developer to create your website using Wordpress, Html5, JavaScript and other web technologies.
- If you wanted to sell something, you we need to integrate with an e-commerce solution like WooCommerce or set up your own database servers.
- You would need to integrate payment services, inventory management and customer management software
- If you wanted to blog, you would need to integrate with third party blogging solutions like Google Blogger or code in your own.
- If you wanted to showcase photographs, you would need to integrate with third party image hosting services like Flickr. This becomes imperative for photographers or other image intensive services as web hosting providers give limited storage space for images.
- You would need third party integration for pretty much every service you want to offer – calendar integration for bookings, file hosting for digital downloads etc.

All this requires technical expertise that costs – typically $50-$75 per hour. It is also very time consuming with a lot of back and forth happening. You try to communicate your requirements to your web designer, they try to implement them, you are not happy, you give them feedback and the cycle continues. Any future updates are also time consuming and the hosting is very expensive too.

While most large companies can afford this web development cycle, small business owners and individuals cannot. WIX has created an easy to use, all in one, very affordable platform that allows everyone to create their own website. And the best part is that much of the design process is automated!

How much does WIX cost?

WIX is very affordable with basic plans starting for as little as $4.50 a month. The $8.50 a month plan would be good enough for most professionals, consultants and services. You could have a very decent website with a small online store for $12.50/month. However, please note that these prices are applicable only if you pay upfront for the whole year. If you choose to pay for a particular plan on a monthly basis, you would have to pay more.

Additional functionality within WIX can be added by installing apps into your website. These apps may cost more depending on what you need. For online stores, additional transaction charges apply depending on your payment provider.

How to create your WIX Website – Step 1

Planning your brand strategy

This step is crucial to designing your ultimate website. If you worked with a team of web developers they would ask you lots of questions about who you are and who your audience is. Now you need to brainstorm and answer these questions yourself.

Know your audience:

The Internet is a broad place and if you try to generalize you will fail. You need to target a very small and specific demographic – the more specific the better.

A few questions for you to answer:

Who is your typical customer? - You can use any data you have from your existing customers to create a typical customer persona. For example, a fitness coach's typical customer could be – John, a working male professional between the ages of 30 and 35 who is unmarried and 7 kilos overweight. John lives in Fitzroy and drives to work. John eats junk food for lunch…and so on. These details will help you make your website appealing and functional for your customers.

What are their challenges? - For John this would be - diet choices, lack of activity, no time for workouts etc.

What solutions are they searching on your site? – Diet advice, workout routines, exercise ideas at home, contact information etc

Identify key solutions:

Identify a few key areas you would be focussing on in order to make your customer's life better. These could give you an idea about potential website pages. Researching competitor websites will help you in this step too.

For example –

- Book a session – a booking page for scheduling workout sessions
- Diet advice – Possibly a free blog or a downloadable e-book that attracts more customers
- Testimonials – From past clients talking about how you have helped them.

Make sure you highlight the three most important things you want to present first to your client. These three things will help you in creating your home page.

Design your brand

Next, think about a few adjectives that describe your service. For our example these could be energetic, strong, healthy, active etc. These adjectives will help you pick website colours, font etc once you start playing around with WIX.

Gather your content

Source high quality images, videos and any other media that will help you tell your story. You can photograph your own premium images or purchase them from websites like Big Stock.

How to create your WIX Website – Step 2

Using the WIX ADI

Now that you have some idea about what you need, begin the website design process. Sign up with WIX and select your category. WIX has built in options for 11 different types of businesses. Pick yours or choose the "other" option.

After this WIX will ask you to choose WIX ADI or WIX Editor. We recommend WIX ADI for newbie's. ADI can automatically create the basic framework of your website. You can make site – wide changes to colour, font and other look and feel through ADI. It also gives you many ideas for specific sections like features, services, testimonials etc.

Once you are happy with the basic layout in WIX ADI, you can modify design details in WIX Editor. If you select WIX Editor mode, you cannot

switch back to ADI. Starting directly with Editor is recommended only for web design pros.

<u>How does WIX ADI work?</u>

First WIX ADI will collect as much information as possible about your website. Make sure you answer the questions accurately.

If you have selected the "other" option, WIX ADI will ask – What do you want your website for? It will auto generate options as you type. Select the option that best matches your website category.

After that, make sure you select the features you need. If you don't know which features you want, select all – there are no additional costs and you can always delete them later on.

Enter the name of your website – you don't have to enter a real name at this point – use words that will help WIX learn more - E.g. youth fitness coach or women's fitness coach. After that you can enter any social media pages, logo etc that you have. The more input you give at this stage, the better website WIX can design for you.

How to create your WIX Website – Step 3

Customizing your theme

The first design that WIX ADI comes up with will probably not satisfy you. Follow the ADI tutorial to learn how to customize your website. Try out different colour and font pallets till you like what you see.

Don't forget to play around with different designs of each section on your home page. Remember to focus on navigation and usability when you arrange your sections. We would recommend focussing on action items and key information.

What is the most important thing you want your customer to learn? Let that be on the top of your home page. What action do you want him to take? Let that be a prominent button. For e.g. Our Fitness Coach could have a catchy phrase "Get fit in five days" as the welcome section title and a book now button on top, followed by testimonials and services.

You can watch a preview of your site by clicking the preview button on the top left corner of the page. The preview lets you observe your site in action for desktop and mobile. Make sure you check out both views and optimize your site for mobile as well. Generally, if you stick with ready sections provided for WIX, you will find that they have been mobile optimized too.

How to create your WIX Website – Step 4

Adding the wow factor

WIX ADI will give you the bare bones structure of your website. If you are happy with this, you can open WIX Editor and add some pro features to it. This step will require some creativity and reading up WIX help on your part. But if you take the trouble, you can easily take your site to the next level. Here are a few features you can play around with:

Light boxes

This is the easiest feature you can add to your sight. A customized light box will pop up for new visitors asking them to take certain action. For e.g. our fitness coach could have a pop up box that says – Download your free guide to healthy eating and ask visitors to enter their email id. WIX has a variety of light box designs and ideas to choose from.

Full width Strips

WIX divides your web page into strips. All sections that you add in ADI mode are actually pre-made strips. In WIX Editor, you can customize this further by starting from a blank strip and adding elements into it. You can further divide each strip into columns and present information more efficiently.

The best part of using strips and columns is that they are automatically optimized for mobile. WIX marks out 'twilight zones' in your strip. If you add elements into this zone, they will not be visible on mobile. Watch out for the twilight zone!

Gallery

WIX gives you many gallery options to showcase your images. You can display them as a full width slideshow or in artistic grids. There are so many options that you will definitely find something that suits your needs!

Background Videos

You can add a [full screen background video](#) to your site by clicking "Background" on the left side of the Editor. Your video background should subtly highlight key elements of your website. You can also embed it within a strip.

Parallax scrolling

This feature makes users scroll further on a long scroll homepage with lots of information. It creates a 3D effect by making your background image scroll slower than foreground elements. [See this website](#) to watch parallax in action.

How to create your WIX Website – Step 5

Adding important functionality

When you worked through your design needs, you may have identified some key functions your website needs. For e.g. our Fitness Coach may want:

- A calendar for appointment bookings
- A live chat for real-time talk with website visitors
- A gallery of his Instagram feed
- Yelp or Google Business reviews displayed on the site
- Customized forms to capture client data
- A blog
- Digital download feature for E-books
- Online store to sell fitness apparel

All this functionality (and much more) can be added using the WIX App Market. It is found on the left side of the WIX editor (the small market icon)

WIX Store, Bookings and Blog

WIX manages these three functionalities in a similar manner. Each of these has a manager, which you can think of as your database. You can add and edit products, bookings or blogs in their particular manager. Three icons to the left let you access these managers.

The display of these items is controlled by special display elements. You can add them to specific web pages from the + icon to the left. All data from your managers can be filtered and displayed through these elements.

Other apps

When you add an individual app to your website, you can click on it and change settings to manage functionality. You may have to read the help for individual apps to get them to work.

How to create your WIX Website – Step 6

Getting ready to publish

Publishing means making your website visible to the world. You can continue to edit and save changes for as long as you like before publishing. Also note that you can always edit your site, at any time, even after it is published. These changes will not be made public until you publish again.

When you are ready to go live make sure that:

<u>You have set up your domain</u>

You need a premium plan to connect your own domain to your WIX site. You can purchase a domain within WIX or connect to an external domain. Your Domain Manager will be found in Site Settings under Site in the top menu bar.

If you stick to the free plan - your domain will be – www.yourusername.wix.com/yourwebsitename. This is clearly not a Search Engine friendly domain. WIX ads will also display prominently on your site if you choose to do so.

<u>You have optimized your site for search engines.</u>

The WIX SEO Wiz gives you a handy, step-by-step guide on how to do this. The SEO Wiz can be found on your Dashboard as well as on your Site settings page. The main things your SEO Wiz will expect from you:

- Set up five keywords and use them in your page descriptions and page title on every page.
- Set up alt text or image description text that only search engines can see.
- Set up location information
- Optimize the content for each page so that it is original, concise and uses your keywords.

<u>You are using multiple sites to manage changes</u>

You can create as many sites as you like under your WIX account. You can choose to publish any or all of them. However, a separate premium plan needs to be purchased for each site you wish to make live.

Think of this as having many draft files in your documents folder. You can polish your drafts till you are satisfied. Then you may publish one (or more) of those drafts as your final books.

Similarly, you can create multiple design versions of your site and save them separately. You may then choose the best one to publish. You may also publish different sites on different domains.

How to create your WIX Website – Step 7

Converting website traffic to business

Now that your awesome website is live, you need to make sure it is working for you. Websites are no longer passive repositories of information. The can actively engage clients and convince them to do business for you. WIX has a number of features that can help you with this.

Visitor Analytics

Go to Site Settings, and to your left hand side under analytics – you can set up your Google Analytics Account.

After that, you can go to your Dashboard and see site visitor data in the Visitor Analytics app. This app shows you a lot of basic analytics for free and gives powerful data charts and graphs at a small monthly cost. This data can help you take good marketing decisions.

WIX Shoutout

Shoutout is the WIX email marketing service. You can capture email addresses on your site through the WIX Subscription form. You can add this form to any page by looking under Contact or LightBox in the + (add) menu in WIX editor.

Once your website is live, any email addresses entered here will be saved in your Contacts. Your contacts app can be seen in your dashboard. You can edit and manage all subscribers over here.

You can create and send emails in the "Email Marketing" App in your Dashboard. Once you have designed your email, you can integrate with existing contacts and send an email to all your subscribers. You can even set up automated emails that are sent when someone subscribes, contacts you or purchases a product.

WIX Invoices

WIX Invoices lets you create and manage all your payments and billing in one place. You can set up your tax rate that quickly calculates taxes for payments. You can set up invoice templates that can be auto sent to clients for any product or service purchase. Want even more? WIX Invoice also gives you your earnings summary over a period of time.

Are you ready to create your own WIX website? Given below are a few key points to remember before you begin:

- Spend some time brainstorming your website design. Identify your target audience and try to give them what they need.
- Identify key pages, functionality and key elements of your home page
- Use WIX ADI to create the barebones structure of your website. Focus on colours, fonts and look and feel and use pre-made sections where possible. Switch to Editor only if you are happy with the basic ADI website.
- Combine compelling content with WIX supported creativity. Taking the time to read WIX help on certain advanced features can make your website very attractive.
- Make sure your website is easy to navigate and drives your visitors to take specific action.
- Identify the best apps on the WIX App Store to meet all your functional needs. WIX made apps are better than apps provided by others.
- Use WIX SEO Wiz to optimize your site for Google. Doing this will ensure that your site organically climbs to the top of Google search results.
- Use WIX Shoutout, WIX Blog, and WIX Social Media Apps to engage with your visitors outside your website. Use the automated functionality to engage with visitors even while you sleep.
- Use Apps like WIX Engage, WIX Invoices and WIX Analytics for managing your website and your business more smoothly.