

CEI

Women's

Business Center

# Websites 101

Visit us online: [ceimaine.org/women](https://ceimaine.org/women)

# Buy a Domain Name



Image: pexels.com

Once you have picked out a business name, review that the .com domain is available on [domains.google](https://domains.google). You will also want to check that the name isn't too similar to another business by conducting a [Secretary of State search](#). Picking a domain with another ending won't be the end of your business, but .com is synonymous with legitimacy.

If you anticipate using social media as a primary means of communicating with your customers, use [NameCheckr](#) to check the handle availability.

# Determine the outcomes you want your website to produce

Why do you want people to go to your website? Most likely, the primary purpose of your website is to make money. A website allows you to do this by selling your products or services. You may want your customers to be able to purchase directly from your website, or you may prefer to use your website to generate leads or nurture potential customers.

The secondary purposes of your website may be to establish trust or showcase legitimacy. Consider key words that matter to your customers. Consider colors and images that will resonate with your customer base. And, when it comes to content, consider demonstrating your expertise by writing a blog, for example.

# Write all of your copy and collect your content

Your site should only have the necessary pages in order to convert a visitor into a customer. The quality of your copy and content will be much better if you write and organize it first. Your copy and content should be about your customer -- not about you and your company.

It should tell your customer where you're going to take them or what you will do for them. So, gather all of the things that your current customers say about your company - emails, reviews, comments. How do they describe your company? The problem you're helping them with? And what do they care most about your company?

What, if anything, should accompany your text? Are images, videos, or something else most likely to contribute to converting visitors into customers? Collect them after you've drafted your copy.

# Pick a website maker

Assuming that you won't be developing the site from scratch, pick a hosting platform. All of these platforms will allow you to manipulate prebuilt templates or you can start from scratch. Most of them will include an SSL certificate for free. SSL is a digital certificate that secures information sent to and from your site. The cost and features of various website makers will vary quite a bit depending on your needs (and each has pros and cons).

For example, if you're building an e-commerce site, you might be more inclined to choose [Shopify](#), as their platform is built around selling products online. If you're looking for a simple one-page site without frills, [Carrd](#) is a good option. If you're looking for an affordable DIY solution with lots of templates to choose from, [Squarespace](#) and [WordPress](#) are suitable. WordPress will allow more customization if you have basic HTML/CSS skills. And, if you're looking for even more customization with HTML/CSS, Javascript, you can check out [Webflow](#).

# Build and maintain your website



Image: pexels.com

Now it's time to move pixels and start promoting your new site! Website makers have tools that make it easy to add SEO labels so that visitors can more easily find your site from Google. Once you build your site, you'll likely want to understand how visitors are using your site and how effective it is.

Website makers like Squarespace have built-in analytics tools to measure visitors and sales. [Google Analytics](#) is a more sophisticated tool to track visitor behavior.

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