NICK RONNINGEN

I teach website owners how to build and manage their websites so they can save money and succeed online.

Website Project Plan

Hi, I'm Nick and I'm going to guide you through your project. Block off **2 hours** to work through pages 1-7, filling in the blanks as you read, then call it a day. On day two you will turn your notes into a first draft of your story. You'll be all set for your one-on-one training and crafting pages.

A. Set Goals
B. <u>Collect Content</u> *(click underlined text to jump ahead or visit web pages)*
C. <u>Plan Your Story</u>
D. <u>One-on-One Training</u>
E. <u>Craft Pages</u>
F. <u>Review</u>
G. <u>Launch</u>
H. <u>Refine</u>

Set Goals

Start with two goals — when you're going to launch, and the primary action you want people to take.

Goal #1 is launching your new website. You should be able to do everything you need in 1 week. Set a deadline and block off time on your calendar. **Your website can't help you until you launch.**

One-on-One: ____/____/____

Launch Date: ____/____/____

Next — what action should your website visitors take? Do you want people to contact you? How? Are you selling a service? Focus on the one (and only one) thing you want people to do. Think of this as your **big red button.**

Big Red Button: _____

We'll ask for your Launch Date & Big Red Button at the start of your one-on-one.
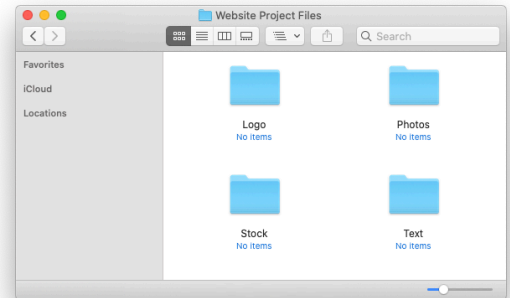
Collect Content

Collect your important files and put them in one place. Make a folder on your computer named **Website Project Files**.

Inside that folder you can use subfolders to keep things tidy.

- Logo
- Photos
- Stock
- Text

Stock

Your stock folder is where you put photos, graphics, and videos you license from a resource like Unsplash (free), Graphic Market (paid), or Shutterstock (paid). Licensing content is a common practice and it's easy to do. **Make sure you have the right to use all of the content you put on your website.** Grabbing images off of Google can get you in trouble!

Empty Folders?

No problem. You're starting from a clean slate!

No logo? Ugly logo? OK, put that on your to-do list, but it isn't mission critical for launch.

No photos? Start with stock and then replace images later on.

No text? Time to put your thinking cap on!

Plan Your Story

Your story is the text on your website. Your story should tell people **who you are**, **what you do**, and **how it relates to them**. The exercises on the following pages will help you get your thoughts organized.

General Guidelines

- Avoid flowery language, technical jargon, or anything that reduces clarity. Plain, simple words work best.
- Assume people don't know what you know; state the obvious. Make your points as clear as you can.

If you get stuck during the writing process, sit down with someone else and talk it through out loud. Explaining yourself forces you to say what you're thinking.

Be Concise

None of us read as much as we used to, especially online. We scan headlines, slow down for lists, and skim paragraphs if we're truly interested. The proverbial "wall of text" where long paragraphs fill the screen is website kryptonite.

The good news is this — less text and fewer pages means you can launch faster!

Our designers take this trend into account, making use of white (or negative) space, giving the reader visual space around blocks of text. Breaking text up into smaller chunks makes it easier to digest.

Focus On Your Hero

Think of your website visitor as your hero. Your website must introduce you to them and tell them how you can help. Speak directly to your hero in a friendly and approachable tone.

Your hero is coming to you because they need something. Your role is to guide them towards success. You must recognize their need (or problem), empathize with them, demonstrate your worthiness to guide them, offer a solution, and then call them to action. Think about these questions.

1. Who is your **hero**?
2. What is your hero's **problem**?
3. How do you, your product, or service **solve** their problem?
4. How will they **benefit** when their problem is solved?

Example: Typewriter & Co.

- **Hero:** *website owner*
- **Problem:** *difficult to manage website, webmasters cost $$$ & take time*
- **Solution:** *teach people how to build a website they can manage*
- **Benefit:** *save money and succeed online*

Your answers give your website's story a framework. Write your answers below and keep them handy as you organize your content.

Hero: _____

Problem: _____

Solution: _____

_____

Benefit: _____

Typewriter & Co.

After you have clearly identified your hero, their problem, your solution, and the ultimate benefit, put it all together in a positive statement. This is your elevator pitch or one-liner — what you would answer if someone asked what you do. Here's what I wrote for T & Co.

Example One-liner: *We teach website owners how to build and manage their websites so they can save money and succeed online.*

Don't overthink this! Don't use fancy words to sound impressive. Be direct.

It's normal to reword your one-liner a few times. As you write the rest of your content you may come back to this and refine it once or twice.

One-liner: _____

_____

_____

You've just written the most important text for your Home page. Now, let's talk about all of the other important things you need to communicate.

Empathy

Empathizing with your audience is how you connect — you want to show them that you understand their problem. Our audience is frustrated by the difficulty of updating their website so we say the following on our Home page.

- *There's no point in having a website if you can't use it.*
- *We believe it should be easy to manage your website.*
- *Use your website like you own it.*

We start with an obvious statement that resonates with website owners, **empathizing with their frustration**. No one wants to have a website they can't use. We follow with a statement of what we believe. This statement says we believe there is something wrong with the world and we're going to fix it. We are effectively making a **promise** to fix the hero's problem. The last statement looks forward towards the success of our hero, offering a concrete **vision** of where they are headed after they overcome their problem.

What frustrates your audience? _____

_____

Typewriter & Co.

What do you believe needs to change? _____

_____

How will your hero's life change if you help them? _____

_____

Proof

Your hero wants to know if you're capable of guiding them to success. This is where testimonials, reviews, case studies, endorsements from associations, credentials, and awards, become important.

If you have raving fans, feature them on your website! Include a testimonial when it's relevant to the point you're making. Feature a photo of the person, or a logo, to highlight who is giving the testimonial.

If you don't have testimonials, start collecting them as soon as you launch.

Online reviews are huge. Facebook, Instagram, Google, & Yelp! are great sources of testimonials. After your site launches make sure you include some paths to the places where you'd like reviews to be found.

Case studies are a step up from a testimonial. They're valuable if your product or service is complicated or expensive. Write multiple paragraphs or a page substantiating how you helped someone.

Endorsements from trade organizations and professional credentials are good for an About page. List them but don't make too much out of them unless you really think people will be interested.

List your best testimonials or reviews: _____

_____

_____
(Don't try to write the testimonials out here, just make notes so you have them in mind as you work.)

List your endorsements, credentials, & awards: _____

_____

_____

Typewriter & Co.

Typewriter & Co.

Offer a Solution & Call Your Hero to Action

Your one-liner has already told the hero you have a solution. Now your hero needs to know **what action to take** so they can **move forward**. This boils down to a button and possibly some further explanation. Your explanatory text breaks your solution down so it can be easily understood by the hero.

> *People don't buy the best products and services, they buy the ones they can understand the fastest.* — Donald Miller

At Typewriter & Co. we follow our one-liner with a link to <u>4 Easy Steps</u>, highlighting how our solution works.

1. Choose a Design
2. One-on-One Training
3. Craft Your Site
4. Launch

Our primary call to action, the Big Red Button from page 1, is *Pick Your Design*. (Ironically, our "red" button is brown and white in the menu, but that's a rabbit trail.) *Pick Your Design* is the action you take to work with us — which is how you move forward and ultimately solve your problem.

Since our solution is more than just one thing (eg. a website design), the breakdown of the 4 steps connects the dots between our one-liner and our call to action. Does your hero need to do something more than click a button?

Break down your solution: _____

_____

_____
(Skip this if it doesn't make sense for your solution.)

At this stage of the process you may be rethinking your Big Red Button and what it should say. Think about it from the hero's perspective. What does your hero need to be told to do so they take your desired action (eg. work with you)?

Call to Action: _____

You may offer more than your primary service (we do!) — that's great. Keep your focus on the primary way you help your hero. Simplicity and clarity are more important than saying everything. Secondary services are just that — secondary.

Here's a quick recap of what you should have at this point.

• One-liner for your Home page
• Empathetic statement
• Belief statement — what you believe needs to change
• Vision for how your hero's life will change if they accept your solution
• List of testimonials & reviews
• Endorsements, credentials, & awards
• Solution breakdown explaining how your solution works
• A call to action

What Else?

Focus on the content your hero needs.

• Services — tell people what you do
• Portfolio — show off what you've done
• Testimonials — what do others say about you?
• About Us — who are you? why do you do what you do?
• Contact — how do you want to be contacted?
• Blog — do you have more to say?

Don't go overboard, and don't presume everything above equates to a page of content.. If you don't need something, skip it. If you can combine Portfolio & Testimonials into one page, do it! Maybe you don't need Services but you need Our Program.

Your content's purpose is to help your hero understand how you can help them.

Pages You Need to Launch

• **Home**

• _____

• _____

• _____

• _____

• _____

Goal #1 is to launch. Only write what you need to launch. Add secondary content later on.

—— **END OF DAY ONE**

Typewriter & Co.

Blog

Use your blog to build a community around your website. Even a small audience can be powerful if you share common interests. Your blog is an opportunity to connect.

Publish on a regular basis. Start with a monthly post, then shift to weekly. This trains readers to visit your website on a regular basis. Even if they don't join your tribe immediately, if they like your content they will come back. This is a fundamental sales strategy. Connect with a common interest, and let the sale happen naturally when the time is right.

Time to Write

If writing doesn't come naturally, start with bullet points. Just write the bare minimum. Share your bullets with someone else. Explain each bullet and make notes as you go.

You aren't writing essays. The longest block of text on the T & Co. website has **79 words.** The shortest has **25 words.** The shortest call to action has **13 words** including the button.

Write to Your Hero

You aren't writing to the entire world. You can't solve everyone's problems. Write for the people you can serve. These people are your ideal audience. You can change their lives for the better so tell them just like you would if they walked up to you on the street.

Write Fast, Edit Later

You've got one day to get all of your ideas out as best you can. Accept this constraint and jot down notes, write a sentence for this or that, and keep moving. This is your first draft and starting point.

One-on-One Training

Today's a big day! Here's what we have on the agenda.

- Review your worksheet notes
- Discuss your pages & set up your navigation
- Start your Home page
  - learn how to add text
  - learn how to format text
  - learn how to add photos & videos
  - learn how to handle special content (FAQs, calls to action, etc.)
- Practice creating pages and adding content

Craft Pages

Your text is in a workable state and you just learned how to use Typewriter to craft your pages. Dive in and get going. Similar to riding a bicycle, you want to practice a lot at first until things become second nature.

Experiment freely. You can delete a block and start over, put two different blocks up and compare, drag stuff around — just put your stuff up on the screen.

Crafting your pages with your draft text lets you see what you've written in context. It will be immediately apparent where you want to write more or less.

Photography

Great photos make you look great. Bad photos make you look bad.

If you don't already have photos that you like, spend 30 minutes pulling stock so you have something. Find 10 - 20 photos you like a lot. These can be fallbacks if you get stuck.

Look for photos of people that look like your hero, or the way you imagine your hero on their best day. Look for photos your hero would identify with — scenes, objects, locations — whatever makes sense for your content.

Pull stock as you work on your pages, but don't get lost looking for the perfect photo. Set a timer each time you have to go after a photo. If you can't find what you want in 3 minutes, use one of your fallbacks and move on.

2 Days

Give yourself 2 days to rough in your text and photos.

Review

Ever heard the phrase, "Kill your darlings"? Feedback will quickly tell you what you need to work on. Don't think too much of yourself or anything you've done so far. Your favorite paragraph or photo may soon be a dead duck.

Here are three important steps.

1. Ask someone who doesn't understand what you do to read through your site to see if you have communicated your points effectively.
2. Read through everything and try to make it more concise. Less is more.
3. Check your spelling and grammar.

Be prepared to cut, rewrite, or edit as needed until your reviewer(s) can easily understand what you are offering to your hero.

Typewriter & Co.

Launch

If you've read this far and don't have a date set for your launch, what's holding you back? How will you ever get any results if you don't launch?

If you're ready, make it a big deal and celebrate! Plan some social media posts and an email to everyone you know. Now is the time to make announcement and do some promotion.

Promote Your Solution, Not Your Website

Think about your hero's frustrations. Tell everyone you're solving THE problem. People will be more interested in your solution — the thing you have to offer — than they will be in your website.

Refine

Your website isn't a work of art you "finish" and hang on the wall to collect dust. How does that help you? I hope you never "finish."

Your website is more like a speaker's platform. You say something. Your audience responds with page views, clicks, emails, likes, sales…

Engage your audience.

Refine your message, write blog posts, do a photo shoot — put your website to work! Your hero is waiting.

GoTypewriter.com

Typewriter & Co.