

Freshen up February

February 2012



Barbican bite

February is here. For parents, it's the mad school dash. For others, it's the endless summer outdoors. Graham and I spent time over Christmas in Indo-China. Vietnam is stuffed full of entrepreneurs working long hours to feed their families for little money.

How lucky we are in God's own country with opportunity all around us. Challenge yourself in 2012 and try something new. Our popular **FREE** part-time programmes are filling fast so get inspired and upsize your future now!

Blessings, *Susan*

Keeping your website fresh and easy to use

When was the last time you read you looked at your own website like a customer might—checked every link and read each and every word. If you can't remember, then it's probably been a while, and more than likely your site needs an overhaul.

➤ Make sure your site downloads quickly and is user friendly

The average website visitor takes just eight seconds to make their mind up whether they want to stay with you or not. If your home page is full of large graphics, it may take longer than that to open, and they'll be gone. There's no prize for the prettiest website, but large rewards for user friendly ones.

➤ Keep it simple

Are your sidebars crammed full of different widgets? Keep your pages clear. Take a look at each page, and ask yourself "What do I want visitors to do from this page?" Buy something? Sign up for your newsletter? Pick up the phone and call you? Whatever it is, make sure that this is the only action to take on that page. Too many choices may cause confusion and make prospects leave.

➤ Fix any problems

Over time, as you make changes to your website, things can get a bit "off" and/or inconsistent. One page may have a different colour or font; others may have different margins or a different template; links get broken. If you're not careful and fix things up, the whole site can look like a dog's dinner. Take some time to go through each page, rectify any typos, make sure information is accurate and links are working.

➤ Get a makeover

If your site hasn't had a new look in a few years, it's probably starting to look a bit old and dated. Think about a redesign (different colours, layout, etc) that reflects your company's current direction and attitude.

➤ Add news and stories

Put out press releases, post them on your website and you might even get some free media coverage. If reporters are thinking of visiting you, they can scan them and they'll get the idea that your business is going places. Each media release might get some interest in your business on its own, too. To make life easy for the media, you can put a specific media contact name on your website, so reporters know just who to call.

➤ Keep your "About Us" page up to date

Your "About Us" page is probably the second-most visited page on your website. You need to make sure that your business has a friendly "face". Include fresh company news—any awards you've won, new products coming out, new offices opened or new team members. People like to know who they're dealing with.

➤ Blog—do it properly or don't do it at all

If your business website has a blog, and you haven't written a new piece for three months or more, you need to do something now. Blogs can be good for getting new prospects to your site, but an old, dated blog does more harm than good. Get it up to date (and keep it that way) or get rid of it.

➤ Don't hide

You wouldn't believe how many business websites there are where the phone number, address, contact names, product prices and hours of operation are either hard to find or missing altogether. Have your contact details in bigger fonts, up higher, and visible on every page of your site. If you have a "Contact Us" page, have it as an easy to see tab.

Useful websites

Ever needed to know what time it is somewhere else in the world. Find it at

<http://www.timeanddate.com/>

Here you can also get: public holidays throughout the world; stop watch and count-downs; sun and moon tables

Unsubscribe hello@barbicantc.com

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Small business programme LAST CHANCE

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Grow your business!

Tackle the prickly stuff that needs attention now * Get help from a one-on-one mentor to keep you on target

**Call Pip now on 03-547 6138
or [register now](#) to enrol for an
information session**

Coming up

*** * * FREE Business Start Up Workshop * * ***

A FREE 4 hour workshop designed to get you started in business on Tuesday 21 February. Call Pip today on 03-547 6138 or [email](#) or contact Alison at Nelson Tasman Business Trust on 03-539 0824. [Tell me more.](#)

*** * * RISE 2012 * * ***

RISE up ladies! Realise Innovation Success and Enterprise in this one day forum for women who are serious about business and success. Held in Marlborough. Have you [booked](#) YOUR place yet?

Join the Barbican family

Join us on [Facebook](#) and keep up to date with what's going on around town.

WOW moment!

The best-paid athlete of all time was imperial Rome charioteer, Gaius Appuleius Diocles. He won 1,462 out of 4,257 four-horse races before retiring in 146AD. His winnings reportedly totaled 36m sesterces, or US\$15bn in today's money .

There is just one thing I can promise you about the space programme—your tax-dollar will go further.

[Wernher von Braun](#)

Keep in touch

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Got news to share?

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