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## 6 ways to build your company presence online



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The marketing landscape has changed dramatically in recent years and digital technology has had a direct impact on the ways in which consumers make their buying decisions. The average B2B buyer now completes up to 70%\* of the purchase decision-making process using online channels before they contact you directly, which makes having a strong and engaging online presence all the more vital.

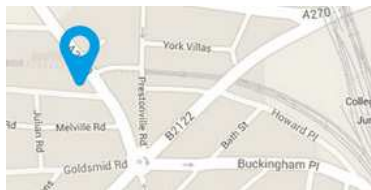
There are a number of inexpensive ways to raise the profile of your business in search engines such as Google, some of which won't cost you anything. We've put together a list of our top six tactics that could formulate part of your online marketing strategy to help ensure your business is given the visibility it needs in our 'always on' society.



### 1. Get listed on search engines

It's really important to ensure your company website is listed in search engines such as Google - the main driver of online traffic in the UK. To check whether or not it's already listed, just type your website address in the Google search box. If Google knows about your site you'll see some results (known as "organic" or "natural" search) and if it doesn't appear, you need to submit it.

Visit [www.google.co.uk/submityourcontent/website-owner](http://www.google.co.uk/submityourcontent/website-owner) for more information. It won't cost you anything to list your website and it's your first step in ensuring that your business starts to 'rank' for relevant searches.



### 2. Claim your local listing

A simple way to boost your online presence is to 'claim' your business listing and ensure your company is on Google Maps. Visit [www.google.co.uk/business](http://www.google.co.uk/business) and follow the step by step process. Once you have 'claimed' your business listing, Google is more likely to increase your ranking in organic search results.



### 3. Look into paid search

Working alongside your organic search engine and business listings, PPC ('Pay Per Click') is an excellent way to get your website at the top of search results.

Also known as 'Paid Search' or 'Adwords' (Google's PPC platform), paying via a bidding system for relevant search terms can help your company website appear quickly in search results, instead of waiting for the search engine to rank your site organically, which can sometimes take up to 6 weeks to appear. The amount you pay will depend on the competitiveness of the search terms you are bidding on. Visit [www.google.com/adwords](http://www.google.com/adwords) to get started.



### 4. Use email as a marketing tool

Email marketing has enjoyed a revival in recent years thanks to the growth of mobile devices, such as smartphones and tablets - gone are the days of uninspiring plain text emails. Email marketing enables you to engage directly with your current and future customers on a one-to-one basis by sharing news, offering incentives or promotions and other information that may be relevant to them.

There are a number of tools that you can utilise to help with your email marketing, many of which are often free of charge, such as MailChimp or Constant Contact. Once registered, they will guide you through the email build process, often providing useful templates and suggested ideas for content. Don't forget to include hyperlinks back to your own website and social media pages where possible as this will encourage increased website visits, thus improving your search engine rankings.



## 5. Social media networking

Social media is one of the easiest and cheapest ways to build your online presence. All you need to do is register on networks such as LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram or Pinterest. Choose a profile name (preferably your company name so you can be found easily) and start to post content and interact with other users.

Careful consideration must be given to the number of networks that you sign up to; each platform will require a commitment from you or a designated colleague to invest time in building your profile and creating interesting and engaging posts that are relevant to your brand or product as well as your audience.

The key is to ensure that the content you post is engaging enough for your audience to want to share with others as this will not only help to extend your brand reach, but will also benefit your ranking in Google.



## 6. Use press releases

A press release is a typical marketing tool which is used to convey newsworthy stories to regional, national or industry-specific media and to generate publicity for a firm both online and offline. In addition to emailing to your local and industry press, ensure your press release is on your own website in a 'news' section and share the link to this webpage on your social media networks and in your email marketing.

It's also worth considering the use of a professional online newswire service as these can help you tailor your press releases for online reading and distribute to a multitude of newsfeeds around the world. Look up websites such as [www.pnewswire.com.uk](http://www.pnewswire.com.uk) or [www.i-newswire.com](http://www.i-newswire.com). As with all of your online activity, making sure your content is relevant and engaging is essential in order to really reap the rewards of all your hard work.

\*CEB, MLC Customer Purchase Research Survey, 2011.

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