



Build a Website That Wins Customers (North America)

A plain-English guide for US & Canadian small businesses: build a fast, accessible, ADA-aware website that turns visitors into real leads.

Most small-business websites look fine and do nothing. They sit on a .com domain, list a few services, and quietly let visitors leave without ever picking up the phone or filling in a form. A website that wins customers is built around one job: turning the stranger who found you on Google into a lead you can actually follow up with.

This guide is written for owners of small businesses across the United States and Canada — the plumber in Phoenix, the accountant in Toronto, the clinic in Ohio. No jargon, no vanity metrics. Just what a US or Canadian customer expects to see before they trust you with their money, and how to give it to them without overspending.

1. Get the foundations right

Start with a real .com domain in your business name — not a free builder subdomain, which reads as temporary to American and Canadian buyers. Pair it with secure hosting (HTTPS / the padlock is non-negotiable; browsers now warn visitors away from sites without it). Put your real phone number in the header where a thumb can tap it, and state your service area or street address plainly. A US customer wants to know “are you near me, and can I reach a human?” before anything else.

2. Design mobile-first and accessible

More than half your visitors will arrive on a phone, so design for the small screen first and let it scale up. Accessibility is both the right thing and a real legal exposure: thousands of ADA web-accessibility lawsuits are filed in US courts every year against small businesses whose sites screen-readers can't use. Cover the WCAG basics — readable color contrast, text alternatives on images, labels on every form field, keyboard navigation, and headings in order. Canadian businesses face parallel expectations (Ontario's AODA).

3. Build trust on every page

North American buyers are skeptical by default and check you out before calling. Show the signals that move them: a visible Google reviews rating, your Yelp or industry listings, a Better Business Bureau (BBB) accreditation if you have one, and any state or provincial licenses, bonding, or insurance. Show clear pricing in US dollars or Canadian dollars — even a “starting at” range — because hiding it makes people assume the worst and bounce. Real photos of your team and work beat stock imagery every time.

4. Make it convert — and stay legal

Every page should make the next step obvious: a sticky “Call now” or “Get a free quote” button, a short contact form (name, phone, one message field), and a fast-loading page. The moment you collect a name or email through that form, you trigger privacy obligations: a clear privacy notice covering CCPA/CPRA if you have customers in California, and PIPEDA across Canada. Add a plain privacy policy linked in your footer that says what you collect and why — it builds trust and keeps you on the right side of the rules.

The four pages that decide whether a visitor becomes a lead.

Page / element	Why it matters	Get it right by
Home page	It's your first impression — visitors decide in seconds whether you're real and nearby.	Lead with who you are, where you serve, a phone number, and one clear action above the fold.

Page / element	Why it matters	Get it right by
Contact / quote request	This is where a visitor becomes a lead; friction here costs you money.	Keep the form short, show your phone and hours, and confirm you'll reply — link a privacy notice.
Services / pricing	Americans and Canadians distrust hidden prices and quietly leave.	List services plainly with US\$/CAD pricing or a “starting at” range; explain what's included.
Proof (reviews, case studies)	Buyers check reviews before they ever call you.	Show your Google rating, Yelp/BBB, licenses, and a couple of real customer stories with names or photos.

Common questions

How much does a website cost in the US (or Canada)?

It ranges widely. A simple do-it-yourself site on a builder can run roughly US\$15–40 a month including hosting. A professionally designed small-business site typically starts in the low thousands of dollars (US\$ or CAD) and rises with pages, custom design, and features. The right question isn't “what's cheapest” but “what will reliably bring in leads” — a site that wins one extra customer a month usually pays for itself.

Should I use a DIY builder or hire a developer?

DIY builders (Wix, Squarespace, GoDaddy) are fine when budget is tight and your needs are simple. The trade-offs are templated looks, weaker control over speed and SEO, and accessibility you're responsible for. Hiring a developer costs more upfront but gets you a faster, more accessible, lead-focused site. A common middle path: start DIY to prove the business, then invest once leads matter.

Does my website really need to be ADA accessible?

Yes, take it seriously. US courts have applied the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to business websites, and accessibility lawsuits and demand letters against small businesses are common. Aim to meet WCAG 2.1 AA: good contrast, alt text, labeled form fields, keyboard access, and logical headings. Canadian businesses have parallel duties (such as Ontario's AODA). An accessible site is also simply usable by more customers.

How do I get found on Google (SEO)?

For most local businesses, the biggest lever is a complete, verified Google Business Profile with accurate hours, service area, photos, and a steady stream of reviews. On your site: a page for each service, your city/region named naturally, fast load times, mobile-friendliness, and a clear title on every page. SEO is a slow build, not a switch.

What actually makes a website convert visitors into leads?

Clarity and trust, plus a single obvious next step. Tell visitors exactly what you do and where, in seconds. Make your phone tappable and put a “call” or “get a free quote” button on every page. Keep forms short. Show proof and honest pricing. And make it fast — a slow page loses visitors before they see your offer.

Do I need a privacy policy?

If your site collects any personal information — even just a name and email through a contact form — then yes. In the US, California's CCPA/CPRA sets expectations many businesses follow nationwide, and in Canada PIPEDA governs how you handle personal data. A plain-English privacy policy linked in your footer should say what you collect, why, and how someone can reach you about it.

[Read the full interactive guide, with a free tool, at cmbeyer.com](#) — or ask Bea to build a package for your business.