OCTOBER 26'
VOL. 11 | ISSUE 4

Maine Street MARKETING MAGAZINE

Smart Tools - Real People - Better Marketing

Who Needs a Website?

In today's world, every business does. Here's why.

What is GEO?

How Generative Engine Optimization Helps your business get found in AI search.

LATEST COMPLETED PROJECT

The Tyler Smith Team

A modern, high-performing website for a trusted local mortgage team.



Why Every Maine Small Business Needs a Professional Website



The Fielding website showcase: a consistent experience on every screen.

For Maine small businesses, reputation has always mattered. Word of mouth, referrals, community involvement, and repeat customers remain incredibly valuable. But today, even when someone hears about your business from a friend, their next step is often the same: **they look you up online.**

What they find can determine whether they call you - or move on to a competitor.

A professional website gives your business a place to establish credibility, explain what you do, showcase your work, and turn interested visitors into customers. Whether you operate a restaurant in Scarborough, a contractor in Portland, a junk removal company in York County, or a professional service business serving communities throughout Maine, your website has become an important part of your business identity.

Your Customers Are Searching Online

When Maine consumers need a plumber, contractor, restaurant, mortgage professional, landscaper, heating company, or other local service, online search is frequently part of the research process.

Even customers who already know your business name may search for you to find your phone number, hours, services, reviews, directions, photos, or additional information.

If they cannot find a professional website, it can create uncertainty. Is the company still operating? Does it serve their town? Does it provide the service they need?

Your website answers those questions while giving potential customers a clear next step.

A Website Builds Trust

Your website is often a customer's first substantial introduction to your company.

A professionally designed website can immediately communicate:

• Who you are and what you do

• The Maine communities you serve

• Your products and services

• Photos of your work, business, or team

• Customer reviews and testimonials

• Licensing, certifications, awards, or affiliations

• Phone, email, location, and contact information

• Clear ways to request a quote, appointment, reservation, or consultation

For a locally owned Maine business, this is particularly valuable. Your website provides an opportunity to show visitors that there are **real local people behind the business.**

Social Media Isn't a Replacement for a Website

Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and other social platform scan be useful marketing tools, but your business does not control those platforms.

Algorithms change. Organic reach changes. Accounts can be restricted. Features come and go.

Your website is the digital property your business controls.

Social media should help bring people **to your website**, where you can provide complete information about your company and guide visitors toward contacting you.

Your Website Works 24 Hours a Day

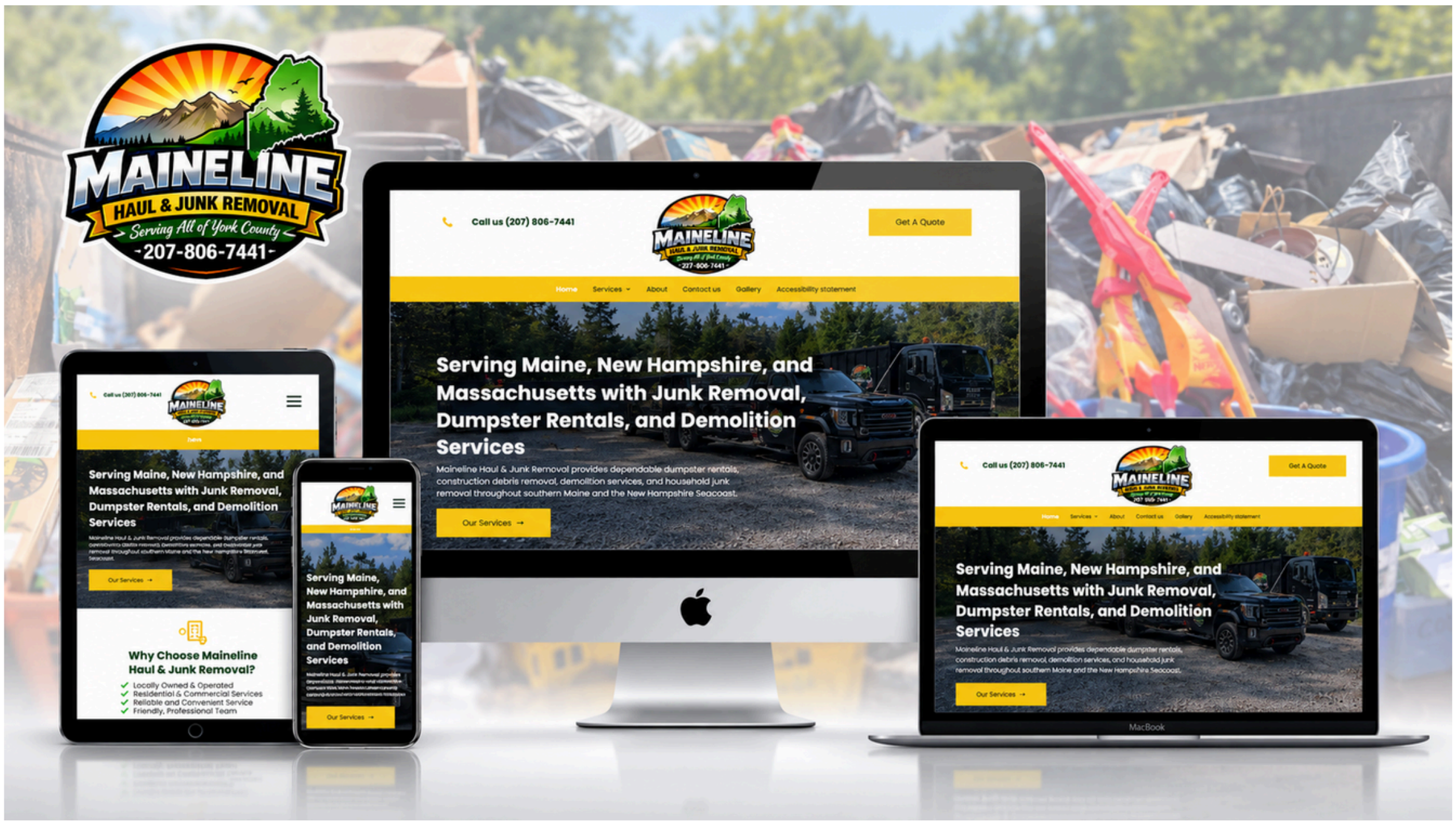
Your office may close at 5 p.m., but your website doesn't.

Someone searching at 10 p.m. can learn about your services, view completed projects, read FAQs, check your service area, and submit a contact form.

Think of your website as a salesperson who is available **24 hours a day, 365 days a year.**

A well-designed site doesn't simply provide information. It helps move a visitor from:

Search → Website → Trust → Contact → Customer



Maineline Haul & Junk Removal website showcase across desktop, laptop, tablet, and phone.

Mobile-Friendly Design Is Essential

Customers aren'tonly searching fromdesktopcomputers. They're searching while sitting in their car, walking downtown, relaxing at home, or comparing businesses from their phone.

That's why modern websites need to be **responsive.**

Your site should automatically adapt to desktops, laptops, tablets, and smartphones while keeping navigation, text, images, forms, and buttons easy to use.

The goal isn't simply to make a website "fit" on a phone. The mobile experience should make it easy for a customer to **call, get directions, request a quote, or contact your business.**

A Website Helps Maine Businesses Compete in Local Search

A website also provides Google and other search engines with information about your business.

Individual pages can be optimized around your services and the communities you serve. For example, a Southern Maine contractor might have dedicated pages explaining its roofing, siding, windows, remodeling, and other services instead of trying to squeeze everything onto one page.

Location-specific content can also help search engines understand where those services are available. Combined with an optimized Google Business Profile, consistent business information, reviews, useful content, and good technical SEO, your website becomes the foundation of a stronger local search presence.

Websites Are Becoming Important for AI Search, Too

Traditional Google search is no longer the only way consumers discover businesses.

People increasingly ask AI-powered search tools conversational questions such as:

"Who installs replacement windows near Portland, Maine?"
"Where can I get junk removed in Southern Maine?"
"What's a good seafood restaurant near Old Orchard Beach?"

A clear, well-structured website gives search engines and AI systems useful public information about your company, including your services, locations, expertise, FAQs, and business details.

This makes **SEO, GEO (Generative Engine Optimization), and high-quality website content** increasingly connected.

No website can guarantee that an AI platform will recommend or cite a particular business. But businesses with accurate, accessible, well-organized information give these systems more useful information to understand.

Your Website Should Generate Business - Not Just Look Good

An attractive website is important, but appearance alone isn't enough.

A small-business website should be designed around an objective: **turning visitors into prospects and customers.**

That means strategically using phone numbers, quote buttons, contact forms, calls to action, reviews, project photos, service descriptions, FAQs, and other trust signals.

Every important page should answer three basic questions:

What do you do? Why should I choose you? What should I do next?

When those answers are immediately clear, visitors have fewer reasons to leave and continue searching.

Your Competitors Already Have Websites

A potential customer may compare three or four Maine businesses before making a call.

Imagine that two competitors have modern websites featuring project photos, detailed services, reviews, FAQs, service areas, and simple quote forms. Your company has an outdated website - or no website at all.

Even if your company provides excellent service, the customer doesn't know that yet.

Your website helps communicate the quality of your company **before you ever speak with the customer.**



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A Website Is an Investment in Your Business

A professional website shouldn't be viewed simply as anotheradvertising expense.
It becomes the central destination for much of your marketing.

Your Google Business Profile can point to it. Social media can send visitors to it. Email marketing can link to it. Google Ads can direct prospects to targeted landing pages. Printed materials can include the URL or a QR code.

One website can support your **SEO, advertising, social media, email marketing, reputation management, and sales efforts simultaneously.**

Is Your Website Helping Your Maine Business Grow?

Having a website is only the beginning.

Today's Maine small businesses need websites that are fast, mobile-friendly, secure, easy to navigate, locally optimized, search-friendly, and structured so both people and modern search technologies can understand them.

If your current website looks dated, doesn't represent your company anymore, or isn't generating inquiries, it may be time to rethink what your website could be doing for your business.

Your Website Could Be Here

At **Maine Street Marketing**, we design websites for Maine businesses with both people and marketing performance in mind. Our goal isn't simply to build something that looks good. We build websites that help clearly communicate your business, support local SEO and GEO strategies, and give potential customers an easy path to take action.

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Ready for a better website? Let us design you one.

www.mainestreetmarketing.com

What Is GEO?

A plain-language guide to AI search for Maine small businesses



AI and GEO search optimization. The search screens in this supplied illustration are examples, rather than verified live results.

If you run a small business in Maine, you have probably heard plenty about SEO. Now another term is showing up in marketing conversations: **GEO.** You may be wondering whether it is something your business needs, or simply one more acronym to keep track of.

GEO stands for Generative Engine Optimization. It means improving your online information so your business and its content have a better chance of being represented in answers produced by AI-powered search tools. [1]

Think about a homeowner asking, “Who installs replacement windows near Portland, Maine?” Or a visitor asking, “Where can I get seafood near Old Orchard Beach?” Instead of only browsing links, they may read an AI-generated answer that helps them narrow their choices.

For a business owner, the practical question is simple: does your online presence give people enough clear, trustworthy information to understand what you offer?

How Is GEO Different From SEO?

SEO focuses on helping people discoveryour website through search engines. GEO focuses on how your business or information appears within AI-generated answers. The two overlap because both depend on useful content and a website that search systems can access.

Google says its existing SEO practices still apply to AI Overviews and AI Mode. There is no special GEO markup or extra technical requirement for those features. A supporting page must be indexed and eligible for a search snippet, and inclusion is not guaranteed. [2]

That makes GEO a sensible extension of your marketing work. Keep improving your website while making your information easier to understand and use.



A optiomize website can explain a local business's services and give visitors an easy next step.

Start With the Questions Customers Actually Ask

A good starting point is your own inbox. What do people ask before hiring you? Do you serve their town? How does an estimate work? What affects the price? How long will the project take?

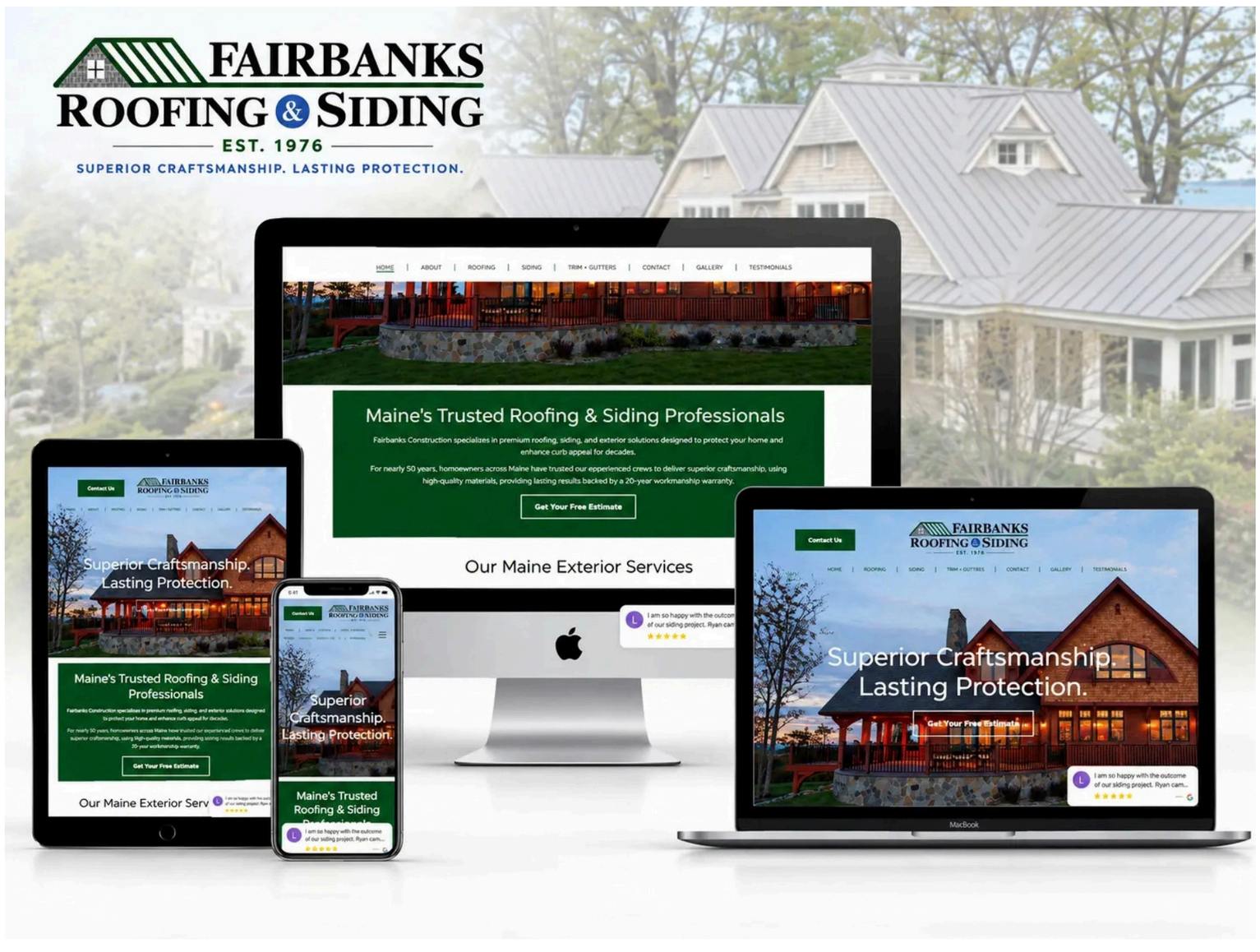
Build pages that answer those questions in everyday language. A junk removal company could explain what it accepts, how pickups are scheduled, and which communities it serves. A remodeler could explain the planning process and what customers should prepare before a consultation.

These are useful details whether someone reaches you through a traditional search, an AI answer, or a referral. Write for the person who needs help making a decision.

Make Your Local Information Specific

“We provide great service” could describealmost anycompany. Tell visitors what you do, where you work, and what they can expect. A Maine contractor might explain the kinds of projects it takes on in Saco, Biddeford, or Scarborough, using examples from actual completed jobs.

Create location pages when you have something useful to say about that community. Repeating the same paragraph with a different town name gives customers very little help.



A local perspective and clear service information help people understand who a business serves.

Show the People and Experience Behind the Business

Your website should make it easy to learn who owns the company, who does the work, and how to get in touch. Include real project photos, helpful explanations, and relevant credentials you can verify.

Customer reviews and accurate directory listings can support the wider picture of your business. Keep your name, phone number, hours, and service information consistent wherever you publish them. Ask for honest reviews and make corrections when details change.

Give Your Website a Solid Foundation

Use readable headings, straightforwardnavigation,anduseful links between related pages. Important answers should appear as text, rather than only inside graphics. Keep contact buttons and forms easy to use on a phone.

Google also recommends current Business Profile details and structured data that matches the visible page. Schema can describe your business, but special AI schema is not required for its AI search features. [2]

Can GEO Guarantee Your Business Will Be Recommended?

No. GEO is work toward better visibility, not a promise that an AI tool will name your company.

Research on generative engines describes how difficult it is for publishers to control when and how their information appears. [1]

Avoid treating one screenshot as proof of lasting results. For a practical check, record the questions you test, the date, the tool, and whether the answer names your business or links to your website. Repeat these checks over time, and look at both the accuracy of the information and the mention.

Then connect visibility to real business outcomes. Track inquiries, quote requests, calls, and appointments. Ask new customers how they found you. A mention is encouraging; a qualified lead tells you more about whether your marketing is working.



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What Should a Maine Small Business Do First?

Start with your most importantservice page.Explain the service clearly, name the communities you actually serve, answer a few common questions, add proof of your work, and make contacting you easy. Then review your business listings and fix outdated details.

You do not have to rebuild everything at once. Consistent improvements give customers a better experience while strengthening the information available about your company.

Maine Street Marketing helps local businesses bring website design, SEO, and GEO strategies together. If your website needs clearer content or a stronger local presence, let’s talk about where to start.

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Sources

[1] Aggarwal et al., GEO: Generative Engine Optimization (KDD 2024).
[2] Google Search Central, AI features and your website. Accessed October 2, 2026.



Building a Local SEO-Focused Website for Tyler Smith of Society Mortgage

When I started building a new website for **Tyler Smith, Loan Officer with Society Mortgage**, the goal was bigger than simply creating a professional online presence. We wanted to build a website that could serve as a genuine resource for Maine homebuyers while helping Tyler become more visible to prospective borrowers searching for mortgage guidance locally.

Building With Local Search in Mind

From the beginning, I approached the website with **local SEO at the forefront of the strategy**.

Mortgage searches are often highly location-specific. Someone looking to purchase a home may search for a mortgage lender in their town, information about a particular loan program, or answers to questions about qualifying for a mortgage in Maine.

The site was structured to meet those potential borrowers at different points in that search journey.

In addition to Tyler's core website pages, we developed locally optimized content targeting communities throughout Southern Maine, including **Saco, Scarborough, Biddeford, South Portland, and Portland**. These pages give search engines more context about the areas Tyler serves while providing prospective borrowers with a relevant local resource when they begin researching their financing options.

Making Mortgage Information Easier to Navigate

Local visibility was only one part of the strategy. Once someone reaches the website, they need to be able to quickly understand their options and know where to go next.

The website organizes Tyler's lending services into dedicated resources for a variety of financing needs, including conventional, FHA, VA and USDA loans, as well as options for self-employed borrowers, real estate investors, renovation projects and more.

Rather than overwhelming visitors with mortgage terminology, the goal was to create clear pathways that help people identify the financing option that may fit their situation and encourage them to start a conversation with Tyler.



Creating a Resource That Can Grow Over Time

SEO isn't something I view as a one-time addition at the end of a website build. The foundation needs to be incorporated into the site from the beginning.

That meant considering page structure, headings, metadata, internal linking, service- specific content, local landing pages, FAQs and future blog content as part of the overall build.

With that foundation in place, Tyler's website can continue growing as a resource for questions Maine buyers are searching for—from first-time homebuyer information to loan programs, qualification questions and local housing topics.

Connecting Search Visibility With a Personal Brand

Mortgages are also highly personal. Prospective borrowers aren't simply looking for a loan product—they're choosing someone to guide them through one of the largest financial decisions they'll make.

For that reason, the website needed to balance **SEO and educational content with Tyler's personal brand**. His experience, straightforward approach and focus on responsive communication are incorporated throughout the site so visitors can get a sense of who they'll actually be working with.

The result is a website designed to do more than look professional. It's built to help prospective borrowers **find Tyler, find the information they're looking for, and have a clear next step when they're ready to begin the lending process.**

For me, that's where a strong website build and a strong local SEO strategy come together: creating something that's useful for the person searching while building long-term visibility for the business.

Mary Couturier

Marketing Manager

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Complete *Marketing* Solutions

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Modern, mobile-friendly websites that work.

SEO
Get found on Google and beyond.

GEO & AI OPTIMIZATION
Be visible in All search and emerging platforms.

GOOGLE ADS
Targeted advertising that delivers results.

SOCIAL MEDIA
Engage, grow and build your brand.

EMAIL MARKETING
Stay connected and drive repeat business.

DIRECT MAIL
Make a lasting impression locally.

ONLINE REVIEWS
Turn happy customers into new business.

BUSINESS LISTINGS
Keep your information accurate everywhere.

DISPLAY ADS & RETARGETING
Stay top of mind with local customers.

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