TARSUS PARTNERS · FREE RESOURCE

The Website Ship Checklist

The checks a small-business website must pass before it goes live — and after every change.

Your website works for you around the clock. Before it goes live, it should pass the same checks a careful builder runs on every site that ships. This is that list — the real one, in plain English. Free to use. Free to share.

1. How it looks before anyone clicks

☐ **Your logo shows in the browser tab.** Open your site and look at the tab at the top of the browser. A blank page icon or a generic globe reads as "unfinished" before a visitor reads a single word.

☐ **Sharing your link produces a proper preview card.** Paste your web address into a text message or a social post. The preview should be a designed card with your business name readable on it — not a random crop of some photo from the page.

☐ **Every page's tab title leads with your business name**, so people with six tabs open can find yours again.

2. On a phone first, then a desktop

☐ **Nothing runs off the edge of the phone screen.** No sideways scrolling, ever. Check on a narrow Android and an iPhone, not just by shrinking a desktop window.

☐ **Stacked text has air between the lines.** A name with a tagline under it, a heading with a subheading — if two lines read as one blob at arm's length, it isn't done.

☐ **Buttons don't move while the page loads.** If a picture loads late and shoves the page down, the button a visitor is reaching for slides away mid-tap.

☐ **Your phone number can be found within 3 seconds on a phone.** An emergency customer who has to hunt for it calls the next business instead.

☐ **The header fits.** Your name and your menu sit on one clean line at desktop width — nothing wrapped, squeezed, or overlapping.

3. Every link, every page — after every change

☐ **Click every link on every page.** A broken link (the "404" error) gets fixed the same day it's found, not added to a list.

☐ **After ANY change to the site, re-check ALL the links on ALL the pages.** Changes break things far from where you touched them. This is the single most-skipped check in the business.

☐ **Your money links work from every page** — call, book, directions, payment. Test them from the deepest page on the site, not just the homepage.

4. Forms, booking, and money paths actually work

☐ **Send yourself a test through every form — and confirm it ARRIVES.** A "message sent" note on the screen is not proof. Proof is the message sitting in your inbox. Check the spam folder too.

☐ **Run one real end-to-end test like a customer.** Book the appointment, buy the small thing, from outside your own network, on the real site. Inside tests pass on systems customers can't reach.

☐ **Booking stays on your own domain.** Customers who get bounced to a stranger's portal to book or pay wonder where they went — and some don't come back.

☐ **Email from your site actually lands.** Booking confirmations and receipts are authenticated mail (your domain's SPF, DKIM, and DMARC records) so they reach the inbox instead of the spam folder.

5. Trust and the legal basics

☐ **Everything on the site is real.** Your license number, your reviews, your photos, your prices. Never a claim you can't back up — visitors can smell it, and regulators can bill for it.

☐ **A privacy page that says plainly what you track and why**, in normal words a customer would understand.

☐ **Footer fine print on every page:** "By using this site, you accept our Privacy Policy" — with a link to that policy.

☐ **Readable text and labeled forms.** Text has enough contrast against its background to read easily, every form field has a visible label, and every picture has a text description. These are accessibility basics — and the ones that show up in lawsuits.

6. Getting found

☐ **Visitor counting is installed** (Google Analytics or the like), so you can see which pages actually help people and which ones don't.

☐ **Nothing is accidentally telling Google to ignore you.** Build-phase settings like "noindex" tags or a blocked robots file sometimes survive the launch. Check that search engines are allowed in.

☐ **Your main photo loads fast.** It's compressed and sized to the space it fills. A heavy hero image is the number-one reason phone visitors leave before the page finishes.

7. After launch — and after every fix

☐ **Judge the live site a few seconds after it settles, on the real address.** Not the preview, not the first paint. What a visitor sees three seconds in is the truth.

☐ **When the design files change, their version stamp changes too**, so returning visitors never get a stale, half-old version of your pages from their browser's memory.

☐ **Your backup has been test-restored.** A backup only counts after you've brought a copy back from it and confirmed it works. Untested backups fail exactly when you need them.

Who runs this list?

We do — on every site we ship. **Tarsus Partners** builds small-business websites that pass this checklist before they go live: basic builds are $500, and a care plan ($100/month) keeps the site passing it as things change. See working examples and get in touch at **tarsuspartnersllc.com**.

More checklists like this one are coming. Follow **Tarsus Partners** on LinkedIn and on Bluesky (**@tarsuspartnersllc**) to get the next one free.

© 2026 Tarsus Partners LLC · Free to share with credit · tarsuspartnersllc.com/ship-checklist