

# Competitor Website Review

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for



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## Overview

Overall, there is no outstanding website doing everything right – this is quite common.

The [redacted] website is possibly a little ahead of the others. It has good positioning and a clear menu enabling people to find the kind of service they are interested in easily. However the contact form is incredibly complicated and the inclusion of a bigpond email address is unprofessional.

[redacted] is ahead of the average but could be better.

It's also worth noting that no one really has any kind of lead generation tool unless someone is ready to discuss a specific build. Getting in with something helpful at this stage could help build a trust relationship early in the sales journey.

## Key Recommendations

Home page:

- Be sure the new website includes a clear positioning statement visible above the line on the home page. For example, 'Custom new home, extensions and renovations. Quality built to last.'
- Include awards, memberships and at least one testimonial on the home page.
- Include a call to action
  - A **useful** downloadable resource – NOT sales materials. Ideally this should be something which answers the questions potential clients have at a first meeting – not about [redacted], but about building in general. Possibly a checklist of some kind, or 'top mistakes to avoid'. Or even a listing of 'indicative costs' (free on [redacted] site, but fairly well hidden) so that people can start scoping and select themselves in or out as clients appropriately.
  - An option to complete the starter form and have a complimentary meeting. Or even 'Complete this form and we'll know whether it's worth meeting. If not we'll recommend a more suitable builder.'
- Include Google reviews widget to add more social proof.

Structure the site to improve SEO:

- Separate pages for each key service (custom new builds, renovations, extensions, commercial, infinity pools etc) Each page can then be optimised for that concept. Include links from that page to a filtered gallery / portfolio.
- Have a separate page for each project and include on here:
  - Location and type of project (see services list). These will then create extra SEO for these combinations of words (eg if someone searches for 'custom home builder serving Pitt Town')
  - A testimonial from the client or at the least a summary of what the client wanted and how [redacted] delivered
- Consider replacing the blog with a combination of:
  - Updating projects in the gallery / portfolio for every project.
  - Building a resources section with articles on any issues which keep cropping up. (eg cost of custom builder vs project home; what the steps in the building process are; how to control a budget; If you do decide to proceed with a blog, ensure there are at least
- Include information in the footer such as the area serviced. This will build geographic SEO across the entire site.

# Detailed Website Comparison

## Technical

<b>TECHNICAL</b>						
<b>Mobile Usability</b>						
Mobile Friendly visual inspection?	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Mobile Friendly Google Analysis?	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes
<b>Home Page Load Speed (webpagetest.org, seconds)</b>						
test 1	4.094s	4.892s	2.340s	4.887s	15.351s	
test 2	3.987s	5.14s	2.349	5.320s	15.877s	
test 3	3.886s	5.173s	2.326	4.690s	16.803s	
<b>Home Page Load Speed (Pingdom, seconds)</b>						
test 1	1.5s	3.66s	735 ms	1.60s	6.50s	
test 2	1.49s	3.66s	842 ms	1.37s	5.91s	

**What this measure means and why it matters**

Over 50% of all web traffic is mobile - and it's increasing. Google uses the mobile site as default for ranking sites.

Ideally a page should load within 2-3 seconds. See <https://www.warpcache.com/slow-websites-are-bad-for-business/> for a list of case studies supporting this.

Fast load speed is important, especially on mobile. Images tend to be big, so they present challenges.

It's clear that [redacted] has the fastest site. [redacted] and [redacted] are the next best performers. For the [redacted] site, the images are well optimised and the late loading ones are in the slider, so the speed to 'appears fully loaded' is actually fine. [redacted] on the other hand, is noticeably slow.

## Look and Feel, Layout and Navigation

<b>LAYOUT AND NAVIGATION</b>						
	Clear navigation	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
	Clean layout with white space	yes	Layout is a bit complicated	yes	yes	yes
	Consistent layout and structure	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
	One page per main service offering	no	yes	yes	yes	no
	Site Search box	no	no	no	no	no

### What this measure means and why it matters

It's important that people can find what they are looking for when they visit your site. White space assists with this as it helps break content into manageable chunks.

Most of the sites have the same basic **initial impression**, with a large image slider dominating the home page. [redacted] is slightly different in that it has three fixed images across the page. This means the site can display a wider range of visuals straight away, which is good. However, the mobile view is poorly optimised as the images shrink to be very small. (The three images are in reality are one composite image. It would work better if they were three images in a table, which could stack vertically on a mobile.)

The clarity of **positioning** varies more. Positioning should help any new visitor who comes to the site to answer immediately the questions:

- What do they do?
- Who do they do it for?

[redacted] and [redacted] have no words to pinpoint their positioning, leaving all the work to the images. Yet only one image is visible in the slider above the fold at any one time. The same is true of [redacted] – except that their logo identifies them as custom home builders

[redacted] do a great job with the tagline 'Your custom home building specialist', combined with a strong call to action. They are the only business to reference 'you' the visitor and potential customer rather than focus on the business itself. But the dark colour scheme is unattractive.

[redacted] have strong positioning as 'can do the hard stuff'. Note that 'unusual or unique styles' helps them cast a wider net – everyone wants their custom built home to be 'unusual or unique' – but only after they have built confidence they can do it. They are also the only ones to clarify the locations they work in.

In terms of **navigation**, the two key issues with the [REDACTED] site are the 'Our Mission' page and the 'Services' menu

All the content on the 'Our mission' page could easily be combined with 'Meet the Team' to create a single 'About Us' page.

- On the other hand, the Services menu has only one option – custom homes – yet the company does new builds, renovations, extensions and commercial work.

Those are clear distinctions which relate to the kind of project a visitor might have in mind, so make sense as separate categories.

Compare this to the [REDACTED] Services menu, which is visitor-friendly. It also means there is a page for each service which can be optimised for SEO. [REDACTED] in fact ranks on the first or second page of Google search results for a range of search terms relating to second storey extensions, first floor additions and flamezone houses.

All sites have a **portfolio, gallery or project listing**.

They are not always clearly divided into projects or kinds of projects.

There's also very little 'story' or explanation. Once again, images are left to do the work.

[REDACTED] performs well in this area. There is a brief overview of each project which highlights positive results for the client. Anyone who browses the projects immediately gets a sense that [REDACTED] is listening and responding to what individual clients want and need. Scrolling through the images on a specific project or moving to the next project could be easier, though.

[REDACTED] has a particularly messy project section where enlarged images flow on to each other with no break between projects, and where the arrow keys to navigate are often invisible. (This last easily solved by putting a black arrow on white background or vice versa – then whatever the image colour, either the arrow alone or the entire box will show up.)

The [REDACTED] project page is possibly the worst. On a laptop or a mobile, it's not obvious that anything changes when you click on a particular project. The content is effectively hidden.

## SEO Performance

<b>RANKING AND LINK PROFILE</b>						
Moz Domain Authority	6	9	10	22	10	
AHRefs Domain Rating	4.9	7	2.3	4.2	3.5	
Number of Referring Domains	6	10	9	59	11	
Number of Referring Pages	15	25	33	166	25	
Number of Backlinks	20	27	63	658	45	
DoFollow	16	14	60	448	37	
NoFollow	4	11	3	210	8	
Crawled Pages	123	66	198	578	113	
Organic Keywords (in Australian search only)	17	38	34	363	210	

### What this measure means and why it matters

This is the Moz overall rating of your domain's strength. Score from 0 to 100, the higher the better.

This is the AHRefs overall rating of your domain's strength. Score from 0 to 100, the higher the better.

Referring domains. ie other websites which link to your site. More and more authoritative linking domains increase your ranking.

Number of individual web pages linking to your site. (so a link in a footer on a website with many pages can inflate this figure hugely.)

Total number of links to your site. (One page may have multiple links, either to the same page on your site or to different pages.)

Dofollow and Nofollow are settings webmasters can apply when they set up a link to your site. Dofollow gives you a better score - it indicates the webmaster trusts and likes your site. Different sites have different defaults and policies about how to handle these

Number of pages the AHRefs bot found when it crawled your site. A zero score may mean that bots are forbidden to crawl the site.

The number of keywords (which AHRefs tracks) where your site ranks in the top 100 results.

None of the sites has an especially high SEO performance.

performs the best, with the most sites linking to it, the most links and the most keywords it shows for. However, AHRefs assesses many of the links as poor quality (from unrelated websites with low rankings themselves). This suggests some poor quality SEO work in the past.

Also worth noting is that has pages linked to in its footer which are purely for SEO around Builder Hawkesbury and Builder Western Sydney. This is an unsubtle way to improve ranking for those searches.

## Contactability

<b>CONTACTABILITY</b>					
<b>Contact information across the site</b>					
contact phone / email on all pages	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
contact phone / email on all pages above fold	yes	Home page only.	no	yes	no
<b>Contact form on contact page</b>					
number of fields	6	4	3	6	5
number of compulsory fields	4	4	3	6	5
<b>Contact/subscribe form in footer / sidebar</b>					
number of fields	no	no	no	no	no
number of compulsory fields	no	no	no	no	no
Chatbot	no	no	no	no	no
Request permission to send notifications	no	no	no	no	no

### What this measure means and why it matters

make it easier to contact you

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More fields makes your form harder to complete. Fewer people do so. Compulsory fields are a bigger issue than optional ones.

Having a form on every page makes it easy for people to sign up / enquire

Having contact details 'above the fold' means that they are visible without scrolling down.

has a visible phone number in the header which means it is on all pages. offers a choice of phone numbers and an email icon which links to an online form.

have an offer of an e-brochure, but the form is badly implemented, with too many required fields and poor options for the Contact Type and Found Us fields. Also note that the e-brochure is a sales piece and does not add value for the visitor or prospect, so is a bad choice of lead generation material.



## Readability

<b>READABILITY</b>					
<b>Readability score - reading ease</b>					
home page	58.6	53.6	66.2	61	56.8
about page	69.3	51	64.2	51.4	60.3
<b>Readability score - grade score</b>					
home page	6.7	6.9	5.1	6.8	7.2
about page	5.8	7.4	5.9	7.9	6

### What this measure means and why it matters

The higher the score, the easier your page is to read. The 'standard' for web writing is a readability score of 60 or above. If you operate in a technical field, a lower score may still be acceptable. But you don't want to be hard to understand compared to your competitors. 'Grade score' is the number of years of education someone needs to be able to understand your webpage.

There is little to choose between the sites in terms of readability. One reason is that home pages are generally image-heavy with minimal text.

## Building Trust

<b>TRUST FACTORS INCLUDING SOCIAL PROOF</b>						
	About page	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
	Photos/bios of founder / staff	yes	yes	no	yes	no
	Physical street address	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
	Testimonials	no	yes	yes	no	yes
	Case studies / projects	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
	Blog / News etc	yes	no	no	no	no
<b>Social Media Accounts</b>						
	Linked In	no	no	no	no	no
	Twitter	no	no	no	no	no
	Facebook	yes	no	yes	no	no
	YouTube	no	no	no	no	no
	Instagram	yes	no	yes	no	no
	Pinterest	no	no	no	no	no
	G+ (now defunct - should remove!)	yes	no	no	no	no
	Other?	Houzz				

### What this measure means and why it matters

Content like information about your business, customers, case studies and testimonials makes it easier to trust your site.

A regularly updated blog shows there is 'someone

Compare your social media accounts to others in your industry. Remember it's worth looking in more detail - social media only works if the business is active.

Trust and social proof enable visitors who have never met you to feel confident about you, so they can reach out or even buy from your site.

All sites generally score highly on trust factors. There are About pages with information and photos of key staff and there are testimonials and actual projects.

Use of testimonials is generally poor, though. They tend to be isolated on a testimonial page, rather than included on home page, about page, service pages and project pages. In a similar way, projects are not as well presented as they could be. They are a set of images rather than a story about how the project met client wants and needs.

██████████ is the only site to have a blog, but it is not full of content and updated. In an industry like this building, the need for a blog is debatable. It depends whether there is time to create articles discussing aspects of building rather than specific projects. A well-constructed services menu and a project gallery where each project has its own page (with text describing benefits to client / testimonial from client, and the page optimised for SEO) may be a more effective model and easier to maintain. This could be supported by an FAQ or Resources section focusing on specific building issues, which can build over time but does not require new content on a regular basis.