



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools

Schools Website Strategy and Essentials

By Sue Ellson



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge that MACS offices and Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Melbourne are situated on the lands of the five language groups that make up the Kulin Nation, who have walked upon and cared for this land for thousands of years. We acknowledge their continued deep spiritual connection and relationship to Country.

We pay respects to their Elders past, present and future, and commit to the ongoing journey of reconciliation.



Past Presentations for Catholic Schools

3 September 2025 Schools Online Content

Video https://drive.google.com/file/d/1TI9KL14pE8lprVEBI8FRJVBWfoLMB6Ry/view?usp=drive_link

Slides <https://sueellson.com/wp-content/uploads/20250901-MACS-Schools-Online-Content-Strategy-By-Sue-Ellson.pdf>

2 June 2025 Schools Online Strategy for Community Engagement and Enrolments

Video <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ailAu-p4MoKLT645n7erE2tg-eJiLMcX/view?usp=sharing>

Slides <https://sueellson.com/wp-content/uploads/20250602-macs-online-strategy-for-community-engagement-and-enrolments-by-sue-ellson.pdf>

29 November 2024 Marketing Your School in Social, Search and AI Chat

<https://sueellson.com/wp-content/uploads/20241129-catholic-development-network-marketing-your-school-in-social-search-and-ai-chat-by-sue-ellson.pdf>

26 June 2024 Social Media and AI Marketing for Catholic Schools

<https://sueellson.com/wp-content/uploads/20240626-catholic-development-network-social-media-and-ai-marketing-by-sue-ellson.pdf>

18 September 2019 LinkedIn For You And Your School

<https://sueellson.com/blog/linkedin-for-you-and-your-school-for-the-catholic-development-network>

6 March 2018 Social Media Masterclass

<https://sueellson.com/blog/social-media-masterclass-for-the-catholic-development-network>

<https://sueellson.com/catholic-development-network-presentations-and-publications>

MACS – Community
Engagement and
Growth Team – School
Marketing Tutorials
ceg@macs.vic.edu.au



Best Practice Guidelines for Schools

Website Checklist

- ☐ **HOME PAGE**
- ☐ Clear School Name & Logo
- ☐ Brief Welcome: A few lines about who the school is and what it values.
- ☐ Hero Image, Video or Banner: Showcases students, school grounds, or key messages.
- ☐ Easy Navigation Menu (Recommended key sections): Home, Our School, Our Learning, Wellbeing, Enrolment, Community, News & Events, Contact.
- ☐ Mobile-Friendly Design: Works well and looks clean on phones and tablets.
- ☐ 4 Quick Link Buttons: [Request Prospectus](#) [Book a Tour](#) [Enrolment Enquiry](#) [Apply Now](#)
- ☐ **GENERAL CONTENT**
- ☐ Menu Structure: Refer to sample website headings document
- ☐ Enrolments: An easy step-by-step process supported by an enquiry form and an application form. Ensure info is accessible within 1–2 clicks.
- ☐ Contact Page:
 - o Address with Google map
 - o Phone and email
 - o Office hours
 - o Contact/enquiry form
- ☐ **FUNCTIONALITY**
- ☐ Search Function: Allows users to quickly find information.
- ☐ Accessible Design: Meets accessibility standards (font size, contrast, alt text on images).
- ☐ Fast Loading Speed: Pages load quickly.
- ☐ Working Links: All internal and external links checked regularly.
- ☐ Links to Facebook/Instagram on the Home Page
- ☐ Use consistent fonts and colours
- ☐ Avoid walls of text: Use headings, images, space and avoid long scrolling on the page
- ☐ Current photos that reflect diversity, vibrancy, and relevancy of your school

Website Checklist

Best Practice Guidelines for Schools

Google Search Checklist

- ☐ **GOOGLE BUSINESS PROFILE (Maps & Search Box Info)**
- ☐ Claimed and Verified Listing: School has an official Google Business Profile (search "[Your School] Google Business Profile").
- ☐ Correct School Name: Matches what's on your website and signage exactly.
- ☐ Address, Phone & Website Link Accurate: Matches contact details on your website.
- ☐ School Hours Listed: Office opening times added (can include term/holiday variations).
- ☐ Profile Photo & Cover Photo Added: School crest/logo and a banner image of the school or students.
- ☐ Category Set to "Primary School" or "Catholic School": To appear in relevant local searches.
- ☐ **SEARCH RESULTS – WEBSITE APPEARANCE**
- ☐ School Website Appears First in Google Search: If not, check domain name is clear and relevant (e.g. yourschoolname.vic.edu.au).
- ☐ Page Titles and Descriptions Optimised: Each page of the website has a unique and clear title (e.g. "Enrolments – Our Lady's Primary School").
- ☐ Meta Description on Homepage: A short summary (about 1–2 sentences) that appears under your school name in search.
- ☐ Secure Website (HTTPS): Padlock symbol shows in the browser — essential for trust and search ranking.
- ☐ **LOCAL SEO (Search Engine Optimisation) BASICS**
- ☐ Your Suburb and School Type Mentioned on Homepage: E.g. "Catholic primary school in Surrey Hills, Melbourne."
- ☐ Images Have Alt Text: Helps with accessibility and shows up in Google Images.
- ☐ Consistent Contact Info Across Platforms: Your name, address, phone number match everywhere (website, Google, social media).
- ☐ **BONUS**
- ☐ School is Listed in Local Directories: e.g. Catholic Education Melbourne, school listing sites.

Google Search Checklist



Helpful Resources

What to do before you speak to a website designer – terminology – design house template or portable in the future (WordPress), custom, integrations other platforms
<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/what-do-before-you-speak-website-designer-sue-ellson>

How much you should pay for a website and what should be included in the website design proposal?
<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/how-much-should-i-pay-website-what-included-design-proposal-ellson>

What to do before you upgrade or redesign your website
<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/what-do-before-you-upgrade-redesign-your-website-sue-ellson>

Catholic Development Network August 2024 Newsletter Quick Wins for AI and Social Media
<https://sueellson.com/wp-content/uploads/20240801-catholic-development-network-august-newsletter-content-quick-wins-for-ai-and-social-media.docx>

LinkedIn for Schools, Colleges and Universities – Summary of a lot of schools related content
<https://sueellson.com/blog/linkedin-for-schools-colleges-and-universities>

LinkedIn Audit for Schools – ASBA Associate Magazine Page 21-22
<https://online.anyflip.com/fubq/ktvk/mobile/index.html>

Educate Plus Presentations and Publications
<https://sueellson.com/educate-plus-presentations-and-publications>



Follow MACS on Social

Keep up to date and have content you can consider sharing!

<https://www.facebook.com/MelbourneCatholicSchools>

1.1K / 1.3K / 1.4K Followers

<https://www.instagram.com/melbournecatholicsschools>

2,139 / 2,862 / 3,068 Followers

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/melbourne-archdiocese-catholic-schools>

11K+ / 12K+, 11,933 Followers 10K+ / 10K+ / 10K+ Employees

<https://www.youtube.com/@CatholicEducationMelbourne>

958 / 985 / 998 Subscribers 133 / 133 / 133 Videos



All social links on footer of website at

<https://www.macs.vic.edu.au>



Thanks and Feedback

✓ Completely anonymous

✓ **Extremely important – appears when you leave the webinar**

✓ You can also say Thank You to MACS via an online review

Google Review (20 / 22 / 22 Google Reviews)

https://search.google.com/local/writereview?placeid=ChIJibe0NsNC1moRXCqf_efKuac



Webinar Feedback

Your anonymous feedback is extremely helpful to us - please take a moment to add your comments!

1. What did you find most helpful in this webinar?

Long answer (300 characters)

2. What do you plan to do next?

Long answer (200 characters)

3. What else would have been helpful?

Long answer (200 characters)

4. Are there any other topics of particular interest for a follow up webinar?

- ☐ Website and Search Engine Optimisation SEO
- ☐ Specific Social Media Platforms - Strategy and Tactics
- ☐ Creating Content and Engagement - Strategy and Tactics
- ☐ Directories and Reviews - Google, Bing, Facebook, True Local
- ☐ Alumni and LinkedIn - Strategy and Tactics
- ☐ Other

5. Any other comments or specific requests?

Long answer (300 characters)



What can you share?

- Do you have a website story that you would like to share with us?
- Something that you are proud of and why?
- Any warnings or suggestions you have for other schools?

Will be some time for discussion at the end...



School Website Role?

- **Are you responsible for**

S = Strategy

M = Management

U = Updates and Edits

O = Other

Please put your letter/s in the chat

Schools Website Strategy and Essentials

Understand the value of your school website for online search, AI and social media results, strategy and essentials.

Learn from Sue Ellson and gain valuable insights to enhance your school's online presence.

Don't miss this opportunity to network with other educators and share best practices.

Comprehensive slides with links will be provided to all registrants.



Sue Ellson

Member of



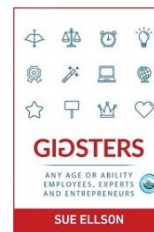
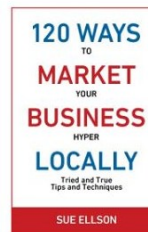
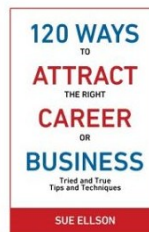
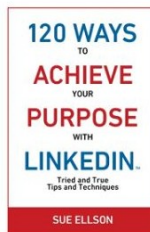
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SOCIETY
of AUTHORS



Founder of



Author of



Books Available at <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Sue-Ellson>
Webinars and Recordings at <https://sueellson.com/webinars-and-recordings>
More at <https://sueellson.com> and <https://www.linkedin.com/in/sueellson>
Quick questions welcome sueellson@sueellson.com



Follow / Subscribe Online

- ✓ LinkedIn Profile <https://www.linkedin.com/in/sueellson> 26,497 Connections 31,291 Followers
- ✓ LinkedIn Page <https://www.linkedin.com/company/sue-ellson> 1,086 Followers
- ✓ Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/sueellson2> 283 Followers
- ✓ Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/sueellson> (mostly poems) 508 Followers
- ✓ TikTok <https://www.tiktok.com/@sueellson> 121 Followers
- ✓ Pinterest <https://au.pinterest.com/sueellson> 22 Followers
- ✓ Twitter / X <https://x.com/sueellson> 443 Followers
- ✓ YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/@sueellson> 754 Subscribers 213 Videos
- ✓ Sue Ellson Shares LinkedIn Newsletter <https://www.linkedin.com/newsletters/sue-ellson-shares-6869552819440099328> 6,946 Subscribers
- ✓ Sue Ellson Sharing LinkedIn Newsletter <https://www.linkedin.com/newsletters/7011478630589497344> 423 Subscribers
- ✓ Sue Ellson Email Newsletter <https://sueellson.com/newsletters> 1,833 Subscribers



Interactive

- Please engage throughout
- Please take action notes
- Please select three actions to complete after the workshop
- Questions most welcome throughout the workshop!
- Including examples and stories

Who are you representing today?

1. Early Learning Centre
2. Primary School
3. Secondary School
4. Primary and Secondary School
5. ELC – Year 12
6. Provider of Services to Schools
7. Other

Please add relevant number/s in chat



1. Purpose

- Appear in Search and Generative AI Results
 - Support enrolments – make a CLEAR journey (Book a tour and/or Enrol now on Home Page)
 - Promote school values
 - Celebrate achievements
 - Engage families
 - Due diligence for ‘lurkers’
-
- What else would you add?



2. Catholic School Identity

- Key Static Information
- Key Current Information
- Key Messaging
- Archiving of History Online (how much to keep)
- What else would you add?



3. Target Audiences

- Students – future, present, past
 - Parents and Caregivers
 - Teachers and Staff
 - Local Parish Community
 - Various Stakeholders
 - Referrers - Childcare Centres, Pre Schools
 - Local Community – Neighbours, Council etc
 - Suppliers
-
- Do you support these with your website strategy?
 - Who else would you add?



4. Online Digital Assets

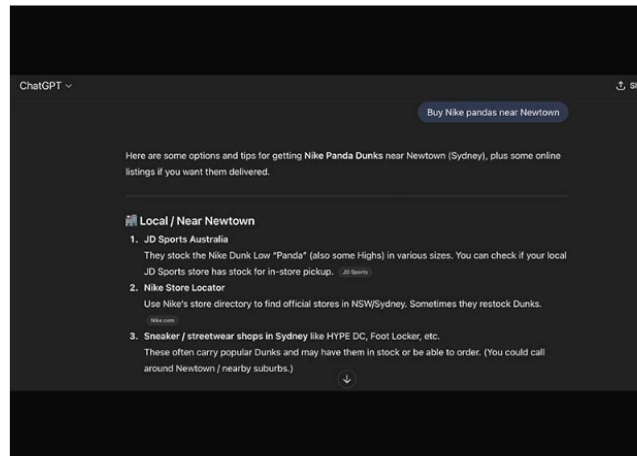
- **School Website – only item YOU own**
 - Social Media Profiles
 - Public Directory Listings
 - School Specific Listings
 - Mainstream Media Coverage
 - Online Publications
-
- Are these all up to date?
 - Have you checked the settings for each one?
 - **Do you search for and index all of your school content on your website?**
- 



WHY GEN Z IS DITCHING SEARCH FOR AI AND HOW IT WILL IMPACT YOUR BUSINESS

BY CEC BUSBY SEPTEMBER 16, 2023 11:54 AM

SHARE



More young Aussies are now turning to AI platforms rather than traditional search engines, social media, or even influencers when deciding what to buy, according to a global report, [New Modes 2025](#) by Commerce and Future Commerce.

The report surveyed 1,000 consumers across the US, UK, and AU/NZ to paint a picture of changing habits. Nearly half of Gen Z and Millennials in our region report using AI platforms every day. Around a quarter of them even admit they trust AI recommendations more than ones coming from humans.

The report also shows that shopping itself has become an always-on activity, with nearly half of all consumers keeping what researchers call a "perpetual shopping list". Basically, a running tally of things they're always considering buying. Yet while they're always ready to shop, friction is still a deal-breaker: 63 per cent of consumers

<https://businessbuilders.com.au/news/why-gen-z-is-ditching-search-for-ai-and-how-it-will-impact-your-business>



5. Search Results versus Generative AI Results

Search

Google
Bing
Yahoo

Algorithm Assessment
Added to Database
Scientific Qualified Result

Few Words Search Query
AI Result + Links to websites
You can assess quality

Generative AI

ChatGPT
Gemini
Copilot

Comprehensive Data Scrape
Added to Huge Dataset
Probability Results – LLM and NLP

More Words Prompt
AI Narrative + Digital References
What you want to hear



6. Requirements for Search and Gen AI

- Pages - Home, About, Contact, Privacy Policy
- Backup – to restore if/when compromised
- Caching (loads faster)
- Security
- Search Engine Optimisation
 - page / post titles what people are looking for
 - logical site map (no orphaned content – blog with categories helpful)
 - resized, renamed and titled owned image/s and featured image per page / post
 - one video per page / post (if available, recommend YouTube embed)
 - markup (Heading 1, 2, 3, bold text, bullet points, quotes, categories, tags)
 - 300+ words
 - include interlinks other pages / posts, external links / backlinks opening in a new tab
 - include a call to action



7. Specific Website Goals

- First Page above the 'fold' – visitor knows exactly what to do or where to go
 - David Jenyns:
 - website speed (the time it takes to load) - less than four seconds
 - bounce rate (the percentage before a visitor returns to previous screen) - less than 55%
 - time on your website - greater than two minutes
 - pages per visit to your website - more than two pages
-
- Find these in Google Analytics or Microsoft Clarity
 - Set the results you want for your school and do what you can to achieve them



8. Other Goals

- maintaining or increasing the number of visits all of the time
- converting a reasonable (and increasing) percentage of visitors into leads
- seeking feedback from visitors as to how to improve their user experience (UX)
- kept fresh and interesting over time (reviewed and checked at least every two years)
- building and earning a consistent reputation over time (where your content is referenced in multiple quality locations)
- provides a useful resource for past, present and future stakeholders (students, caregivers, staff)
- responds to the needs of the school community (e.g. more information for potential staff members about the benefits of working at your school)
- be found for school name, school location, school type in a broader location, school speciality, school facilities (if hiring out) etc



9. Google Business

- business.google.com – make sure you own / administer it
- select up to 10 categories
- include social media links
- add regular Posts (including social media ones)
- add own photos
- add products, services, other sections
- most schools have had Reviews turned off (consider Facebook Reviews)
- setup <https://www.google.com/alerts> for your School Name and Principal's Name
- make sure you own <https://analytics.google.com/analytics/web/>



10. Common Issues

- Items don't work – forms don't work, not tested etc
- Social Media Profiles not listed (especially YouTube and LinkedIn)
- Icon Links not linked
- Difficult to find information
- Main message not clear
- No video welcome from the Principal
- Promotion of website developer (you paid for it!)
- Not easy to use on a phone – pinch and zoom not responsive
- Using PDFs not website content
- Old copyright date (past year) or not updated within last three years
- Clickable or Non-Clickable Phone Links (+61 3 9999 8888 may or may not work)



Great Examples



Search: Catholic Primary School Melbourne
Trinity Primary School Richmond <https://tcs.catholic.edu.au>



Great Examples



High in Search but also created with WordPress <https://www.genazzano.vic.edu.au>



Great Examples



3

Campuses located in Wahroonga on Sydney's North Shore



200+

Boarding places for boys from Year 7 across three boarding houses



92.3

Median ATAR in 2024



30+

Sports including rugby, basketball, tennis, volleyball and more



70+

Co-Curricular activities including cadets, clubs and social justice



90+

Music programs including instrumental and choral performance opportunities



1

Bespoke Total Fitness Model representing academic, social-emotional, spiritual, and physical wellbeing



60+

Co-educational opportunities such as cadets, service learning and the performing arts



<https://www.knox.nsw.edu.au>



What can you share?

- We will add links here for you to check out later!



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- ☐ Other

5. Any other comments or specific requests?

Long answer (300 characters)



Thank you – and Questions and Answers

Great to have you with us! Please keep in touch!





Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools

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