

Downtown is  
Calling

Good  
Times  
Await



October 2023

# EBulletin

Riverside Downtown Business Improvement District


## Downtown Business Improvement District

The Board of Directors of the Riverside Downtown Partnership (RDP) approved the Annual Report for the renewal of the Riverside Downtown Parking and Business Improvement District (Downtown BID) levy for the 2023 calendar year at their July 12, 2023 meeting. The report was submitted to the City following the meeting for setting of the Public Hearing. It's expected that the Public Hearing will be set for 3 pm on October 24, 2023. The City sends out notices to all businesses in the Downtown BID to advise them of the date and time of the public hearing.

Both the Annual Report for the renewal as well as the PowerPoint presentation are posted on the RDP website for businesses to review prior to the public

hearing. Go to [www.riversidedowntown.org](http://www.riversidedowntown.org), click on "About RDP" for the dropdown menu, and then "Annual Renewal Report."

The activities of the Downtown BID are funded by the BID levy which is equal to 100% of the annual business tax levied by the City of Riverside and assessed on all businesses within the BID boundaries. No changes in the assessment or boundaries are proposed for 2024.

For more details, please refer to the Annual Report and the PowerPoint presentation. If you have any questions regarding either or the BID renewal process, please contact Janice Penner at the RDP office at 951-781-7339. 

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Join us for the RDP luncheon at Noon on Tuesday, October 24, 2023 at the Life Arts Center at 3485 University Avenue featuring Nancy Melendez of the Spanish Town Foundation presenting on the Trujillo Adobe. Call the RDP office at 951-781-7335 for reservations.



## Fall Events

**The Riverside Art and Music Festival** takes place on Saturday, October 7th from 11 am to 7 pm in White Park. The Riverside Downtown Partnership (RDP) and the Riverside Arts Council (RAC) are once again partnering on the annual Riverside Art and Music Festival. The festival will include performances by local cultural groups and entertainers, artisan vendors, exhibits and demonstrations by arts and cultural organizations, plus children's activities. There will also be several art installations including one by Rico Alderette of Alderette Designs. For more information on the Riverside Art and Music Festival, visit [www.facebook.com/RiversideArtandMusicFestival](http://www.facebook.com/RiversideArtandMusicFestival).

**The Riverside Art Alliance's Artoberfest** will be held on Saturday, October 7th from 6 pm to 10 pm at the Riverside Art Museum. An artful night of "bier and musik" German-style, attendees will enjoy beer tasting flights, German food, and music from Brassworks. Attendees can sort through the vintage art sale of gently loved art treasures to snatch up at bargain prices and an art boutique that will offer everything from

jewelry to ceramics at very affordable prices. For more information visit <https://riversideartmuseum.org/events/artoberfest/>

**The Mary S. Roberts Pet Adoption Center's first Barktoberfest** will be held on Saturday, October 14th from 12 pm to 4 pm at White Park in Riverside. This is a dog-friendly, fundraising event with the proceeds providing second chances to homeless pets and resources to the community. Animal lovers and craft brew lovers alike will come together to enjoy tastings from some of the best local craft breweries, partake in delicious bites available for purchase, listen to music, participate in special activities and more. Visit [petsadoption.org](http://petsadoption.org) for more information.

**The 46th Annual Mission Inn Run** returns on Sunday, October 22nd with a Health and Fitness Expo on Saturday, October 21st. To sign up, participate as a sponsor, vendor or volunteer, or to get more information, go to [www.missioninnrun.org](http://www.missioninnrun.org). The website also has a map of street closures on


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October 22nd along with times of closures. Downtown Businesses should note that full street closures start at 7 am and continue until 12:30 pm. The finish line is in front of the Mission Inn Hotel and Spa. Visit [missioninnmuseum.org](http://missioninnmuseum.org) for more information.


**The Inland Regional Center's Fall Festival** will be held on Saturday, October 28th from 11 am to 3 pm at the Riverside Convention Center. This free family festival will celebrate the Inland Empire's cultural diversity. Visit [inlandrc.org/ff2023](http://inlandrc.org/ff2023) for more information.

### And Halloween fun includes:

- California Riverside Ballet's Spirit Walk on Thursday, October 19th at Riverside Community Players and Ghostwalk October 20th and 21st at St. Francis De Sales School. For more information, visit [crballet.net](http://crballet.net)
- Monster Fest on Saturday, October 21st starting at 6 pm at North Park. The event has Halloween fun for all ages with food, kids' entertainment, and music. Costumes are encouraged. Tickets available at [eventbrite.com](http://eventbrite.com) 

## RDP's Holiday Window Decorating Contest Returns

Downtown businesses can help light up downtown by participating in RDP's annual window decorating contest. Decorate your windows and be eligible to win the \$200 First Place prize, \$150 Second Place prize, or \$100 Third Place prize, or one of five \$50 Honorable Mention prizes. Winners will be notified by email or phone and then announced on December 15th on Facebook. Winners will also receive a Certificate.

To enter, email [janice@riversidedowntown.org](mailto:janice@riversidedowntown.org) to receive an entry form. Entry forms will also be available at the RDP office or from the RDP Ambassadors. Windows must be decorated by November 17th and entry forms submitted by December 1st. 

## Supervisor's Message – Kevin's Corner *Contributed by Supervisor Kevin Jeffries*



In lieu of my normal updates, I wanted to pass along this excerpted press release from the County on an issue of importance to many:

### **Riverside County to launch CARE Act mental health program Oct. 2**

The CARE Act is a new state law meant to address and treat those with severe mental health disorders by allowing the court to order the county to provide behavioral health treatment in community-based settings. Governor Newsom signed SB 1338 enacting the Community Assistance, Recovery & Empowerment Act (CARE Act), which creates a new pathway to deliver mental health and substance use disorder services to the most severely impaired Californians who often suffer homelessness or incarceration without treatment. CARE Court aims to break the cycle of homelessness and incarceration for these individuals and promote long-term recovery through a court process. Riverside County is in the first group of seven counties to implement CARE Act.

"Riverside County's commitment to behavioral health treatment is unwavering," said Chair Kevin Jeffries, First District. "While we continue to seek voluntary treatment at all times, this new CARE Court tool may put us in a better position to help more people – those who just may need it the most."

The goal of the CARE Act program is to prevent those with severe mental health disorders from entering more restrictive conservatorships or incarceration. At the same time, voluntary treatment is always available and preferred to seeking court-ordered treatment options.

For the last year, county teams and the Superior Court have worked in partnership with state agencies, and the Judicial Council of California, to support the successful implementation of this legislation. The CARE Act is a new civil court process that will be collaborative in nature, whereby multiple agencies will work together to provide personalized treatment plans and community-based support services to those that qualify. In Riverside County, CARE Act cases will be part of the probate division of the Superior Court.

Individuals can be referred into the program by a variety of persons, the most typical being a family member, first responder or service provider. The process can start by calling the Riverside University Health System-Behavior Health CARES Line at 800-499-3008. In addition, petitions to Commence CARE Act Proceedings can be filed at any Riverside County Court location, starting October 2, 2023. Petitions may also be electronically filed free of charge via the court's eSubmit system. Riverside Superior Court offers self-help services to assist CARE Act petitioners, respondents and families as they navigate the CARE Act process and will also help connect individuals to other available resources in Riverside County.

Riverside County residents who need more information about the CARE Act can call the:

- Court's Self-Help Legal Services at (951) 274-4499 or (760) 393-2163, or
- County's CARES Line at (800) 499-3008, or
- Visit the Riverside University Health System website.



# Mayor's Message - Always a Busy Time in Downtown!

## Updates on Downtown Projects

*Contributed by Mayor Patricia Lock Dawson*



So much is going on in our downtown! As I have shared before, beautification is important to bring people and events to our city core. Over the last month there has been much accomplished by way of beautification. The "Historic Riverside"

mural in the alleyway behind Citizens Business Bank is complete after a 55-day effort by local artist Tiffany Brooks. This is the largest mural in town at 6,000 square feet and funded by private donations. Across Mission Inn Avenue by Route 30 Brewing is another new mural by artist Ekaterina Orlovie. This vibrant orange mural incorporates American Sign Language (ASL) into the work for a take on ASL-inspired art. The Riverside Downtown Partnership has funded two additional murals by artist Geoff Gouveia—one at Main and 14th Streets and one at Main and 5th Streets, both of which were completed last month. The one at Main and 5th is a favorite of mine as it is a map of Downtown Riverside to direct visitors from the hotels and convention center to various artistic and cultural institutions.

Other beautification projects are underway with the renovation of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial

under construction now, deep cleaning/polishing and minor landscaping improvements to the Cesar Chavez Memorial, and restoration of the Seth Thomas Clock at Main Street and Mission Inn Avenue are in the pipeline.

The City Council recently approved six million dollars in small business grants—funded through federal dollars—for security enhancements, exterior repairs, façade improvement, staff training, and more. The façade improvement grant is one I have shared about in this column before as it is one that I am most looking forward to seeing implemented. Over the next month we will start up the program and will open the application process. More to come in November!

Finally, starting October 2nd CARE Court goes into effect for Riverside County. I have shared about CARE Court before but as a reminder, it is a new state law that will allow judges to act on and rule in cases of individuals with severe mental and behavioral health challenges to compel them into treatment. We are the first county in the state to launch CARE Court so there will be much to document and learn in the first few months of this program. This is the first significant change to our mental healthcare laws since 1967. I will provide an update on progress in early 2024.

As always, my door—and inbox—is open. Please contact me at [2mayor@riversideca.gov](mailto:2mayor@riversideca.gov)



## COUNCIL CORNER

### Ward One Council Update

*Contributed by Councilwoman Erin Edwards*

October shows no signs of slowing down in our Downtown. September brought vibrance to our Downtown with Artswalk and Deafestival. As we look forward to fall in Downtown Riverside, make sure you stay tuned for these important discussions and events:

- I look forward to seeing you at the Art and Music Festival in White Park on October 7th from 11AM - 7 PM.
- On the consent calendar for the October 10th City Council evening session, we will vote on scheduling a public hearing for the annual Downtown Business Improvement District Intention to Levy. That final conversation is anticipated to take place on October 24th.
- Also on October 10th: there will be a discussion to help the community understand ways to address Tree and Sidewalk concerns.
- Animal Lovers will flock to Downtown for Barktober Fest in White Park from 12-4 PM on October 14th.

- Downtown gets spooky on the 20th and the 21st for the return of Ghost Walk.
- The Riverside Transmission Reliability Project Working Group will share an update with the City Council during the evening portion of the October 24th meeting.
- The City Council will review the annual Downtown BID Levy at 3 PM on October 24th.

Good news: Downtown will have a new parking lot at the former Encore School Site by Festival of Lights. After hearing your concerns, our staff are working on securing a paving schedule for Brockton Avenue between 10th and 14th Streets. The Community Engagement Policy is headed to the Dais this fall; stay tuned to learn when you can engage on this critical topic. As always, you can contact me at 951-783-7811 or at [EEEdwards@RiversideCA.Gov](mailto:EEEdwards@RiversideCA.Gov) to discuss questions and ideas. I look forward to hearing from you.





# Arts Corner - Riverside Artswalk - Artist Spotlight: Willis Garcia Salomon

*Contributed by Rachael Dzikonski, Executive Director – Riverside Arts Council*



First Thursdays have become the prime time to check out Downtown Riverside, with all of the new restaurants and businesses and of course, with the wonderful ambience that our arts community creates during Riverside Artswalk. This year, the event has experienced a great deal of changes and growth, with the move and expansion of the vendor area, the incredible exhibits that have been on display at the museums and galleries – and not to mention the amazing new murals that have been popping up throughout the downtown area.

The arts have been intertwined in the culture of Downtown Riverside, inspiring community participation and providing artists with many opportunities to exhibit their work. Willis Garcia Salomon, this month's Artist Spotlight, is one of the artists that has received many opportunities recently to showcase his artistic talents at various locations. In September, Willis participated in the Krook's 23rd Anniversary Skateboard Group Art Show at Pain Sugar Gallery and was featured at The Cheech in the Altura Credit Union Community Gallery

Willis is an Inland Empire based visual artist and photographer who has attended the Riverside Artswalk for many years as a consumer and patron, but in the last three years has participated as an organizer and participating artist. His background is in art direction for commercial fashion, as well as installation art and visual display. Currently he is focusing on his own artistic practice, connecting nostalgic ideas through a mix of analog and digital means, and dedicating some quality time to his budding

mural career. The ultimate goal with his art career is to be able to create and live while also helping other creatives do the same.

Willis is inspired to create artwork by the environment around him, an old feeling, a memory, past experiences; both good and bad. During his self-time, he gets inspired and takes in inspiration which is the balance and respite from producing art and constant creative output. Willis uses his artistic practice to pay bills, as an escape, to find inspiration for other art disciplines, and it lets him express himself. It also lets him connect and communicate with other creatives. Willis thinks that whether it is connecting with other creatives, seeing art shows and exhibitions, and even buying/selling - being actively engaged in the arts helps the ecosystem and helps art and commerce thrive. Helping other creatives not only build a skillset but learn about how to sustain a creative lifestyle is very important, and Riverside Artswalk is just one of the many events that help artists connect, learn and thrive as career artists.

Willis has shown his work at the Artlands, Eastside Arthouse, Alleyes Gallery, Pain Sugar Gallery, Gramercy Gallery, the Riverside Art Museum and Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art & Culture. He is also very involved in the local art communities and organizations, currently on the board for the Artlands Creative, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based in Redlands, and is also Director of Communications for Arts Connection, the Arts Council of San Bernardino County. Willis hopes to figure out the puzzle of being able to live and sustain a creative/artist life, and wants to share his experiences with other creatives, so they too can live and sustain a creative life.

For more information about Willis, visit [willisthegorilla.com](http://willisthegorilla.com) or @willisthegorilla on IG. For more information on Riverside Artswalk visit [www.riversideartswalk.com](http://www.riversideartswalk.com) or @riversideartswalk on IG 📍

## BUSINESS BUZZ

### Email Marketing List Management Best Practices

*By Karina Fabian*

- Building a small business website is essential to inform your audience, explain your value proposition, boost brand recognition and drive sales.
- To build a business website, you first need to choose a domain name and secure web hosting.
- You'll want to keep your website updated and optimized for mobile devices.
- This article is for small business owners looking to build a website for their company.

It's no longer feasible to run a business, even a brick-and-mortar one, without a web presence. Consumers turn to the internet for everything, from product research to company location and operating hours. Even a simple, well-designed website can give you an edge in your field and if you have products to sell, your site can open up new markets and expand your business cheaply and easily.

Website design software has evolved to be easy for anyone to use. You don't need to know coding to develop an attractive and functional site. No matter what program you use, you

need to follow some basic rules and tips to give your website a professional look, make it easy to find and show your company in the best light.

How to build a business website

Here's our step-by-step guide to creating a successful business website.

#### 1. Determine the primary purpose of your website.

A business website generally serves as a space to provide general information about your company or it may function as a direct platform for e-commerce so you can sell online. Whether you create a simple site that tells consumers a little about your business or a more complex offering for online shopping, the most important thing you must do is say what your company does right on the homepage in plain terms. Don't make customers root around to discover if your enterprise can do what they need, said Erin Pheil, founder of The MindFix Group and the website design company formerly known as Followbright.

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"Think about your specific user experience and the journey the user will go through as they navigate your site," said Gabriel Shaoolian, CEO and founder of Digital Silk. "Whatever the fundamental goal of your website is or whatever the focus may be, users should be easily able to achieve it and the goal itself should be reinforced as users navigate throughout your site."

If you don't plan to accept payments like Apple Pay through your website, you won't have as much work to do in setting it up. However, if you're a retailer or service provider and want to offer customers the option to pay online, you'll need to use an external service to receive your payments, which we'll discuss later in this article.

### **2. Decide your domain name.**

Your domain name is one of the most critical features of your website. It's the URL you'll share with your current and potential clients and promote on social media. Therefore, you want it to be descriptive and easy to remember and type into a web browser. Try to keep it short and steer clear of abbreviations, acronyms and numbers, if possible, to avoid customer confusion.

You also need to decide your top-level domain (TLD). This is the suffix at the end of your domain name, such as .com, .net or .biz. However, nontraditional TLD names have grown in recent years. These TLDs can be based on location, such as .nyc, or type of business, such as .marketing, .agency or .law. While these can be descriptive, .com is still the main go-to.

Once you've selected your domain name, you'll need to confirm its availability and purchase it through a domain registrar. These are some popular domain registrars.

- Domain.com
- Wix
- Squarespace
- GoDaddy

As you select your new domain name, check copyrights to make sure you're not infringing on anyone else's protected name. If your preferred URL is already taken, you can call the company using it and ask to buy it from them or use a domain-buying service from a company like GoDaddy, which will reach out to the owners of your desired domain name. This service costs around \$70 per domain, plus commission for their services.

Your domain name, also known as your URL, is how users will find your website, so choose something related to your business or services.

### **3. Choose a web host.**

Every website needs a host — a server where all its data is stored for the public to access at all times. Hosting your own website is probably too large an expense for your small business, so you'll need to select an external host.

Depending on your business's budget, you can choose from two different routes. A shared web host, the less-expensive option, means you'll share a server with other sites. The other option, dedicated hosting, costs significantly more, but it means you get your own private server and won't have to compete with other sites that could drag down your website's speed. Some web builder platforms, such as Squarespace and Wix, include web hosting in their monthly packages.

These are some notable providers for web hosting services:

- Ionos: This web hosting company is known for its cloud hosting and offers other cloud-based options such as

servers and site backup. Plans and capabilities vary, but hosting for a WordPress-based site begins at \$1 per month.

- A2 Hosting: A2 Hosting sells both shared and dedicated hosting options. Managed WordPress hosting plans begin at \$11.99 per month. Dedicated hosting plans start at \$155.99 per month when you sign up for the whole year.
- DreamHost: DreamHost has tailored plans for WordPress hosting, beginning at \$2.59 per month, along with shared and virtual private server (VPS) hosting plans.

If you're looking for free hosting options, it's crucial to remember that hosting a website is by no means free for the hosting company. Therefore, they may employ other methods, such as placing banner ads on your website, to compensate for the free hosting.

When choosing a host, consider how well the vendor can answer questions about its server locations and reliability, said Jim Cowie, co-founder of DeepMacro and former chief scientist at cloud-based internet performance company Dyn.

"It's good to ask, 'Can you show me how close you are to the major markets my customers are going to be in?'" Cowie said. "Any good hosting provider should have the tools to show you ... measurements of their performance."

As your business grows, you may find that you need to upgrade to a different web host or even work with multiple providers to handle your website traffic and operations. Cowie advised keeping a close eye on your site performance and the experience your customers have using your website so you can determine your hosting needs.

### **4. Build your pages.**

A good website is more than a static homepage. Using platforms like WordPress, Wix or Squarespace, you'll want to create multiple pages dedicated to different aspects of your business, such as a detailed catalog of your products or services or a blog section for company updates. As for your overall website, make sure each page supports the site's primary goal, has a clear purpose and includes a call to action (CTA), such as "Learn More," "Sign Up," "Contact Us" or "Buy This," that leads the user somewhere.

A contact page, your customers' direct link to you, is one of the most vital sections of a website, so include as much information as you can (your business's phone number, email address and physical location, if you have one). It's also a good idea to include information about the founding team or staff on an "About" page so customers can put real names and faces to your brand.

If your business doesn't already have a logo, hire a graphic designer or create a logo yourself to use on your website, business cards and social media profiles. A cohesive brand image will help your clients identify your company quickly and easily on the web.

Justin Zalewski, senior user experience manager at Evernorth Health Services, offered a few basic tips to help you create efficient, content-rich pages for your website:

- **Be clear about what your business does:** Distill what your business does into a clear, concise statement and lead with that. Visitors should be able to understand what you do within seconds of landing on your homepage. A few well-written pages are more effective than dozens of poorly written ones.
- **Place strategic CTA:** CTA buttons tend to perform best when they match the information on the page. For example, a "Buy Now" button makes sense on a product page,

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but a “Contact Us to Learn More” button might be more appropriate on the “About Us” page. Similarly, a page listing customer reviews might have a button that takes the reader to your available products and pricing.

- **Automate speed improvements:** Set up as many automated speed improvements as you can through online tools. If you use a content management system, installing the right plugins will cache parts of your site so visitors don't need to download anything more than once. For WordPress users, Zalewski recommended WP Super Cache or W3 Total Cache, which compresses files and allows visitors to browse your site more quickly. Some of the more technical aspects of caching and compressing files may require a web development partner if you're not particularly tech-savvy.
- **Avoid stock photos:** Tacky stock photography is the quickest way to turn a great site into a mediocre one. If you're looking for photos to use on your pages, it's best to use a picture of your actual team or office. Pheil added that high-quality images of products increase sales, so invest in good photos of the items or services you sell.

### **5. Set up your payment system (if applicable).**

While this step won't apply to all business websites, companies that want to offer the option for customers to pay online will need to integrate electronic payment systems with their sites. The easiest way to do this is through e-commerce software or by employing one of the best credit card processing solutions.

Also, many web hosts offer an in-house shopping cart or integrate with e-commerce programs. Do some research to make sure you get a solution that's easy to work with and flexible enough to meet your needs now and in the future.

Common e-commerce problems include shopping cart abandonment, where potential customers don't follow through with online purchases and security concerns following data breaches.

### **6. Test and publish your website.**

Before announcing your site is live on the web, make sure it works on all major browsers, such as Microsoft Edge, Firefox, Safari and Chrome. Click through each page and feature on every browser to ensure images show up, links are correct and the format looks smooth. This will take some time, but the effort you put in now will save you future complaints from visitors who can't access certain features.

Also, make sure your website displays properly on mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets. This step should not be overlooked as Google and other search engines have migrated to mobile-first indexing, which prioritizes the performance of the mobile version of your website when it comes to search engine rankings.

Another important feature to incorporate from the very beginning is an analytics program. By setting this up before the website launches, you can iron out any issues and coordinate a proper setup, Shaoolian said. Once the website is live, you can monitor page performance and determine why a certain page is successful or unsuccessful based on the analytics.

“You can look at which of your marketing campaigns are showing the most conversions and examine any [user] metrics, such as city, browser, etc., to shed some light on how your audience is interacting with your site,” Shaoolian said. “If you ... implement this [after] the site goes live, you'll miss out on

valuable data and have no way of seeing which elements of your site are successful or unsuccessful right from the start.”

### **7. Market your website on social media.**

Social media platforms, such as Facebook, X (formerly known as Twitter), LinkedIn and Pinterest, are the best way to increase your audience reach and alert customers to what's going on with your company. Whenever you update your website, post about it on your social media accounts but balance those posts with genuine, nonpromotional engagement.

Also, include links to your social media profiles on your website. The most common places to do this are in the footer or the ancillary bar (the extra menu in the top-right that often holds login or contact links).

### **8. Invest in search engine optimization (SEO).**

Submitting your website to major search engines will help direct users to your page as will deploying a strong SEO strategy across your site. Shaoolian said that defining title tags, meta descriptions and uniform resource identifiers (URIs) that are relevant to your company and aspects of your industry can boost your rankings in search engines for the products or services you're trying to market.

“Building relevant keywords into your content from the very first phases of your website and having a strong focus on SEO from website launch, will help you generate traffic early on,” he said.

As you build your business website, these important on-site SEO tactics can help you improve your ability to move up the ranks:

- **Choose the right keywords:** Select keywords that are relevant to your business and that your potential customers are searching for online. There are online tools that can help you identify, analyze and track these keywords.
- **Publish fresh content:** Regularly publishing on your website's blog, adding to your site and updating your content all signal to search engines that your site is relevant for the chosen keywords. Choose topics that are relevant to your business and exciting for your industry to position yourself and your business as thought leaders in the space.
- **Place internal and external links:** Internal links are the links on your website pages that lead to other pages on your site, while external links are your links to other popular, high-authority websites. Place these links strategically throughout your website. Make sure the links make sense, fit the context and provide value to the reader; otherwise, the linking may count against you.
- **Optimize images:** Compress images so they don't slow down your site's loading time. Take the same approach with video, making sure any clips load quickly and don't hamper how your site moves overall. Image metadata, such as tags and captions, is also an opportunity to work in your keywords and tell search engines what the images are about.
- **Maximize your site speed:** Pages should load as quickly as possible; within a few seconds is ideal. You can use free site speed checkers like Google's PageSpeed Insights to see if your site is performing optimally.

There are also off-site SEO tactics you can pursue, such as obtaining backlinks — links to your site from third-

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party web pages. This signals to search engines that your website is valuable and deserves to rank highly in search results.

### 9. Maintain your site.

Staying relevant is important, so update your website frequently with blog posts on current industry events, new products and offers and company news to keep visitors coming back to the site.

You should also check at least monthly to ensure your website software and all add-ons are up to date. Pheil said that if your software isn't up to date, it's in danger of being hacked, even

if your web host's security is strong. If you don't have time to do this yourself, delegate the task to a trusted employee or a freelance website manager.

Starting a website for your business is a relatively low-cost investment that can help you establish credibility and reach a wider customer base than you ever could through traditional marketing techniques. If you keep your website updated with fresh, current content and are quick to address technical issues, you'll never have to worry about "not existing" to your current and future clients.

<https://www.businessnewsdaily.com/4661-starting-a-business-website.html>



## "That's Not My Department" and 10 other Phrases Customers Hate

By Shep Hykin

You have a problem. You call the phone number listed on the company's website. Then, wait on hold for what seems much longer than the ten minutes they said you would be holding. You finally get to a customer service rep. You tell your story and the customer service rep responds, "I'm sorry, that's not my department." Then you're transferred to someone else and the "game" of holding and telling your story starts all over again.

This has happened to many, if not all of us. I have good news! Since customer service has become a center of attention for most companies (even though some still don't get it right), "That's not my department" is being heard less and less. That said, there are still plenty of other phrases and words we, as customers, hate to hear. Here's ten more:

1. **"You're wrong."** Customers hate to be told they're wrong.
2. **"I wasn't here when that happened."** It's not my fault." Customers don't care whose fault it is, they just want someone to help.
3. **"I'll get the manager, but he'll tell you the same thing."** Why don't we wait and see?
4. **"We're a little busy now."** What, too busy to take care of your customer?
5. **"The person you need to talk to is on vacation and won't be back for a week. Call back then."** Customers hate to wait. Why isn't there someone to cover for a person who everyone probably knew was going to be on vacation?
6. **"We can't do that."** My dad always said, "Can't means 'won't try.'" Customers want to see you at least make an attempt to help them.
7. **"We won't do that."** Almost the same as can't, but more emphatic. Still, make the attempt to find a solution.
8. **"Your call is very important to us. The wait time is 45 minutes."** Apparently, the call is not really that important.
9. **"You'll have to..."** Customers hate being told "you have to..." Find a way to make it easy on them.
10. **"No!"** Does anyone like to be told no?

This list is by no means complete. There are plenty of other words and phrases people say that upset customers, cause them to lose confidence, and may ultimately cause them to leave and never come back.

So, here's a little homework assignment. Share this article with your team, then sit down and talk about which of these phrases might be in your vocabulary — and banish them. Develop better responses. For example, what else could you say instead of "It's not my department" that won't upset a customer? True, it may not be your department, but what you say and how you get that customer to the right person will make or break their confidence in you and your company.

Put yourself in the shoes of your customer to determine the best way to respond. A customer-friendly response will comply with a modified Golden Rule: Say unto customers as you would have customer service professionals say unto you.

<https://hyken.com/customer-confidence/thats-not-my-department-10-phrases-customers-hate/>



Train employees to avoid the kind of answers your customers hate to hear.

## RDP Welcomes New Businesses to Downtown

Escape the Arcade (Electronics)

I Had That (Misc. Retail)

I Cajal

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Kelly Loves Resin (Misc. Retail)

Lola Hosing Development (Misc. Retail)

Reel Fathers Rights (Business Services)

River Ranch Grill and Bar

Saent Lashes (Skin Care)

Suite Fades (Skin Care)

Toni Pasion (Apparel/Accessories)



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**Press deadline** is the 15th of  
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2023 Spokes-Dog  
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