

# Why you don't need a website



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# I need a website because



I put it in my grant application



I've been given millions of pounds for my project



I need to raise the profile of my project/network/group



I need to raise awareness...



I need generate public engagement...



I need generate public impact...



# SEO – Search Engine Optimisation



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Search process –

1. Crawl – search engine algorithms direct web crawlers to look for URLs and examine their content (urls are web pages)
2. Index – content within urls is tagged with attributes and metadata to help search engine categorise the content
3. Search and Rank – user enters query (keyword(s) and search engine ranks and returns a list of urls

# Main ranking factors

Meaning – using language models

Relevance – content matching keywords

Quality – expertise, authority, trustworthy

Usability – mobile responsive, load times, HTTPS

Context – location, search history

# How we support

Content organisation – headings, rich media, bullet points

Website structure – not too many subdirectories

Backlinks – links from other sites

Domain authority – high quality, relevant content with backlinks

Meta descriptions – include keywords

Image alt text – describing images

Keywords in H2/H3 – keyword variation

CTR – Click through rates

# What is typically available

## Web

- Standalone website (T4, Wordpress, other CMSs)
- Web page on an existing website (central, faculty, school)
  - Microsite
  - Landing page
  - News article/event listing etc.

# When to use what - Standalone website

Website with its own sub-domain (ac.uk). Menu, site navigation etc.

## Pros

- If there are multiple partners (from different organisations) involved and ownership is not clear or is shared it can sometimes be easier to manage user permissions to add content to the website.

Where the existing technology does not have the functionality required.

## Cons

- A new website will not immediately be served up in search results.
- Requires a lot of resource to manage and ensure good SEO performance.
- Requires resource to ensure compliance and best web practice.

# When to use what - Web page on existing site

Can either be a single page to host content or a web section. There are numerous existing websites; central, faculty, school, institutes, PURE, Figshare).

## Pros

- Ranks highly in search results as it benefits from the established brand.
- User can navigate easily to other related content.

## Cons

- User can become distracted by other content.



# Welcome to the BBC



## 'Green' UK power station still burning rare forest wood



### All eyes on Speaker at Prime Minister's Questions

UK Politics



### 'We are coming' - 'machine' Haaland predicts 'exciting times'

Man City · 246

### Why South Korean women aren't having babies

Asia

### Cash-strapped councils target arts and parks cuts

UK Politics



### Experts want 'optical illusion' cycle lane feedback

Somerset · 122

# When to use what - Microsite

Small website that 'hangs' off of an existing site e.g. [bbc.co.uk/iplayer](http://bbc.co.uk/iplayer)

## Pros

- Ranks highly in search results as it benefits from the existing site
- Compared with a landing page user less likely to be distracted by other content hosted on the parent site.

## Con

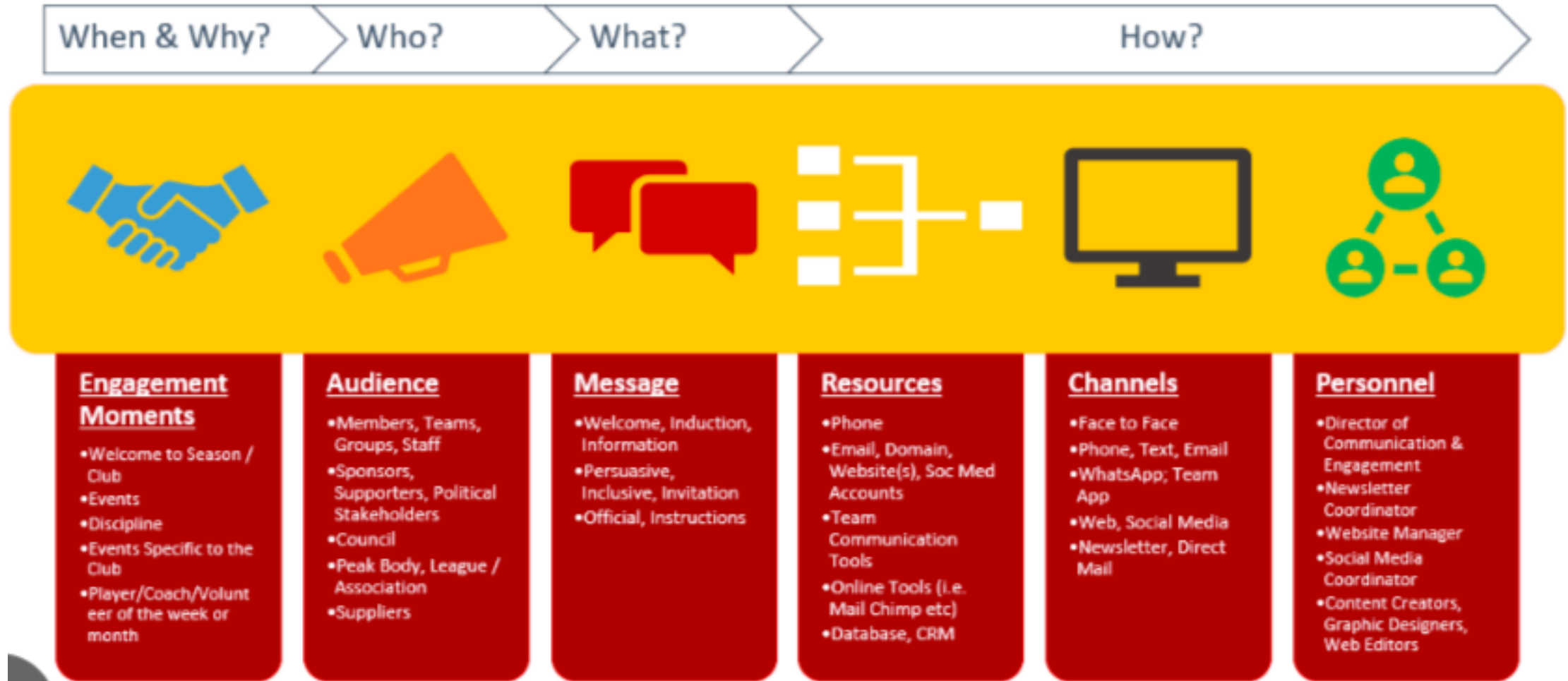
- Too many microsites can complicate the user-journey.

# Understanding your audience

- Personas
- User-testing
- User experience reports
- A/B testing
- Focus groups
- Questionnaires/surveys



# Communications and Engagement Plan



# Take aways



Our default should be a communications and engagement plan not a website.



Web pages are more important than websites in many instances.



If a web presence is required, build on what already exists in the first instance.



There is a lot of digital support across the university that wants to help researchers achieve their objectives.