FREE GUIDE FOR LOCAL BUSINESS OWNERS

Is your website about to break?

Most small-business websites do not crash out of nowhere. They fail quietly for weeks or months first - an expired security certificate here, a form that stopped sending there - and the owner finds out from a customer who could not reach them.

This short health check shows you the seven warning signs to look for, how to spot five of them yourself in about a minute each, and what to do next if you find one. No technical background needed. If you would rather have someone look for you, the last page explains how to get a free personalized video check of your own site.



Avoiding that sinking moment - hearing it from a customer first - is the whole point of this check.

Who made this? Michael Pettibone runs a website care service in El Paso, Texas. He fixes broken local business sites and keeps healthy ones updated, backed up, and secure. This guide collects the same problems he sees again and again on real El Paso sites - expired domains, disconnected site builders, blank pages, and years-old software - in plain language you can check yourself.

THE CHECKLIST

Seven warning signs your site is already at risk

Work down the list and tick anything that matches your site. One tick does not mean your site is broken today. It means that part of your site has no safety net - and it is the part most likely to fail next. Two or more ticks deserve attention this week, not someday.

1. The browser says "Not Secure"

Open your site and look at the address bar. If it shows "Not Secure" instead of a padlock, your security certificate (called SSL) is missing or expired. Visitors see that warning before they see anything about your business, and many simply leave. Secure addresses start with https; if yours only works as http, or the https version refuses to load, treat this as urgent.

2. Nobody has updated the software in a year or more

Most local sites run on WordPress or a similar system that needs regular updates, the same way a phone does. Outdated core software, themes, and plugins are the most common way small sites get hacked or break after a hosting change. If you cannot remember the last update - or your site still runs a version from several years ago - it is running without security patches.

3. Pages take more than a few seconds to open

Time your homepage on your phone with Wi-Fi off, the way a customer on the road would. If you are staring at a blank screen or a spinner while the coffee is still hot, customers are too. Slow sites lose visitors before the phone number ever appears, and search engines rank them lower.

4. The site looks broken on a phone

Most customers will meet you on a phone first. Tiny text you have to pinch to read, buttons that sit off the edge of the screen, a menu that will not open, or a tap-to-call number that is not actually tappable all tell visitors the business has stopped paying attention - even when the business itself is thriving.

5. You have never tested your contact form

Fill in your own quote or contact form exactly as a customer would, then wait. If no email arrives in your inbox, the form may have been silently failing for months while showing visitors a cheerful "thank you" message. This is the most expensive quiet failure on this list, because every lost submission was a real person asking to buy.

6. You do not know when the domain or hosting renews

Your web address (domain) and the hosting it lives on both expire if they are not renewed. When that happens, visitors land on a parking page, a "domain expired" notice, or a site-builder error instead of your business - and old ads, cards, and Google listings keep sending people there. If you do not know where these are registered, in whose name, and on what card, find out before the renewal email goes to an inbox nobody checks.

7. There is no recent backup you could restore

A backup is a complete copy of your site kept somewhere other than the site itself. Without one, a hack, a bad update, or a hosting failure can mean starting over from nothing. Ask yourself honestly: if your site showed a blank white page tomorrow morning, could anyone bring it back by lunch? If the answer is "I think so," treat it as no.

How to score yourself: 0 ticks - healthy, keep doing what you are doing and recheck quarterly. 1 tick - fix that one item soon, while it is still cheap and optional. 2-3 ticks - your site is exposed; get help before one of them fails in public. 4 or more - assume something is already failing quietly and check your forms and phone display today.

DO IT TONIGHT

The 60-second self-check: five tests, phone only

You do not need logins, tools, or a developer for these five. Each test takes about a minute. Do them in order, on your phone, off Wi-Fi if you can.

Test	What to do	Healthy vs. at risk
1. Padlock test	Type your web address and open the site. Look at the address bar.	Healthy: padlock, address starts with https. At risk: "Not Secure," or the https version will not load.
2. Stranger test	Search your business name on Google, tap your own listing, and land where a customer lands.	Healthy: your real homepage. At risk: parking page, expired-domain notice, error, or blank white page.
3. Thumb test	Scroll the whole homepage with one thumb. Try the menu and tap the phone number.	Healthy: readable text, working menu, number starts a call. At risk: pinching, sideways scrolling, dead buttons.
4. Speed test	Close the tab, then open the site again and count slowly to three.	Healthy: main content visible by three. At risk: still blank or spinning past five.
5. Form test	Send yourself a test message through your contact or quote form. Check every inbox, including spam.	Healthy: the test arrives within a few minutes. At risk: nothing arrives anywhere.



The two slowest minutes in business: a customer waiting on your site to load.

What one broken week actually costs

A site that is down, flagged "Not Secure," or quietly eating form submissions does damage in three directions at once. Customers who cannot reach you call the next business in the search results. Google sees errors and warnings and shows you less often. And the fix gets more expensive under pressure: a calm, planned repair of a typical small-site problem commonly runs $250 to $500, while rebuilding a site with no backup to restore can run $800 to $1,500 - before counting the jobs that never called. Prevention, by comparison, is deliberately boring: regular updates, backups, security scans, and form tests, from $10 a month. The next page shows the cheapest way to find out exactly where your site stands.

FREE - NO OBLIGATION

Want a second pair of eyes on your site? Get the free video check.

Reading a checklist is a good start, but it cannot tell you which two problems matter most on *your* site. That is what the free check is for. Here is exactly how it works, so there are no surprises:

Step 1 - You send two things: your email address and your website address. That is all. No passwords, no logins, no card. The link in the Instagram bio for 915 Website Care says it plainly: "Free check - is your site about to break?"

Step 2 - You get a short video: Michael records a brief Loom video walking through your live site and naming the two most important things he finds - for example, a missing security certificate and a form that never arrives. You watch it on your phone whenever you like, and you keep the link.

Step 3 - You decide: Fix it yourself, hand it to whoever built your site, or ask what it would cost for Michael to fix it. About half the owners who see their two issues simply ask, "How much to fix it?" - and that question is welcome, never required. If the honest answer is "your site looks healthy," the video says that too.

To claim your free check:

Tap the link in the 915 Website Care Instagram bio, or call or text **(915) 408-1837** with your website address and the words "free check." You will get your video by email, normally within two business days.

If you would rather never think about this again

That is what monthly website care is for. Plans start at $10 a month and cover the unglamorous work this guide describes: software updates, full backups, security scans, uptime checks, and a monthly test of your contact and quote forms, so a quiet failure gets found by your care plan instead of by a customer. Higher plans add weekly updates, malware cleanup, content changes, and speed tune-ups. There is no long-term contract, you can cancel anytime, and your domain and hosting always stay in your name. Ask about it when your video arrives, or call the number above.

About this guide: Website Health Check is published by 915 Website Care, El Paso, Texas - Michael Pettibone, (915) 408-1837. Prices mentioned are typical ranges for small local business sites and are quoted individually before any work begins; larger work such as new pages or redesigns is always quoted separately. This guide is general information, not a guarantee about any individual website. Your free video check reviews your public-facing site only and never requires your passwords.