

## 13 Essential Tips for Your S.O.S. Website Due Diligence Starting NOW!



Do you have protection for your website? Odds are, you don't.

It's an "oh-oh" author time. And yes, it deals with your website. Are you really protected? Do you know where all your website details are backed up? Do you have all your logins, passwords, codes and anything else that you need if you must access them immediately? If you need help, do you know where to go? Who to ask?

If you have a webmaster, what if he or she gets hit by a bus? Decides to go smell the roses ... wants to pursue other things ... or yikes, dies?

It's a come to **Website Chat Time**.

Start with creating your own **SOS: Website Due Diligence Plan** ... to protect you and your website.

Below are *13 Essential Steps for Website Due Diligence* that you need answers to in a short—very short—period-of-time.

### 1. **Who owns your website? Is the copyright in YOUR name?**

That means NOT in your webmaster's, a lawyer's or someone else that helped you out as your started down your website journey. You or your company should be the owner. Check out [www.WHOis.net](http://www.WHOis.net) and see what it says.

### 2. **Do you know the name of the website host or server, its website and HELP phone numbers?**

Do you have the logins to the accounts? And does the host know you exist and that you are the primary contact; that the webmaster is secondary?

**3. Who is your webmaster?**

What is his or her email and phone number? Do you have the logins to the accounts—all of them, meaning user names and passwords? Do you know what format was used; any special templates that were used or created; or images purchased or apps? Do you know what was purchased for the creation of your website that you paid for?

You may choose to leave your webmaster (or he/she leaves you). You need to have/take what is yours. And you need immediate access to it. Think of it as a divorce ... it's over.

**4. Who has the login credentials to your website?**

Credentials start with YOU—you should be the primary. You may have a virtual assistant or two who has access ... but who? What is his or her phone number and email? And, if you terminate anyone who has access or leaves your employment or confidence—CHANGE passwords immediately—better yet, do it before you terminate them. Consider changing the master email login as well.

**5. Where is your website domain registered?**

Make sure your name and location are included on the ICANN/WhoIs database registration for your domain. You need all contact information.

**6. Your website has a theme.**

Who owns it? Was it a fee or free theme? Do you have proof of allowability? What is the renewal date and login information?

**7. Do you have any “License Keys” for plug-ins or themes?**

Who is the provider? Where are they kept? What are the renewal dates? What are the fees, if any?

**8. Do you have an SSL certificate?**

You should, meaning that your website is “secure” if you are selling anything from it. Who issued it? Was there a cost? Request contact info. An image representing that you have it should be on the upper section of your website.

**9. If you have a Shopping Cart (including PayPal) ... which one is used?**

What are the logins? Are you getting regular reports ... or even checking them online?

**10. What about backup—who is doing it?**

Do yourself a HUGE favor and create a minimum of a monthly backup on both physical and online website locations that you can access in case of an emergency. Who does the backup and what is their contact information?

**11. You have subscribers ... who collects them?**

What service collects the emails? Do you know how to access their names and contract info? Do you have contact information for help? And, do you have a backup of names, addresses and how they opted in?

**12. Start the conversation with staff and gather their user names and passwords that they use for your website.**

If you have staff, start gathering ALL the above—sites, apps, user names, and passwords. If there are any changes, get the updates done. If any leave or are terminated, change passwords immediately. Get them posted in a place that YOU know the location and a TRUSTED backup is completed as well.

**13. TODAY ... have a heart-to-heart with your webmaster.**

Your website is your publishing and authoring lifeline. It's a must to have all the above information in a file on your computer—which should be backed up at least daily. And, it's a *must* to have it printed out in a notebook or manual that your partner, spouse or trusted colleague can find instantly if something happens to you.

Stuff happens. Sometimes, not such good stuff. A key support person can become ill, have personal problems, start acting weird, quit or die. Stuff happens.

**Your motto is: My business IS My Business.**

You need a plan to take care of the “stuff happening” side of what every author deals with—stuff that surfaces at the most inconvenient time along the publishing journey.

Your **SOS: Website Due Diligence Plan** is the way to keep your global lights on before the switch is turned off! Start requesting the information that you don't have today.

And, you are welcome ...

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