

About Your Business



Before I can make a website for you, I need to ask a few questions to find out exactly what is needed.

In addition to taking personal details, I need to gather information to learn more about you and your business, which will help me craft a website that is geared towards bringing benefits to you and your customers.

1 - Why do you want a website?

Knowing your motivation for getting a website gives me the direction for the type of website I build for you.

Think carefully before you say "*because everyone's got a website*" as that's not really an answer that helps either of us. I simply need to understand why you want a website in order to suggest features and solutions that will bring the best benefits, otherwise I risk making something that cannot perform an effective job, and that has little value to your business.

2 - What is your business all about?

This will be easier if broken down into separate questions:

- What does your business do?
- What service do you offer and how do you carry it out?
- What are your long-term business goals?
- What image do you want to portray to your customers?

The information I collect here will help me understand more about you as a person, your business ethos and how you wish the public to view you and your services. Again, these are all points that allow me to tailor a website to your individual needs.

3 – Unique Selling Point (USP)

It is probably safe to assume that your business is not entirely unique.

If for example you sell shoes, you're up against many other shoe retailers - the focus of this question is "what makes you different?", which can then be translated into a unique selling point and the crucial hook that grabs your visitors' attention.

4 - Who is your target audience?

Knowing the kind of visitors you wish to attract to your website will influence the design, content and overall 'feel' of the package I create for you.

For example, a website for a dress-maker of fine gowns would look out-of-place with bold, jagged fonts and vivid colours. You would probably need a more 'romantic' type-face, with a softer colour

palette and elegant lines, to attract a more refined clientele. On the other hand, bold, jagged fonts and vivid colours would be very fitting for a music festival website aimed at university students.

It is not only looks that must be considered though - accessibility and usability play a major part in the success of a website. Teenagers and elderly people both favour a larger font-size, but not because both groups have failing eyesight. Teenagers like bigger fonts simply because they make words easier to read.

5 - What do you want visitors to do on your website?

A website that provides advice and information has a very different setup to a site that sells products, or advertises a service, and a socially directed community site with forums and a blog will be different again.

Before I can develop a site that meets your customers' needs and expectations, I first need to establish what it is that you want them to achieve while they are there. Once a goal has been established, I can develop a design to encourage the direction you would like them to take.

6 - What features do you need/want on your website?

If you are in the market for a website, you have hopefully got a fair idea of the features you would like your website to include. Maybe an image gallery or event registration system would be beneficial, or maybe you just like the look of a banner that showcases your top 5 products on the home page. This is also the place to cover any visual ideas or colour preferences that you have in mind.

I appreciate that at times it can be hard to explain what you like. A picture speaks a thousand words, so please take this opportunity to find an example, and show me what you mean with a working link to illustrate. A link will certainly help to avoid confusion.

By being forthcoming with your ideas, you will allow your web developer to guide you towards features that add value to your website, and steer you clear of anything that may unwittingly cause confusion for your visitors.

A web developer ultimately wants to build a website that you can be totally happy with, so now is your time to discuss ideas openly and benefit from their experience and knowledge.

7 - What features do you NOT need/want on your website?

It is often much easier for a person to express what they do not like, rather than pin their choices down to something that they do.

You have probably visited quite a few websites already and have no doubt come across things that you really disliked. Even on a site that you otherwise really like, there is bound to be something that just does not appeal to you. Maybe it is a scrolling news box on the home page that you find distracting. Maybe you have a personal hatred for the colour purple. Now is the time to say!

8 - Who will be providing/preparing the written website content?

A website is not complete without the bulk of text that forms the main body of your website. Each page needs it and it has to fully explain about you, your business, products and services.

Premium website owners can afford to pay a team of copywriters to research and prepare the written content for them, but if you do not have that kind of cash, then you should be prepared to write the content yourself, or get somebody who works with you to write it on your behalf. This can actually be a good thing; it takes effort, but who knows your business better than you?

9 - Who will be updating your website?

Assuming that your website will not just be a static online brochure, you should probably think about which aspects you would like to update, and who you would like doing the updates.

If you would like to update frequently, maybe adding new pages and uploading images, then you can do this yourself through WordPress. Are you OK doing this on your own or do you need some training on how to do this?

If you have not got time to work on website updates, or you think that it is safer to leave it to the experts, then let me know so I can work on a monthly update schedule into your costs. Depending on the size of the site and work required this can be very reasonably priced. Alternatively, I can do ad-hoc updates for you and charge by the hour.

10 - When do you need your website completed by?

Building a website can be complex, and time consuming, and some clients have very unrealistic expectations on how long it actually takes to make one.

You should tell me your time frame to avoid disappointment and I will give you an honest indication of how long things are likely to take, based on the features that you have requested.

11 - How much money do you want to spend on your website?

The killer question. Try not to let it strike fear into your heart – I am not trying to squeeze you for every last penny. Contrary to what some people believe, most web developers are actually very nice, helpful people who want you to be happy with the service they provide.

As long as you are willing to discuss money frankly, I can work with you to explain things and a trusting relationship can begin to be established with minimal frustration for both parties.