10-point website brief

| **So you want a website? I'd be delighted to give you a proposal …**I’ll need some information to get started. It’s okay not to know everything yet and I can help you clarify technical and design specifications once we've got an initial sense of the direction you want to go. Hopefully you're open to ideas or suggestions from me too! If you're short on time, focus on points 2, 7, 8 and 10, which will be enough info for me to give you a preliminary ballpark.  |
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| **1. Introductions** - If I haven't worked with you before, please introduce your organisation and explain a little about your history, what you do, your target audience, your mission statement/values etc. |
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| **2. Scope and budget** - Do you want a completely new website, with all-new content and functionality, or just a refresh or modernisation of your existing one? Web design is a bit like interior design – it can be done to different specs and budgets depending on what you want and can afford. By being transparent about this, I will know definitively whether I can meet your budget. |
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| **3. Existing website:** Provide some background on your existing site – such as what you like/dislike about it, and what works or doesn’t. (Don't forget to give me the url!) Why do you think it’s time for a change? It’s also worth getting feedback from users internally and externally, to find out what's most popular, and what people like and dislike. You can also look at your current site’s analytics for further insight. |
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| **4. Desired outcomes -** What are the vision, aims and objectives for your new website? Is it part of a broader business strategy? Your corporate website is not just a pretty shop window - it should add value for you and be useful to your audience. |
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| **5. Design specification** - Tell me how you’d like the website to look and feel. Are there specific brand guidelines? Think about where you might source images for your website – do you have a collection already, will you hire a photographer, or do you need me to source photos? |
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| **6. Example websites -** Provide examples of other websites (ideally from similar organisations) to help me understand what you like and are looking for. It can also be very helpful to highlight examples of websites or features you don’t like. |
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| **7. Sitemap and content** - How many pages will your site consist of? What are the top-level menu headings/pages and will there be subpages or sub-sections (a sitemap is useful here). Will you be creating new content for your site or just repurposing or refreshing old content? Think about what needs to be compiled for each page and what you would like my role to be in this. Ideally, content is finalised before any build work starts, as this often dictates the design and structure. |
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| **8. Functionality** - Is there any special functionality that you want to include? For example, do you want video and audio clips, online shop with payment gateways, social media integration, news/blog tool, in-house content management system, calendar tool, registration forms, membership login areas, location maps or database integration? The only limit is your imagination ... but don't get too carried away and end up with a bloated, slow-functioning site. Perhaps develop a phased or prioritised plan for launching new tools and functionality, as each additional functionality adds time and cost to any build. |
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| **9. Maintenance -** Maintaining a website is very important to keep it secure and functioning optimally, so consider whether this is something you can do in-house or if you’ll need ongoing support. Strike a balance between what you can or should be doing yourself vs focusing on your core business. Please ask me for more information about maintenance options. |
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| **10. Timeframe -** Finally, if you have internal deadlines or key dates that are relevant to the project, including your desired launch date, please, include these in your brief, along with any relevant info about key decision makers or stakeholders for the project. |
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