
Web Guidelines - Getting Started

This document answers the following questions:

- Why set up a website?
- What makes a good website designer?
- How do I choose the best website design company for me?
- How much do I need to budget for my website?
- How much should I budget for marketing my website?

Why set up a website?

Here are the three main reasons why you should think about setting up a website:

1. To make a name for yourself and establish your business as a competent and serious contender in your industry. To show customers your company image and project your company values (eg. trustworthy, superior, cutting edge). The Internet is a great equaliser: by setting up a great website, a small business that's run from home can compete with a much larger one with its own office block.
2. To get new business and repeat business. People search for products and services on the Internet as an alternative to using the Yellow Pages. But just having a website isn't enough. Your website needs to be well designed so people enjoy using it and can find the information they need. Your website may be the first time someone has come across your business – make sure that first impression counts!
3. To save time and money. Compared to the cost of print media like brochures, the Internet offers a low cost way to promote your business. Think about the advantages websites offer compared to print media:
 - Lower set up costs
 - Can be viewed by an unlimited number of people
 - Easy to update
 - Accessible all the time

A good website will help you save time by answering any questions a prospective customer may have.

What more do you need to know? Give us a call and tell us a bit about your business to find out how you'll benefit from having a well designed website.

What makes a good website designer?

First and foremost, it's a team job. You need a project manager who can look at your business and, based on their thorough understanding of Internet marketing, design a navigation system and production timeline that will get results fast. The project manager will then liaise between you and the design team to ensure that your goals are met. They should listen to your needs, answer questions clearly and inspire you with confidence. The project manager will work with a team of people (the design team) who are experienced in the Internet and these specialised fields:

- Internet Marketing
- Graphic design
- Interactive design
- Computer programming
- Copywriting and editing

Many website design companies and their websites fail because one of these key people or skill sets is missing.

How do I choose the best website design company for me?

It's your business, your reputation and your money on the line, so you'll definitely want to choose your website design company carefully.

We believe that a website should achieve what it sets out to do. There are more and more reputable website design companies around but before you choose the best one for your job, here are a four key questions you should ask them:

- What qualifications do they have?
- How much experience have they got?
- What is their website design philosophy
- Who will you be working with?

The best advertisement for any website design company is their portfolio. Invest some time looking at their website and the websites they've designed recently. Make a quick appraisal of each one and ask yourself these questions:

- Does the site look professional?
- Is it fast to download?
- Is it easy to find the information you need?
- Can you contact the company quickly?
- Is the site copy easy to read?
- Is the website free from technical errors?

When making your final choice we recommend that you:

1. Choose a company that specialises in website design and marketing.

There are a lot of companies that specialise in one area (such as graphic design, branding, web hosting or print media) and also offer website design as a secondary concern. They may be excellent in their specialist field but not so strong when it comes to website design.

2. Choose a company with experience in website design.

The Internet is an evolving medium. There are so many factors to take into account, such as how the latest technology and software can help or hinder good design and how variables affecting the end user (such as their screen size, screen resolution, web browser, Internet connection speed) can change the way they'll see your website. We've been working with the Internet since 1996 and because it's constantly evolving we're still learning. That's why we love it.

3. Choose a company you can talk to.

Before they can design a good website for you, they need to understand your business and how having a website can improve it.

4. Choose a company who gives good advice.

Don't be embarrassed if you don't understand everything about the Internet. It's perfectly normal and nothing to be ashamed of! Not everyone chooses to spend 40 hours a week surfing the Internet and designing websites. But we do and we want to use what we've learned to help our clients.

5. Choose the best company for the job, irrespective of their geographical location.

Close contact by email and phone is essential when you work with a website design company, but face-to-face contact isn't (although it's always great to meet people when possible.) If the company you prefer fills the criteria listed above and answers all your questions clearly then don't worry if they aren't based in your town (or even your country.) We definitely recommend you support local businesses, but not at the expense of your own.

I'm sure you'll agree that there are enough bad websites around already. Don't let yours be one of them. If you do choose someone other than us to design your website, that's fine by us. As long as they do a good job of it!

How much do I need to budget for my website?

This is always a tough question for a website designer and it's always helpful for us to have a budget in mind so that we can allocate it correctly between design and internet marketing to get you the best return on your investment. However, giving you some insight into our thought processes when we quote for a website may be of help.

First of all, the easy stuff: you will need a domain name which will typically cost around \$50 annually for a .com.au, (less for a .com), and you will need web hosting which usually comes in at around \$20 to \$30 monthly for a secure and reliable service.

How much does the actual website cost? Well, that's the tricky bit, rather like "How much does a house cost?" or "How much will my next car cost?"

In our case, we give you the choice of a few packages which we think represent great value for simple but professional websites from \$800. If your business needs remain constant, these options will meet your requirements for years to come.

For those who are upgrading to a more unique design or for those who have greater ambitions for their website, we offer a bespoke design service.

To give you a fixed quote we would need to gather as much information about your needs as possible, and then work out a costing based on the hours we would spend to complete your website. Some of the work, for example organising the content and copywriting, you may choose to undertake yourself.

A typical range for the cost of a bespoke website can be worked out by breaking down the quote into its component parts:

Project management	\$200 to \$800
Storyboarding and organisation of content	\$0 to \$600
Graphic design	\$800 to \$2,500
Website Coding	\$800 to \$2,000
Advanced search engine optimisation (SEO) (A standard level of SEO is included when we code all websites)	\$0 to \$1,000
Web Copywriting	\$0 to \$2,000
Additional programming, eg for e-commerce websites	\$0 to \$2,000

That gives a fairly wide range of \$1,800- \$ 10,900 but it should give you some idea of what ‘s involved in the process of building a website and thus what yours is likely to cost!

How much should I budget for marketing my website?

This is a common question from prospective clients. It’s a question that is best answered individually but you should certainly set aside part of your marketing budget for an Internet Marketing campaign. A recent survey on Internet marketing found that different industries spent from 10% to 20% of their total marketing spend on Internet marketing.

The great thing about Internet marketing is that you can use it conjunction with analytics software to accurately measure your return on investment (ROI), so you can very quickly work out what is working for you.

A Google Adwords Pay per click (PPC) campaign should be a part of your overall internet marketing budget. This is particularly important for new websites as it takes time (up to a year) for a new website to gain a good search engine ranking.