



Pre-Project Website Design Checklist

With bonus checklists to kickstart your web design project - as a web designer, agency, or a client

Pre-Project Website Design Checklist

Domain Name

- Do you have a list of all domain names that are relevant?
- Do you own the domain(s) and have access to the registration information?
- How many domains point to this website?
- Would altering any of those domains have an impact on other aspects of your business, such as company email?

Site Security

- Is an SSL certificate required for your website?
- Password security?
- Other?

Target Audience

- What kind of audience will the site be developed for?
- What kind of information are they looking for?
- What kinds of actions should they be taking?
- Is any usage or analytic data available for the web design team to review?

Keywords/SEO

- Make a list of keywords and key phrases that you believe your website should target.
- Are these the same words your target audience could use to search for your products or services? Put yourself in the shoes of your customer.
- When auditing and developing your website content, keep this list in mind.

Audit Existing Content

- How much is staying?
- How much is being removed?
- How much needs just minor editing?
- How much new content needs to be generated?
- Don't forget to include logos, images, and videos in this process

Site Structure

- Does the site already have a sitemap to follow?
- How will changes in your content impact the way the site is organized?

Creating New Content

- Are you developing the content internally?
- Do you need to enlist a copywriter for partial or full copywriting assistance?

Existing Site Assets and Functionality

- Is there any data or functionality that needs to be carried over?
- Do you already have a web analytics solution in place that should be retained?

New Functional Requirements

- Is there any new functionality the new site should be capable of?
- Does the site need to communicate with any backend systems?
- How will e-commerce transactions be handled and processed?
- Who with your organization should receive web form submissions and notifications?

Technology Requirements

- What technology requirements (if any) does the new site have? For instance, should the site be developed on the Microsoft .Net platform, or .PHP?
- Do you need a printable version of the site?
- A mobile version?

Content Management

- How much of the site's content will you need to edit on a regular basis?
- How often does the content change?
- What kind of content changes will you be making?
 - Product data, simple text updates, adding/removing whole pages, and images to a gallery, etc.?
- Who within your organization will be responsible for these updates?
- Does content need to be approved by others in your organization before it goes live?

Hosting

- Where will the site be hosted?
- If switching to a new host, does the new host support the technology the new site will use?

Deadline

- When does the new site need to launch?
- What is the plan in the event there are any delays?

Budget

- What is the budget available for this project?
- If there is not an adequate budget for this project, can some of the features and functionality be phased in?

Social Media

- What social media does your company participate in?
- How will social media be integrated into the new website?
- Do you own and have control over all the usernames and passwords for those accounts?
- Do you need to create them from scratch?

Marketing

- How will you promote the site to your existing users and customers?
- How will you attract new users and customers?

Project Management

- Who will be the main point of contact during the project for your organization?
- Who has the power to make decisions and approve project milestones?
- Have you assigned tasks to other team members from your organization to assist with the project?
- Do they understand their roles and responsibilities?

If you've never been in charge of a website design project before, we hope this list offers you some confidence and points you on the right path. For web designers, you can add more questions or tweak this checklist if you want according to the need of the project.

- END -

Setting Up Your Website Checklist

If you need a new website, following these steps before you enter a web design project can ensure you get your website perfect the first time.

- **Set your goals.** For example, promoting to current or future customers, offering product and sales support, generating direct sales online, or recruiting staff.
- **Your goals should be SMART:** specific, measurable, agreed upon, realistic, and time-bound.
- **Look at other websites for inspiration.** It's a good idea to look at your main competitors as well as other businesses in your industry. You can also gather ideas from websites you enjoy. Create a rough overview of what you want your website to include.
- **Decide whether or not you wish to sell online.** Creating an online store is now easier than ever, but it still adds some complexity to the process. Take the time to learn about legal and customer security risks, as well as distance selling laws.

- **Choose the most appropriate method for building your website.** There are three major options: construct it from scratch in-house, hire a freelance web designer/agency, or use a template-based website builder.
- **Find whatever technical or web design help you need.** Request references and examples of successful projects.
- **Ensure that you own the original design files and website code and that all copyright is transferred to you.**
- **Create a site map and page designs (also called wireframes).** This should specify how many pages your website will have, what they will include, and how they will be organized logically. Wireframes allow you to visualize and adjust your site before it is constructed.
- **Consider your website content early on in the process.** Can you modify current marketing materials or website text? Do you want to write for your website yourself, or do you need to hire a copywriter?
- **Create design guidelines that are consistent with the company's aesthetic.** Aim for visual clarity and ease of use. Avoid complicated designs that take a long time to download.

- **As you build your site, make sure it is search engine optimized.** For example, to help search engines, ensure that sites have proper keywords and descriptions.
- **Evaluate how users will interact with your website on mobile devices.** Consider using responsive web design to adapt your site to smaller screens.
- **Analyze accessibility difficulties** for disabled people and guarantee that the Equality Act of 2010 is followed.
- **Make sure you can track how well the site performs.** Track visitor numbers and behaviors with an analytics solution such as Google Analytics.
- **Choose a suitable web host** so you'll be able to publish your site online. If you're working with a designer, they should be able to help you make a decision. There are numerous business web hosting solutions available, and most website builder packages include hosting.
- **Purchase a memorable domain name** (such as www.yourbusiness.com) to help visitors find your website. A domain name should be available from your web hosting company.

- **Test the website with different web browser versions.** Ensure that the design is correct, that the pages load quickly, and that the page links properly.
- **Examine the site's visual appeal and usability.** Request comments and suggestions from key staff and consumers.
- **Launch the website and start promoting it.** Identify which sites you can link to and from and inform your clients about it. Include the address on all letterhead, brochures, and advertisements.
- **Keep the website up-to-date.** Add new, time-sensitive content, especially on the home page, to keep visitors coming back.

Checklist for Working with a Web Designer

Designing your website is most likely a job for a professional, but as the one in charge of the budget, you'll want to maintain control of the project. Here are the issues to think about.

- Determine your budget and timeframes.
- Prepare a thorough brief outlining the history of your company and the website project, as well as your goals.
- Determine how you will select a designer.
- Before disclosing project specifics or other proprietary information, require designers to sign a confidentiality agreement, if applicable.
- Explain the limits that the designer must work within, such as matching your existing business style and sticking to brand guidelines.
- Collaborate with the designer to create a specification; define as clearly as possible what constitutes an acceptable design.
- Set a timeframe, set interim goals, and decide how progress will be monitored on a regular basis.

- Before you accept the completed website design, agree on what testing will be required during the project.
- Decide what will happen if the project runs late.
- Consider what will happen if you want to change the specification after the project has begun.
- Identify your rights to terminate the project once it has begun and how any payments will be handled.
- Require the designer to assign you copyright and design rights to the site, or to grant you an acceptable license.
- Ask the designer to waive any moral rights to be identified as the author or designer of material or to object to how it is used or modified once the project was finished.
- Ensure that you have the proper license to use any software or source code required to make the site work.
- Require the designer to guarantee that he owns any intellectual property utilized on the website and to cover you in the event of a claim.
- Assess and validate the acceptability of any commitments you are required to agree to (for example, providing specified material by a certain date).

- Decide how much the designer will be paid, when payments will be made, and whether you will cover any additional costs.
- Agree on a suitable dispute resolution process in the event that you cannot resolve a problem during the project.
- Prepare agreements with any other parties (for example, if the site is being hosted by someone else); determine how everyone will collaborate.
- Plan ahead for how the website will be maintained and developed in the future; consider whether this is necessary now.

Remember that the checklists provided will serve as a guide for a web designer, agency, or client. You are not required to follow everything on the checklist and feel free to modify or consider necessary points according to your situation, business style, and how you deliver web design projects.

CLOSING

If you need help with your web design project, feel free to book a free, no-commitment 30-min project discovery call with me.






[BOOK NOW](#)


Or you can copy this link if the button is not working
<https://calendly.com/marlenpgarcia/free-project-discovery-call>


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OTHER RESOURCES

For updates and helpful content about the business of web design, realities of freelancing, and everything in between, feel free to follow me on the links below:

   @marlenpgarcia

 [in/marlenpalayadgarcia](https://www.linkedin.com/company/marlenpalayadgarcia)

 [Creative Insights: A Designer's Podcast](#)

Hope you enjoy the content and may you find the best web designer for your business goals.

Kind Regards,
Marlen
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