

Client Website Design Guide

Hello

Here at Agincourt we take designing and developing websites very seriously and work hard to deliver a solution that works.

To make this process clear we have compiled this guide to outline the stages required to take your great idea and turn it into an effective website your customers will love. It details when we need you to do things (such as provide text and images, and sign off), what we will deliver and when.

Obviously this is a generic outline and it may vary slightly project to project, feel free to pick up the phone (0845 481 1010) or send us an email (info@agincourt.co) if you'd like to discuss it.

Before you Start: Some Thoughts

- ▶ Keep text to a minimum. Only provide users with information they NEED to know.
- ▶ Users visit websites for a specific purpose, not to read your entire site. Make it as easy as possible for them to find what they are looking for.
- ▶ Buttons/links which require action should be as clear as possible, and use simple, conventional terms like 'Search', 'Basket', 'Contact Us' etc.
- ▶ Site navigation should be clear and simple. Users should always know where they are, and how to get back to where they were.
- ▶ Users don't always land on your homepage - so don't try to cram everything onto it. Most users will come in via search engines or referral links so they will land on specific pages related to the topics they are interested in.
- ▶ Avoid design by committee - rely on your designers knowledge and experience.

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Outline

This is the start, where we will get to grips with what your website is trying to achieve and what your needs are.

We will use this information to build an outline proposal, that describes your requirements and provides information on our solution along with costs and the milestones for the project. This document also includes a copy of our Terms and Conditions which outlines the various contractual points of our relationship. This document is the central reference point for the project.

It is key that at this stage you appoint a central point of contact for all communications, we are happy to work with a group of people but need to know who makes the decisions.

This stage is complete when: we receive signed copies of the proposal and terms and conditions.

Wireframes

Once we have received back the signed proposal we can get cracking. We will begin by working on wireframes for your site.

Wireframes are designed to ensure the following:

- ▶ users can easily navigate your site to find the content they are looking for easily and in a logical manner.
- ▶ the important parts of your content are given the correct prominence within your website.
- ▶ interactive features are intuitive to users.

Note: the goal is not to minimise the clicks, people are generally quite happy to browse around your website, *provided* they feel they are getting closer to completing their goal (finding what they want / submitting a form etc) - which is the job of wireframing to ensure.

At this stage we will introduce to our project management system, Basecamp. This is a web-based system that we use to manage all aspects of our projects, we also use it for on-going client communication so that everyone involved on a project can see what is going on and decisions can be tracked to reduce any potential for confusion.

Once the wireframes are ready they'll be emailed across to you for approval. It's very important that you look through them carefully and ensure you are 100% happy with them as changing them (or any details based on them) after sign-off may incur additional costs. This is the stage to really get to grips with the detail of the way the site will operate and may require a lot of head scratching and decisions to be made.

After signing them off now is the time to start compiling your content - writing text, taking photographs, spell checking and shooting video!

The wireframing stage is complete when:

- ▶ We have sent you the wireframes.
- ▶ We have received confirmation of your approval of the wireframes via email.

Design

Once you have signed off the wireframes, we can begin working on the actual design for your site.

During this process you will work very closely with one of our designers to ensure the design is tailored to your brand and suits the goals of the website. When you are happy and have signed off the design, we will move onto building your site!

Note: designs may vary slightly across different web browsers. This is normal as they have varying capabilities. It's our job to ensure your users get the best experience possible in their chosen browser.

Remember to be meticulous when reviewing the design. After sign-off, changes to the design may incur further charges.

The design stage is complete when:

- ▶ We have provided you with a bespoke design.
- ▶ You have signed off the design.
- ▶ You have sent us all the copy and images, required for all the pages of your website.

Build

So the design is agreed: it's time to build the site.

Taking a visual layout and building a site that reflects it can be a time consuming process, the milestones in the proposal document will reflect this. We will only schedule the build after the design is approved so to avoid the project slipping please do get all your content to us as soon as possible.

During this stage we not only build the visual side of your site but also the 'engine' behind it - which includes any interactive content, or sections that you (or your site administrator) can change. It can be difficult to make changes to the structure of the site as this stage so ensure you are familiar and satisfied with the wireframes and design prior to the build.

Once the site is built we put it through various tests and quality checks including: accessibility, performance and SEO best practices.

You will be given a test website address so you can view the site working and ensure it's perfect before the public can see it.

If you have gone with an editable website - the site will go live on our CMS platform.

The build stage is complete when: the site has been built and loaded a test website for you to view.

Note: if you are providing your own design, please see Appendix A.

Amendments & Testing

Once the test site is up and running you have 14 days to make any alterations and check you are happy.

We can make tweaks and adjustments at this stage, and the content can be updated and edited - however large, fundamental changes that move away from the agreed requirements, wireframes and designs may incur additional charges.

At this point we will then ask you to have a look over the site, and make sure everything functions as it should. If there are any bugs or glitches which are a result of our work, or if anything does not function as the requirements state in your proposal, we will fix them for you.

If we do not hear from you within the 14 days we will assume you are happy with the site, and send you the final bill. We will not put the site live, however, until we hear from you and receive payment.

The testing stage is complete when: you send us an email saying you are happy to go live.

Launch & Hosting

Once everything is ready, everyone is happy and we have received final payment for your website, we can promote your site to our live server.

As a condition of building your site, it needs to be hosted on our server, unless otherwise specified by us in your requirements. Any support time for additional design or development once the site is live is charged at an hourly rate as specified in your contract.

The launch stage is complete when:

- ▶ We receive final payment for your website.
- ▶ We receive a completed standing order form for your hosting.
- ▶ The website is live and fully operational.

CMS Training

Now that your site is live, you can sit with our friendly staff and we will train you on the CMS platform.

You simply need to find a convenient time, and arrange a session - we can train up to 3 people at a time, however 1 on 1 is usually best and your project will include 2 hours training (this is usually plenty to get to grips), should you need more (for more staff), it can be arranged for an additional fee. You will be taken through uploading simple content to your site, like text and images, and even shown how to add new pages, and headings.

Your training doesn't stop there though, should you need a refresher - we have instructional videos online explaining typical maintenance tasks - so you can watch at your own pace whenever you wish.

If you'd prefer us to make changes on your behalf, you can pay for us to do so - we'll quote for each job individually so you'll know how much the bill will be before you confirm the changes.

We will, of course, be at the other end of the phone, or on email, if you have any difficulties.

This stage is complete when: you fully understand our Content Manager System.

FAQ's

At the beginning of a project we often get asked quite a few similar questions. We thought this FAQ section would be useful. Of course if you have any other questions along the way please don't hesitate to ask.

Formats

What format would you like me to send my logo in?

An EPS of your logo is preferable. If not, the largest resolution and scale JPG or PDF should be fine.

What's an EPS?

An EPS is a vector file and is the most easily scaled file format.

In what file format should photographs or other images be emailed across?

High resolution (1000x1000px+ where possible) JPG, TIFF or 24-bit PNG. Please upload these to Basecamp. If you have difficulty uploading them, please provide us with a CD/DVD of files.

Can you do Flash?

We don't offer any Flash development services. We have made this decision because Flash has the following problems:

- ▶ It cannot be read easily by search engines - so you're ranking would be much lower.
- ▶ It has a whole host of accessibility problems for disabled users.
- ▶ Further usability issues occur for all users.
- ▶ It won't display on many mobiles phones, and those that do support it generally have severe performance difficulties.

Content

When would you like to receive the content for my website?

We will need to receive most (if not all) of your content before we start the build.

What format should the content be provided in?

All content should be uploaded to Basecamp as separates Word/RTF/Pages files - images must be supplied separately to these documents.

Design

If you source images for me will it cost extra?

We can source images for you, and they will often incur a charge. Obviously the cost will vary depending on the image.

How will you present the designs to me?

In the early stages designs will be sent via email as PDFs or image files through our project management system. When the style of design has been decided upon we will upload the designs onto our server so they can be viewed in a browser. This will help you understand how your website will look when it is fully functional.

What happens if I don't like your website designs?

At the beginning of a project we will find out as much about your company and what you require as possible to ensure from the outset that designs will fully echo your needs. In the unlikely event that you do not like the design we produce, we will talk through what aspects of the design you feel not are working and resolve the issues together by making changes where appropriate.

We do not include unlimited totally new layouts as part of the quote, unless otherwise specified.

Changes

Can I change my mind after signing-off the requirements, wireframes and design?

We strongly advise that sign-off is final, but changes can usually be made at an extra cost.

What happens if I want to change the Requirements half way through?

The Requirements for the project are clearly outlined at the beginning of the project. It is best to be as clear as you can about what you require, as significant changes can incur an extra charge.

Can I change the size of the images after the website is designed?

This depends on the style of your website and the context of the imagery. Some images can be modified easily using CMS. If they are designed/built into the layout of the site, or placed in banners etc this can be more difficult.

What happens if I want some changes after my website is complete?

We are able to add/amend content and make other changes to the site. We will produce quotes for any set of updates (or individually if they are particularly intensive updates) so you can see the costs up front.

Can I update my website myself?

Provided you have gone with a CMS-based website, absolutely - you will receive Content Management Training at the end of the project. This will enable you to edit the content yourself.

Technical

Why does my website look different in different browsers?

Each browser is built by a different vendor (Microsoft, Apple, Google and Mozilla are typically the most popular), and whilst there is a set of standards available, they are always changing and some vendors do not always adhere to the standard.

What browsers do you currently develop for?

We typically check for consistency in the most modern of browsers: the latest 2 versions of Internet Explorer, and the latest version of Firefox, Chrome and Safari. Please check your proposal for the list specific to your project.

If you have a requirement for your website to support older browsers, we can do so for an additional fee. Please let us know if you wish us to test and implement this support.

Can I have more than one web address leading to my website?

Yes, more than one web address can lead to your website.

Will the designs look the same on all screen sizes?

The main, central design will always be the same size, no matter what screen size it is viewed on. It is designed so that it can be viewed on a small or laptop screen (typically 1024px wide minimum). If you view the site on a larger screen the border will increase, rather than magnifying the entire image.

We offer responsive design, where the website will adjust based on screen-size however this will be written specifically into project proposals. Please let us know if you have any particular requirement for it.

Who should I talk to about buying my domain name?

It is best to purchase your own domain name, as then you have full control over it and are responsible for maintaining it, and renewing it each year. If you need advice on purchasing a domain, please contact: support@agincourt.co or call 0845 481 1010.

Timeframe

How long will everything take?

We will set up a schedule at the beginning of the project and will aim to stick to this. However, keeping on track will depend on how quickly designs are decided upon and how quickly content is sent across.

Search Engine Optimisation

Will my website rank well in google?

All our websites are designed and built in accordance with best practice for Search Engine Optimisation (SEO). However, achieving a 'front page' position in the search engines, for either a branded (i.e. company name) or general search (e.g. product name), is dependent on lots of other factors, such as number of links and keyphrase competitiveness.

If you would like to know more information about SEO, please contact us, and we'll talk you through the basics. If you have a particular requirement for SEO services, we can put you in touch with a selection of reputable SEO companies - we feel you'll get the best service from a company dedicated to SEO.

Glossary

- Code** The language a computer speaks, which a developer uses to create what you see on screen.
- Content** All the text, images, headings, links, articles, and information you see on the website. This is created by the client.
- Copy** The written word on your site. This should be concise, to the point, and free of grammatical and spelling errors.
- Designer** The artist who creates the look of your pages, logos, banners, advertisements etc, and liaises with you to ensure your site appears as you would like it to.
- Developer** The programmer who writes the code which allows the designer's images to come to life as a functioning website, online shop, submission form etc. They also make the changes which cannot be done via the CMS.
- Iteration** Each wave of improvements done to a design. We receive an email (or a couple of emails) from you detailing the changes you would like to make. Our designer will implement them and send you a modified design – this is one iteration. Each time the designer modifies the design, according to your amendments, and sends you an updated version, this is another iteration. The iteration number will be clearly stated on the new design.
- Live** The state of a website when it is online, and can be viewed by the public.
- CMS** Content Management System - a user-friendly interface which you can use to manage the pages and their content on your website.
- Wireframes** A simple design for the site, incorporating borders and boxes, to allow you to see and decide on the basic layout of the site, without images, colour, text, etc.

Handy Hints

To finish off we thought we'd leave you with a few handy hints to bear in mind when creating a website. After all, this is what we do every day, and so we want to make it easy for you to get a great website up and running as quickly and simply as possible!

Too many cooks spoil the broth

Your website should be signed off by one or two key people. Be very cautious of emailing the entire office for their opinion. It is rarely helpful, and can actually make the process longer, more complicated, and will not result in a better website.

It's all about the destination

The most important thing about your website is that it serves the visitors in an easy and appropriate manner (i.e. informs users of your products, allows customers to get in touch with you, sells your products efficiently etc). There may occasionally be elements you would like your website to have, which may not technically be possible because it is not supported by the browser, we would have to write an entire program to support, it will be of detriment to your search engine ranking, or it simply isn't technically feasible. However, we will be happy to discuss these issues with you, and find a way to ensure your website looks great and, most importantly, functions in a way which achieves your goals.

Design for your users, not for you

Your users (i.e. the people who will be viewing and navigating around your website) are the most important factor to consider. A website should be designed with them in mind. Our team are experts in usability, so they will be able to advise you on this.

Some final things to bear in mind

- ▶ Keep text to a minimum. Only provide users with information they NEED to know.
- ▶ Users visit websites for a specific purpose, not to read your entire site. Make it as easy as possible for them to find what they are looking for.
- ▶ Buttons/links which require action should be as clear as possible, and use simple, conventional terms like 'Search', 'Basket', 'Contact Us' etc.
- ▶ Site navigation should be clear and simple. Users should always know where they are, and how to get back to where they were.
- ▶ Users don't always land on your homepage - so don't try to cram everything onto it. Most users will come in via search engines or referral links so they will land on specific pages related to the topics they are interested in.

Appendix A: Supplying your own design

On the odd occasion clients have requested to use a design of their own, from a previous designer who may not have the experience required to fully build a website, or where the relationship may have soured mid-project. Provided the design is built by a professional designer, this shouldn't be a problem - however these designs will need to be provided to us before the project can begin.

To avoid additional costs, the designs should adhere to the following specification:

- ▶ If the designer hasn't exported to HTML, a multi-layer Photoshop PSD file must be provided. This should be screen resolution (i.e. designed for ~1024px wide screens, using a 72dpi), ideally built to a grid system (e.g. 960.gs) and any photography should be supplied separately as individual files.
- ▶ If the designer has exported to the design, it should be separated into HTML, JavaScript, CSS and web-ready image files (PNG, JPG), following a logical folder structure. The HTML should be compliant to the W3C specification for either HTML5 or XHTML1. The code will need to be reviewed by one of our developers before we can quote for the project.
- ▶ Designs must be provided for each different page template (e.g. homepage, blog index, blog post, about-us, services index, service detail) with an outline of what is wished to be editable within the CMS.
- ▶ Content must be provided for each page, along with the choice of page template to use (see FAQ for formats).

If any of the above require changes or additions after the project has began, further costs will be incurred.