

Small Business Website Supplier Checklist



Before proceeding with any agreement to develop a website with a supplier, use this checklist to review what information you have and what you don't know. Make sure you are as informed as possible before proceeding.

- What experience does the supplier have in designing websites like the one you are after? Have they done previous work in all the areas required i.e. newsletters, shopping carts, financial transactions online, database management etc?
- Have you seen examples of their previous work? Look at both the quality of graphics and the sophistication of the functionality/technological features.
- Will they provide a detailed proposal with all relevant stages, timelines & costs laid out?
- What does the graphic design package include? (Design using existing logo? Any extra pictures provided by client? All graphics provided? Do you receive alternative design options to start with and if so how many? Do you have to choose one of the suppliers existing graphics setup which will be customized or will they develop it from scratch if required?)
- Is the website a shell system where the content is managed by them (probably not easily changed) or is it a fully self managed content system?
- How user-friendly is the content management system?
- What flexibility is there to change layouts and add-on pages, add in documents, pictures, videos etc?
- In the website package quoted, is there a limit on the number of revisions you can make to the graphic design or web page structure, and if so what and when are those limits operative?
- What will happen if you need to upgrade the website in a short time – small add-on fee or start from scratch?
- Is hosting a compulsory part of the package?
- What hosting set-up do they use – is it offshore? Is it a reputable supplier? What control will they provide against spammers and junk mail?
- What will happen if you want to swap to another hosting supplier?
- What website analytics will your supplier provide that show how well your site is doing in terms of visitors, tracking use through the website etc?
- Do they offer domain registration services? If so, do they deal direct with one of the AUDA approved suppliers or purchase through a reseller? How will the domain registration be handled – will you be the ultimate registration owner? How easy will it be to change the domain name registration if you have to move to a new hosting/website supplier at a later date?
- Is any Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) built into the package? What if anything will they do to get your website listed on the major search engines?
- Will there be key words required for the home page – do you have any input into these? What about other sections of the website? If they design the keywords, what will be the basis of these? Are they using one of the search engine programs from Google or Yahoo to measure search usage of keywords?
- Can they provide internet marketing advice to you (including SEO and PPC), so a whole internet strategy can be developed for your website? Will you have to go elsewhere for this as a secondary service?
- Will they be able to handle any other e-work such as e-zines, email campaigns etc.?
- What other extra value might they add as a supplier – have they provided any good ideas outside of your brief? Have they told you whether they think your website would be successful or not? If not, why not?