



Name _____

Domain Name _____

Phone _____

Other domains? _____

Email _____

Web Host Provider _____

The Website Process

When you visit a website, the wow factor of colors, design and interface is only the 20% façade that you see. The other 80% is the back end; the endless lines of code that make everything appear so simple and put together on the outside. Good planning translates to easy execution and an efficient back end, which is the work you're paying the web developer to do. More planning on your part means less work (and re-work and re-work) on my part. More importantly, it means you will end up with a website that truly reflects your business identity and gets your message across in an attractive, compelling format. These pages will walk you through a thought process and help you articulate to me your vision of your website.

I. Domain Name

If you don't already have a domain name, list a couple that you would like to use and an alternative in case your preferred name is already registered. Examples: www.cyberrentals.com, and www.infocusdesign.net

II. Goals

What are the goals - measurable if possible - for your website?

How can your website increase your business or facilitate your clients?

Examples: Generate 3 leads or requests for information from the website each month; register for events; order products online; present a slideshow of images showcasing your work; allow for 24/7 information downloads; allow for online donations.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

III. Target Audience

Describe who you want to attract to your site and what information they might be seeking. Be honest - what your (potential) clients want may not necessarily be what you want. You should visit with a few clients or prospects to hear their input.

- Will they want to print your pages? Download publications?
- Will your visitors want to watch a demo about your products?
- Take a quiz or survey and submit the results to you?
- Watch a slideshow of pictures?
- See thumbnail-size pictures as well as a large scale version?
- Will they want to hear background sound?
- Will the site need to be accessible for vision impaired viewers?

IV. Site Type

Each site type will likely have a different target audience and relevant goals. Determine which type best fits your vision and goals.

- Informational. Site will offer information to the general public, or special interest groups, about the organization and relevant topics and offer links to other sites. The information on these sites stays fairly static.
- Business. Serves as an online brochure for a business or commercial entity, but doesn't yet offer functionality, such as online ordering or product downloads.
- Gallery. These sites display and showcase art, such as photographs or paintings. The site should be a place where artists can express themselves and their inspirations.
- Ecommerce. This can be as simple as a non-profit's ability to accept donations to complex as a full on-line store. These sites require a dedicated effort to keep up to date.

V. Key Search Words

If you were to do a Google search to find your website, what search words would you use? List as many as you can think of, such as topics, products, location, affiliations, type of business.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

VI. Individual Page Content

This helps you think about how many pages you might need, and how to organize your content. You might need both a primary navigation and a secondary navigation. A viewer should never need to click more than 3 times to arrive at the information they are seeking.

_____	Home _____
_____	About / Bios _____
_____	Business Philosophy _____
_____	Products / Portfolio _____
_____	Clients / Testimonials _____
_____	Galleries _____
_____	Press / In the News _____
_____	Calendar / Events / Registration _____
_____	Directions to store _____
_____	Careers _____
_____	Contact _____

VII. Search Engine Optimization and Links to your site

Many factors drive SEO, which determines how high your site is ranked in a Google search. One of the more important factors is how many other websites are linking to your website. Think about who you can contact to request a link to your site, such as professional organizations, the chamber of commerce, business directories, complimentary businesses. You'll want to secure every incoming link you possibly can. Possible incoming links:

VIII. Content Requirements

Think about the content required for each page, and put it in a word document. Do you have a logo, or need one? Do you have product images? Articles or press you've been mentioned in? Gathering content takes time, and the sooner you have the content ready, the sooner your site can be launched.

Name	Description	Type	Format	Exist now?
Logo	Company logo used in all media	Image	GIF	No
Press release	Write up in newspaper	Text	PDF	Yes
Product picture	Picture of xyz product	Image	JPG	Yes

IX. Features and Prioritizing

You should list everything you would like to see on your website, such as ability to order products on-line, or a downloadable demo, and then prioritize the list. Budget or technical limitations may push some features off into the future, yet allow us to focus on providing a highly attractive and functional website ready for action now.

Must have: mandatory requirements that cannot be eliminated.

Should have: the site can be functional and effective without these features, but might not be as competitive or compelling. These can deliver distinct value to the site.

X. Color & Shapes

Color can convey so much in mood and tone. It can be completely compatible with the purpose of your site and enhance it, or it can be distracting and undermine what you wish to convey. First, write down the colors you think you would like to see on the site. Then check off the adjectives that would describe the look and feel of your site.

Preferred Colors: _____

Facets: Hot Cool Pale Bright
 Cold Warm Bold Dark

Color moods and overall style:

<input type="checkbox"/> Powerful	<input type="checkbox"/> Rich	<input type="checkbox"/> Romantic	<input type="checkbox"/> Vital
<input type="checkbox"/> Earthy	<input type="checkbox"/> Friendly	<input type="checkbox"/> Soft	<input type="checkbox"/> Welcoming
<input type="checkbox"/> Moving	<input type="checkbox"/> Elegant	<input type="checkbox"/> Fresh	<input type="checkbox"/> Traditional
<input type="checkbox"/> Refreshing	<input type="checkbox"/> Tropical	<input type="checkbox"/> Classic	<input type="checkbox"/> Dependable
<input type="checkbox"/> Calm	<input type="checkbox"/> Regal	<input type="checkbox"/> Magical	<input type="checkbox"/> Energetic
<input type="checkbox"/> Subdued	<input type="checkbox"/> Professional	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

Shapes can also be powerful, especially if they relate to your business, or your organization's name, or are a natural extension of your logo. Note below if there are relevant shapes you like and wish to incorporate into the site.

XI. Other Websites

Often it's easier to convey your vision with pictures rather than words. List below any websites you want me to look at, especially competitors. Along with the URL, note what you like (or don't like) about the site and why.

XII. The Road ahead

These are the steps I'll use to develop your website.

- Plan** Includes the submission of this spec sheet and following discussion.
- Design** Design mockups will display the layout and navigation for home page and an internal page of the site, if necessary. If the site requires both a primary and secondary navigation, I will provide a site map, detailing the flow of each page.
- SEO** Search engine optimization is layered into the code from the beginning. At the same time we're evaluating designs, we want to do keyword research at competitor websites, and think about how to build those keywords into the content you're pulling together.
- Production** This is the point where I actually start coding. It's worth noting that coding the homepage requires the most work. Once the homepage is complete, and you're satisfied with the look, the colors, the navigation and so forth, coding the subsequent pages moves pretty quickly.
- Test** We'll review the site in as many different environments as possible, including PCs vs. MACs, desktops, laptops, different browsers, etc. I will also validate the code for WC3 compliance.
- Launch** Happy Day. It's live!
- Email Blast** You may want to send out an email blast to an unlimited number of email addresses announcing your site and driving traffic to it. Email blasts can also be used as an effective ongoing marketing effort to announce new products or events.
- Maintain** This is often the part that is most neglected. At a minimum, review your site every 3-6 months. Keep it fresh.

XIII. How do you define success?

It's important that you can articulate, define, and if possible, have a measure for your website's success. It may not be readily apparent now, but it should be by the time we get to the production phase. It might be as simple as, "the site exists and is live for the whole world to see" to "I have three new clients because they visited the site and learned about my services". The definition of success should keep us solidly on track to our goals.
