

OUTLINING A WELL-STRUCTURED WEBSITE BRIEF

The purpose of a clear, detailed website brief is to provide your chosen design and development team with all the information they need to create a first-class website that meets all of your needs: a responsive, functional and aesthetically pleasing website that effectively showcases your organization and what it has to offer. A well-written brief will also ensure that your brand image is taken into account at every stage of the design process and that your corporate philosophy is clearly communicated to your target audience.

If you have no previous experience of writing website specifications, this short guide will help you to put together an effective brief. Follow the suggestions below and you will be able to create a brief that enables any competent design and development team to take your website dreams and turn them into a fully-functioning reality. Such a brief can also be used to solicit accurate quotations from several different design teams if you have yet to pick the one you wish to work with.

How to Write the Perfect Website Brief

If you follow the structure outlined below, you will be able to put together a website specification that contains all the necessary information, in an easy-to-read format.

1. Introduction

Use the introductory section of your brief to summarise what you want your website to do for your company. This should only take a couple of sentences; there's no need to go into great detail at this point. For example:

“We need a new corporate website that our B2B customers can use to browse our product range. It should contain technical details of each product we manufacture.”

2. Overview of your Business

In this section, explain what your company does, how long it has been in existence, and what your plans for the future are. If you have a corporate philosophy, include this here as well.

3. Notes on Existing Website

If you are building a brand new website, you can safely skip this section. However, if you are looking for a design team to create a fresh, new site that will replace your existing one, it would be very helpful to make some notes on what you like about your existing site and what you would like to change.

4. Design/Branding Notes

In this part of the brief, you should describe the type of design and branding that you wish to be used on your new website. If there are any specific color schemes, fonts, images or other elements that you think are essential to the design of your site, you should mention them here too. The design notes should tie in with your corporate philosophy and desired public image: if you are trying to promote your company as an environmentally friendly organization, for example, a design that utilizes earth colors and images of nature could be a good choice.

5. Who You Wish to Reach

Before writing this section, think about who you want to reach with your online presence. The team that designs your new website will need to know who you are targeting if they are to make a good job of it.

6. Specific Online Goals

What specific goals do you want to achieve with your new website? If you are hoping to increase your turnover by 10% through sales leads generated by your online presence, this is the type of goal that should be included in this section of your brief.

7. Website Navigation/Menu Structure

If you have a clear idea of how you would like your website to be organized, you can provide details here. You may, for example, want to have separate sections for your Sales and Maintenance divisions, with several sub-sections for each of these. If you would like the design team you hire to come up with a sensible structure on your behalf, you can omit this section from your brief.

8. Key Features

If there are any particular features you would like your new website to have, this is the place to list them. If, for example, you need a secure payment facility on your site, for processing debit and credit card payments, this would be a feature you need to mention here. You may also wish

to offer visitors the option to subscribe to a newsletter or to provide them with an interactive map that can be used to explore your company's global operations: any special features you want should be included in this section.

9. Notes on Competitors' Websites

It can be very helpful, especially when starting from scratch, to provide prospective web design teams with links to a few of your competitors' websites, along with some notes on what you like and dislike about them. If there are any websites you particularly like, it would be useful to include these in this section too, whether or not they are run by direct competitors.

10. Timeframe

You need to let prospective designers know how long they have to prepare a quotation and, assuming they win the job of building your new website, how long they will have to complete all the necessary work. It is important to be realistic when setting limits: if you want a large, complicated website with advanced functionality, you will need to allow the design team plenty of time to deliver this.

11. Budget

You probably already have a figure in your mind that you would rather not exceed but, as with the timeframe you set, you need to make sure that your budget is compatible with your requirements. In other words, be realistic about how much functionality and design work you are going to be able to command for the money you are willing to spend. Once you have decided on an acceptable budget, make a note of it here in your brief.

12. Final Thoughts

Bring your brief to a conclusion with any extra information you feel the winning design team will need. If there are any specific requirements you have that do not fit into any of the above sections, now is the time to mention them. If you would like a hosting plan to be included as part of the package, you should make a note of that here. You should also make it clear whether you expect the team that builds your website to maintain it in the future and, if so, whether you expect maintenance costs to be built into the website design proposal or to be charged at a fixed hourly rate.

If your company operates in a niche industry that has unique rules and regulations for conducting business online, be sure to mention these in your brief too. If you have any questions about writing a website brief that have not been answered in this guide or you would like to talk to a member of our web design team about your requirements, please do not hesitate to call or email us.

Fill out your brief Form

Date:

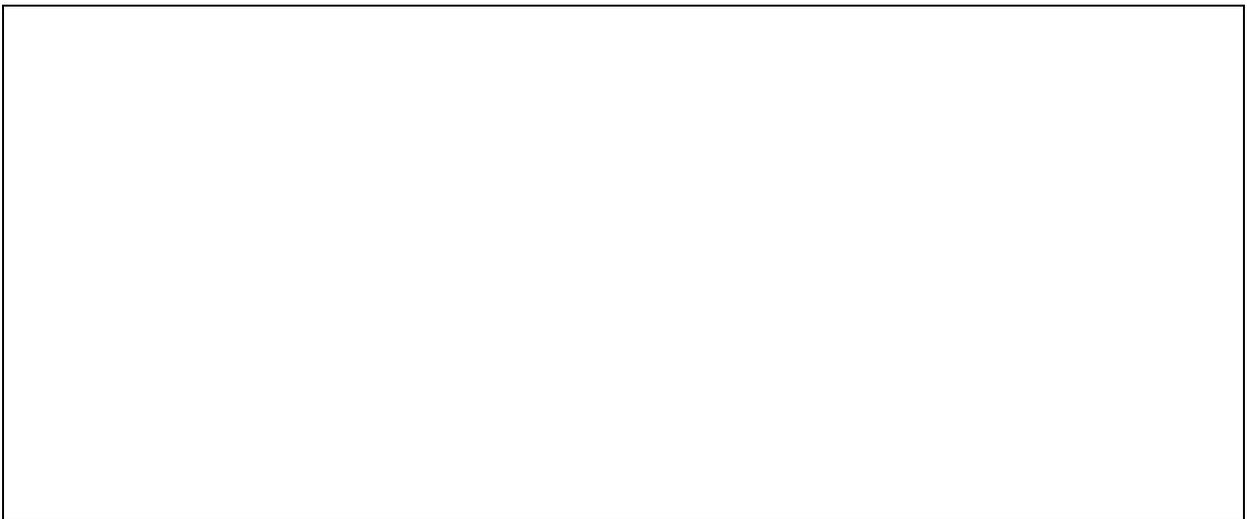
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2. Overview of your Business

3. Notes on Existing Website



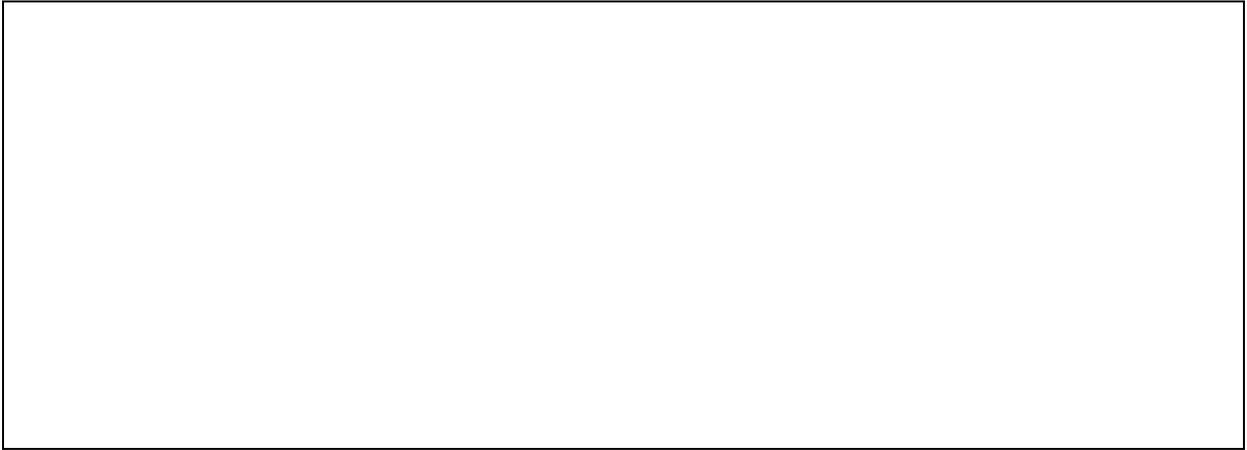
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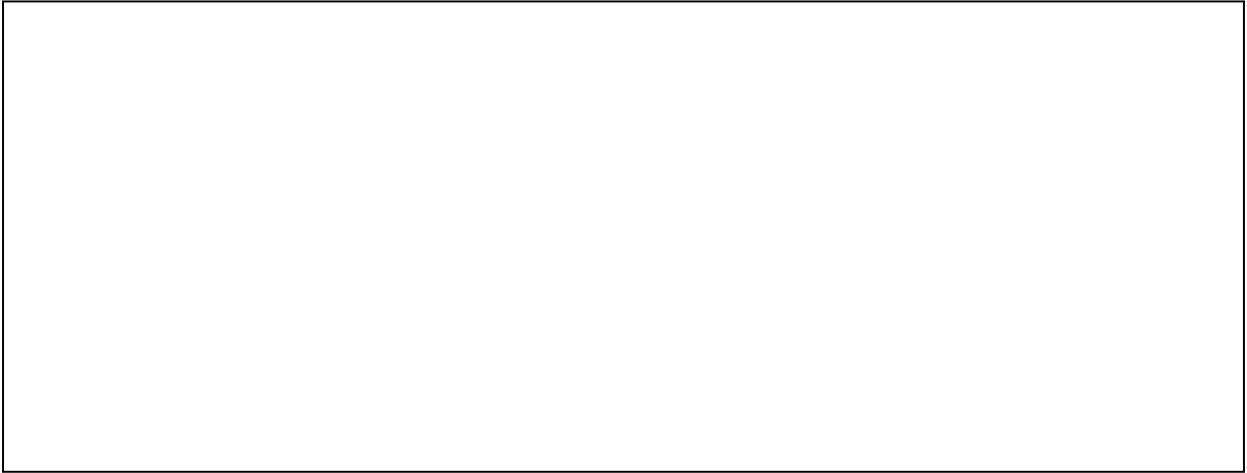
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8. Key Features



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10. Timeframe



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