

# Questions clients frequently ask

## **How long will it take? I need it up by tomorrow.**

You probably didn't build your business in a day; throwing a website together quickly will not serve the interests of your business. You may only have one chance to make an impression on potential customers; make it a good one, not a rushed one. But, timely responses by you to our requests will help speed up the process.

## **How much will it cost?**

The cost will depend on several factors: the complexity of the site, added technical requirements (forms & blogs), the site's size, and graphic complexity. It will also depend on you—on the quantity and quality of content materials supplied, specificity of input, and number of revisions. Unlike some other design firms, we don't use set "package" pricing. These prices are usually based on the use of premade templates. We believe that every client is unique and has their own needs. Once we discuss the project with you, we can give you a detailed estimate (at no charge, of course).

## **Just give me a price.**

We can't give you an estimate without knowing more about your project. Companies that will do that typically add on huge extra fees afterward, or they're using a template and charging you for "custom" work.

## **Why is it so expensive? So-and-so in India will create a site for \$99.95.**

Cost is only one factor to consider. As in most things, you get what you pay for. Companies that promise to create a site for a preset fixed price simply can't afford to take the particular needs of your business into account. Your website will be a critical element of your marketing strategy, and should be created with the care and attention it deserves.

## **I want XYZ features, but I can only afford \$500.**

We will work within your specified budget to give you the best possible site—one that works for your business. We can also suggest ways to save money to meet your budget target. Plus, we can develop your site with the ability to add other features later as your budget allows.

## **Create a site for me and I'll pay for it if I like it.**

This is called spec work and is a bad arrangement for everyone involved. We will work closely with you at all stages of the work, and will do everything possible to make sure you are pleased with your website.

## **My teenage nephew said he could create a site for me. He made his own Facebook page, after all—how much different could it be?**

A lot, actually. Your nephew might be able to create a site for you, and it might have a lot of flashy eye candy. What it won't do is make money for your business. Many factors go into creating a successful business website: technical expertise, marketing and business knowledge, knowledge of how people actually use websites (what makes some more effective than others), and how to get visitors to your site to take action. The purpose of your site isn't to be cool; it's to put money in your pocket.

## **I want it to be Web 2.0.**

Web 2.0 is one of those phrases that everybody has heard of, but which doesn't really mean anything. We build sites using standards-compliant XHTML and CSS; we can also structure your site to appear correctly on Blackberrys and cell phones if desired.

## **I want it to have Flash/MP3/Video/background music/etc.**

These features can sometimes add value to your site, but are often used in ways that actually detract from the site's effectiveness. We will recommend when added technologies will make your site a more effective business tool.

## **I want the site to be built in Flash because Flash sites are really cool.**

Flash sites tend to be cool, visually stunning, and generally useless. They are also difficult (and expensive) to update. The biggest problem with Flash sites is that search engines have a very difficult time finding them. This means far fewer potential customers can find your business.

## **I want the site to use an unconventional navigation scheme.**

Although it may be clever or interesting to depart from expected web conventions, usability—and the business value of the site—often suffer. If people can't figure out how to get around your site or find the information they need, they'll leave.

## **I want to use the free hosting I get from my ISP. Why should I pay extra for it?**

The free hosting provided by your ISP is a fine way to show off your vacation photos, but it has serious disadvantages for a business website. You won't be able to use a proper domain name, important features will be missing, and your site will not project a professional image for your business.

### **I want to be able to make changes to the site myself.**

If this is a genuine requirement, we can set up a content management system for you. Using this will require a fair degree of computer knowledge on your part. If you're in the North Carolina Triad area, we can provide on-site setup and training for you.

### **I want the site to be purple because it's my favorite color.**

All of the design elements of your site—colors, layout, fonts, images—will be designed to maximize the business value of your site. The psychological impact of color will affect how visitors think of your site—and your business.

### **I want it to have a counter/guestbook/blinking images.**

Although these features were popular in the early days of the web, today they are obsolete and detract from a site's professional image.

### **I want the site to use Times Roman.**

Like colors, we select typefaces to project the best possible—and most appropriate—image for your business. And unlike with printed materials, type cannot be completely controlled on the web. The browser settings of the user can affect the type size and font. We take these factors into consideration in designing your site.

### **I want the site to be "www.mybusinessname.com."**

If the domain name you want is available, we will be happy to secure it for you. If it is taken, we will work with you to recommend a suitable alternate.

### **I don't have the actual copy or images yet, but I want you to get started anyway.**

All content materials must be supplied before work will begin. The amount of text and images can greatly affect the optimum design and layout of your site, as well as the cost.

### **I don't have time to pick out images or write the copy. That's what I'm paying you for.**

We will gladly help you with refining your text and graphics if needed and offer suggestions for making your site content more effective. Our rates are normally based on the content being supplied by you; if you need us to create it for you, we can determine a rate for that.

### **I have (unsuitable) artwork that I want to use on the site.**

If the only artwork you have is unsuitable (poor quality, wrong format), we can work with you to create artwork that will reflect the professional image of your business, including logos and illustrations.

### **I just need a few more changes . . .**

Our estimate will specify how many revisions are included (and what counts as a revision vs. change of work). Additional revisions will be billed at a specified hourly rate.

### **Can you make the type bigger/smaller?**

The type size that visitors to your site will see is largely controlled by them, not us. We will make sure that the type size for your site is appropriate for your target audience, and that the design will still work if the user increases the type size in their browser.

### **You're a vendor, I'm the client. I don't care what you think, just do what I want.**

You are the client, and we will do what you want. However, we assume that you know more about your business than we do. Likewise, it's likely that we know more about web design than you do. By combining our areas of expertise, together we can work as a team to create the best possible site for your business.

### **The colors must match this printed piece / swatch / whatever. The colors look different on my screen.**

Due to the dynamic nature of the internet, perfect color matching is not possible. Different monitors and computer systems display colors slightly differently, much like how different televisions can display slightly different images. We take this into account to create colors which can survive these differences and still convey a professional image for you.

### **I want the site to have lots of text (or other info crammed onto the page) so that people will learn everything about my business. I don't want to "waste" any space, so fill it all.**

Reading text on a screen is different from reading printed materials. Web users don't read from start to finish (like a book), they quickly scan for information. White (or "wasted") space is essential for helping users get the most from your site. It divides the page into easy-to-digest chunks of information, and helps to guide them to important areas of information. Cramming too much information onto a page will detract from your site's business success.

**I want people to have to log in to the site to get to the first page, so I can collect their e-mail addresses for a mailing list.**

Visitors may be willing to sign up for something (such as a n e-mail newsletter) after they have found what they are looking for, but forcing them to do so before will cause them to leave the site. People are unwilling to sign up for an account if they don't know if they will ever use it again. It's unreasonable to force users to provide their e-mail address in order to learn about your business. Any kind of user registration will reduce traffic to your site—and potential customers.

**Have additional questions?**

Please feel free to call us or send a message. We'd love to meet for coffee (we'll even pay for it!)

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