Introduction

How To Plan & Create A Better Website.

THE A-Z GUIDE ON HOW TO DELIBERATELY DESIGN THE BEST POSSIBLE WEBSITE

? Have you wondered how to get the absolute best out of your business (or organisation) website?

? Do you want to be able to have more control about the end result and how well it will work but not be the website builder?

**?** Do you need to rebuild or build your first website and have no idea where to start?

What you need is a simple website planning method that walks you through planning, designing and building your next web site!

What Can You Learn Here?

This **step by step (free)** process will walk you through everything you need to know to create the plan you need to clarify what you want from your website, what you need from your web site, and enable you to choose better who to work with and how to know if you got what you asked for.

This is our guide from over 17 years of scoping and building websites and web applications; that lays out clearly for you how to create your own scope and take control of your website success.

This guide won't teach you how to build websites as a designer, but it will help you get the right designer to **build the site** you want and need to make your business results grow the way you want them to. It won't teach you every skill in depth on the particular modalities like Usability and Information Architecture, but it will give you the starting points for all of these that you can expand on.
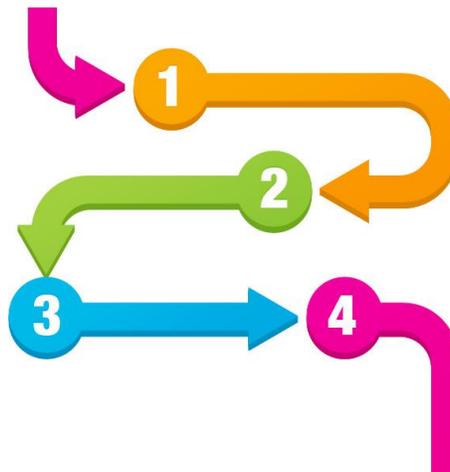
The result will help improve what you do at whatever level you are, and can be expanded on and utilised as a document template even for experienced teams wanting a more thorough plan for their clients.

Who Is This Guide For?

This guide was designed for **Business Owners, Marketing Teams,** and Managers that have the responsibility for their business website.

Anyone in an organisation that has the role of running their current website, **planning their next website upgrade or building their first website** will benefit from this process.

If you need to work with developers and designers to build your site then this will help both you and them in creating a better website.

This guide was also made so that other developers and designers can use it to help them work better with their clients. Not every agency or developer has the capacity or desire to build out scopes of work for the sites they build, many would love a clear set of guidelines and marketing information to help them do what they do better.

You only have to read the 'Clients From Hell' website to see there is a lot of frustration on the supplier side. This guide will **help remove that frustration.**

We believe that a consistent approach for all will help both provider and client get better results, with much more information up front and the removal of significant assumptions and guess work.

This can be used internally within an organisation as well as with external providers. The guide should help everyone remove the missing piece in planning for successful websites.

Why Is This Guide Needed?

Ask most business owners or marketing executives about their experiences in building corporate web sites and you will hear many stories about the difficulties, frustrations, and problems they have.

Many people refer to websites as an **"IT"** thing (yes - still) despite it being one of the **most critical marketing and communication tools** they have.

On the developers side there is still massive frustration on how to best get specifications, requirements and all the essential information up front so they can accurately estimate and quote projects, but also to provide transparent and realistic information on the key client questions of how much, how long and what will we need to do.

After more than 20 years spent working with businesses and organisations of all size and their websites and applications, enough was enough!

Over the lifetime of our business, our team members cried out for better scopes, clearer information and we were forever looking for and improving on what we did. It never seemed quite enough. There were always too many shortcuts or missing pieces of critical information that showed up late in the process of development that should have been discovered earlier.

Everyone gets so excited about a new project that all the energy goes into a push to get started and finished without taking the necessary steps.

Many small and medium businesses don't have the breadth of skills to help them and rely on the development team (like ours) too much to help guide them. Not every company has access to Online Marketing stars across areas like Information Architecture, Usability, and Customer Journey Mapping, to Content Management and Development.

So a blueprint was needed to help step people through a process.

Everyone will get better results!

From Business Owners to Freelance Developers, Agency Teams, Marketing Managers or Assistants, General Managers of medium businesses, small teams to big company project groups, by using a structured clear human focussed scope of works.

If you care about your website, then this guide will help you plan, build and get better results from it.

AN INTRODUCTION

Start at the beginning and grasp why a process like this matters.

Understanding the core concept behind a proper brief and some of the common mistakes will help you think through each step and why it is important to you.

- Chapter 1: What is a website brief/scope?

- Chapter 2: Common mistakes

THE FOUNDATIONS

Get these foundations done right and your site will have a very solid structure to build on. You get to choose whether you build your structure on sand or rock.

Setting goals for your business and the website helps you understand what you need from your site. Determine who you best clients are and how to help provide them solutions. Identify items you simply can't do without which will help to provide you the base on which to build the site.

Following up with relevant research at vital stages in the process will complete the core information you need to go and create a meaningful website.

- Chapter 3: What's the result you want?

- Chapter 4: Who's your audience?

- Chapter 5: Your business must-haves

- Chapter 6: Research

THE BLUEPRINT

This is equivalent to architectural drawings in construction, where you flesh out the structural detail that matters most. What will go where and why, and what will it say.

The bulk of the work that goes into making a useful brief that allows you to dictate the result you want is done through this stage.

Step by step instructions on drawing site maps, writing out the page scopes, how to wireframe (or get wireframing done right), the role content plays and how to address it.

Finally bringing all of this together into a useful brief document or scope of works for your website project that can be shared and used to choose your development team.

You become the architect of your ideal new website.

- Chapter 7: Drafting a Map

- Chapter 8: Scope it out

- Chapter 9: Wireframing

- Chapter 10: Content is King

- Chapter 11: The Document

GETTING IT BUILT

Helping you understand more about the process of web development and setting realistic guidelines and budgets for your goals.

Laying out the final parts and looking for who will help you do the work. With all the prior effort this becomes much easier and it will be easier to determine who to work with.

This stage involves you learning to choose who to work with based on how they respond to the work you have already done, what they can bring to the table to help you achieve results and how to determine a suitable budget for what you want.

There are many tools you can use to have your website built and developers can tend to favour some because they know it not necessarily because it is best suited to your website.

Understand the difference and be part of the process so you get tools that support your business.

- Choosing the tech [Coming May 30]

- Choosing your developer [Coming May 30]

- How much should your website cost? [Coming June 2016]

- Engaging the dev team [Coming June 2016]

- Hosting [Coming June 2016]

FINAL BITS

These last chapters fill in a couple of areas that finish off the guide to helping you plan and build better sites.

A couple of pieces of advice to save you a lot of frustration as well as a glossary that summarises all the terms and names of things, processes and technology that might sound like gobbledygook to you.

- Stop saying or doing this [Coming June 2016]

- Stop Designing the way your website looks! [Coming June 2016]

- Web Design Glossary [Coming June 2016]