

The Ten Tidy Stages of Website Design

This will give an idea of the stages involved & the materials needed to produce & launch a working website. There is no timeframe shown for this outline because each project is different & depends heavily on the cooperation, responsiveness & decisiveness of the client team.

Payment structure is in 1/3 segments for web design & 1/4 payments for web design + shopping cart.

I. *Client Intake

*Payment: 1/3 of estimated total to commence project
1/4 of estimated total to commence project if Part IX (shopping cart) is part of the work*

- a. Contact, payment information, signed contract
- b. Get website host, login/pw, FTP
- c. Get client's preferences for contact & asset management
- d. Set up folders: Asset, Work, Information, Stylesheet, Email
- e. Set up Dropbox account / Asana. Add collaborators if neededw

II. Branding & Style

- a. Receive client style, ideas, ethos, purposes
- b. Receive ideas, website examples, colour/typeface choices
- c. Review existing assets - determine Content Creation for additional assets - see Phase V

III. Wireframes

- a. Receive client's ideas for navigation, 'funnel', website purpose
- b. Discuss additional functions needed (plugins, modules, shopping cart)
- c. Discuss pages, taxonomy. Get firm commitment on pages
- d. Draft prototypes for review
- e. Draft changes to layouts
- f. Final choice for theme, layout
- g. Provide sketch-type layout with client's assets, colours, etc.

Sign-off

IV. Assets & Content

- a. Receive client's collection of photos, illustration, logo
If client needs photography, media purchase, see V
- b. Receive client's created content
If client needs content creation, see V
- c. Assess the need for custom graphics
- d. Determine what is missing; plan for fulfillment

Stages of Website Design, cont'd.

V. Content Creation

- a. Photography - purchase or shoot - Separate Project
- b. Graphic design (beyond webpage deco) - Separate Project
- c. Writing and writing for SEO - Separate Project
- d. Video - Separate Project
- e. Translation - create 2nd set of pages for 2nd language - Separate Project

VI. *Webpage Layout, Styling

*Payment: 2nd third of project total + any cost overruns
2nd quarter of estimated total + cost overruns if IX*

- a. Receive client's choice of Wordpress theme - purchase
- b. Set up on server the site will live on after completion
- c. Set up child theme
- d. Write settings for title, permalinks, Wordpress-effective settings
- d. Set up plugins
- e. Style site as per Phase III directives

Sign-off

VII. Content Insertion, Formatting

- a. Flow text into pages; style
- b. Add assets to Media Library
- c. Insert assets into pages
- d. Write **SEO descriptions**, tags for pages
- e. Client to insert their own blog posts

VIII. Client Review

- a. Review Layout
- b. Review Style
- c. Review Assets/graphics
- d. Review Content
- e. Implement Changes

Sign-off

Stages of Website Design, cont'd.

IX. *Shopping Cart

Payment: 3rd 1/4 of total project + any cost overruns

- a. Determine type of sales process: PayPal, credit card, banque check, etc.
- b. Determine where sales will be allowed (this affects tax rates, shipping parameters)
- c. Determine modules needed to achieve sales process
- d. Complete checklist of items needed {i.e., payment gateway account, UPS account, tracking function, SSL certificate}
- e. Purchase needed modules
- f. Obtain product shots (1 for all or 1 large & detail shots, etc.)
- g. Load assets/description for each product
- h. Set shipping parameters (location, box size, weight) per product
- i. Load payment gateway or PayPal - test in test mode
- j. Complete actual sales in test mode
- k. Launch production mode (real deal)

Sign-off

X. *Let's Launch, Shall We?

*Payment: Last third of project total + any cost overruns **prior to launch**
Last quarter of project total if IX + cost overruns **prior to launch***

- a. Review Hosting
- b. Review Layout
- c. Review Assets
- d. Review Content
- e. Review Navigation (Menu + anchor text, set links, etc.)
- f. Delete old site or put into subdirectory folder . . .
- g. Launch New Site
- h. Test - fix any links, navigation
- i. Toast with really good champagne sparkling wine
- j. (Client to) send out announcements via email, FB posting, Twitter, old site paste-up, etc.
{Make it a marketing ploy}

Things that can cause cost overruns ::

- ⊕ ***custom graphics** beyond what is specified in the estimate*
- ⊕ ***rushes** to complete the phase as a result of late changes or late decisions*
- ⊕ ***additional hours** to a stage beyond the hourly estimate*
- ⊕ ***additional content creation** or content editing*
- ⊕ ***shopping cart delays**, additions or changes that go beyond the hourly estimate*
- ⊕ ***changes** to the project or phase after the stage has been signed off on*