

PurpleTree Graphics

WEBSITE DESIGN HANDBOOK

What you need to know to create your website.



2011

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THE FIRST STEP:

Domain Name & Registration –

Choose a domain name that is as close to your business name as possible, the shorter - the better. You may verify possible names and register one or more on Go-Daddy.com. We can point more than one domain name to your website, so you may choose a .com, .net, and .org as an example. We suggest that you choose a .com account, even if you want your main domain name to be under a .net. People tend to default to looking for a .com. Having more than one domain name does not mean that you will be easier to find your site or that you will climb higher in the search ratings.

Hosting –

You will need web hosting that suits the type of website that you are producing. We only provide for *linux based hosting*. You may also host your website and/or blog with Go-Daddy.com. WordPress, a content-management system (CMS), may also be hosted with WordPress.com, but certain limitations exist within their hosting, along with additional fees for certain requirements. Be sure that you check the limitations prior to choosing a host. You may set up your hosting account and any email accounts, or you may request that we do it for you.

Email Accounts –

You may purchase a package of e-mail accounts for your website. Choose a package that has more names than just you and your staff. You may want email accounts for ‘info@.com’, or ‘service @.com’ for example. You may also need an ‘admin@***.com’ for certain messages. E-mail accounts are not included with the design of your website unless you request it from the beginning.

E-commerce –

If you have items for sale you will need a Merchant Account, a Payment Gateway, and a SSL Certificate to make your shopping cart active and get money into your bank account. We recommend that you use Go-Daddy.com for your SSL Certificate if you have purchased your domain name, hosting and email accounts with them, just for ease of access. Authorize.net is the most recommended site for getting your Payment Gateway, as it provides easy step-by-step instructions. We can acquire and set-up your Payment Gateway and SSL certificate if you would like this service. Currently the SSL Certificate costs \$75 and the set-up fee is \$100. It will be up to you to get your merchant account through a Bank of your choice.

Passwords & Logins –

Please keep all of your passwords and login information in one place as we will need them to set up your website. You may email them to us as you get them and we will provide the complete list upon completion of the site. If we have set up your hosting account we will provide you with all of the passwords for access to your accounts.

CONTENT DEVELOPMENT:

Develop your 'Pages' –

We work under the assumption that you know your business best, so it is up to you to determine what information you want and how that information needs to be shown on your site. This is the time to organize your information and decide what and how many 'pages' you may need, and how you would like people to interact with your information. You may also wish to have pages within pages – or sub-navigation – these are counted as pages toward the total number. This will also determine your navigation requirements. E-commerce sites can be designed with a standard 'front' page and the store pages following. This would count as one page plus a 'cart'. E-commerce pricing is determined by the package and modules required – not by the number of pages. Other organization requirements that you may need to gather are colors or combinations, theme, appearance, logos, graphics, artwork, etc.

Answer these few questions:

What do you want the site to do?

Describe how the site should look and feel.

Who are your customers?

What do you offer that is significant or different from your competitors?

References –

Provide us with your URL of your existing website, if any, and provide the names of 3 websites that you like, and 3 names of your competitors websites.

Additional Requirements –

Make a list of the other requirements that you may need or want, like a Content Management, Blog, Social Media Links, Video, Audio, Slideshows, Flash intros or navigation, Plug-ins, Database Applications, etc. Explain how you would like these to work – such as you would like a link to a video, not a video embedded on the site. Will you have a need for uploading or downloading files? How would you like that done? Please be as specific as possible so that we can find and price the right solutions.

Shopping Cart -

Be prepared to provide product images, descriptions, weights, shipping and handling fees for your products. Product shipping fees can be set by weight or price. Will you be offering wholesale pricing? There are also many options that can be added to your store to enhance your customers' experience, like a newsletter, wish list, birthday gift, and customer referral program. Enhanced shopping features include: featured products and last viewed items. The back office can include customer and viewing statistics, and a variety of analytics. Each 'module' added to the basic e-commerce package is an additional cost.

Decide how you would like your store to work – and be aware that an e-commerce package does only 'e-commerce' things – it will not, for example, verify a persons' identification, or view UPS shipping costs on the UPS website. These data-base

applications (programs) can be designed and implemented – at additional cost, which can be more or less expensive depending upon the complexity of the program.

You should know how you will package and ship your products, and how returns will be made. You should also have the terms and conditions of service and sales.

A Note About Flash –

Flash intros and websites can visually add more interest by providing movement to your site – it can also be distracting to the service or products you’re offering. For Flash to work a person must have it installed on their computer, and if not, the intro or website will not be viewable as designed. Flash is also much more involved in designing and coding, and therefore more expensive. Be sure that Flash is an enhancement to your website, not just a gimmick, and that the majority of your customers have updated Flash and will be able to view your site.

Write Everything Down –

We need everything you require in writing so that we have a check list. You are also responsible for providing the content (copy) for your site.

DESIGN FEES:

Price Estimate & Project Scope –

Your design fee will be based upon the type of website (static, content-managed, blog, e-commerce or mixed), the number of pages, content requirements, email accounts, links and other plug-ins that you are requesting, plus the amount of time required for design, programming and coding to complete the project. This constitutes the scope of the project: changes in the scope of the project during the design phase may change the price and completion date.

Project Time Frame –

We will provide you with a schedule for your project. There are three major phases of the project: 1) the design phase, 2) the review / revision phase, 3) the coding and transfer to host. Any delay in one phase may cause delays in the next, or may change the completion date. For basic sites each phase is provided within 14 working days – for a total time, start to finish, of about 6 weeks. This allows for design and revision time, as well as handling any unforeseen technical problems.

CONTENT REQUIREMENTS:

E-Commerce –

You must provide all information and digital photos (jpg, png) of your products. Digital Photography and adjustments are additional to design fees and billed separately. Product Information – provide all descriptions, ingredients, colors, sizes, pricing, weights, etc. Shipping & Delivery – select a carrier (USPS, UPS, FED-Ex, etc.) and provide shipping costs. Will your shipping and handling be based on product price or weight? Store Policies – you must provide terms and conditions, returns, legal requirements, etc.

Website Content -

Unless you have requested us to research and develop your content, it is up to you to provide us with all of the information you want on your site; which includes all copy (text), photos, logos, artwork, and graphics. You may request that we find images or graphics for your site, and you will be billed at cost for the selected images that you approve.

Your content must meet certain requirements: submitted text must be the final, edited copy. Graphic images (pictures or artwork) must be 72dpi minimum, and at the same size or larger than where it is to be placed. Images appearing to be less than 72 dpi will not be suitable. Note: Your text may be edited for content and fit, and your graphics will be selected based on usability, clarity, aesthetics and fit.

Content Management System -

We provide a variety of custom options using the WordPress platform. We can customize an existing theme, customize an empty, flexible theme using the built-in preferences and plug-ins, or design a completely new theme from scratch that suits your needs.

Because Wordpress is a client content managed system, we expect that you are going to add the content – meaning copy, images, etc. There are several articles online that can assist you in learning to use your WordPress site, and we provide you with basic written instructions to get you going.

Revisions / Changes / Additions –

Minor design changes during the design period, prior to design approval, may or may not affect the price or completion date. Design changes after approval will add additional cost and may change the completion date. Requests for additional pages, plug-ins, e-mails, applications, etc. all constitute a change in project scope and will be additional to the contract price and affect the completion date. This includes things like adding Google-Analytics, Google-Adsence, and other SEO applications, or any other web applications requiring additional configuration and coding.

Content Submission Date –

Your project has a final deadline for content submission. Each day past the deadline that any content is past due, the deadline for completion may change beyond the original date.

THE PROCESS:

Design –

We may provide for your review, a single layout, or multiple themes for approval, usually within the first week or two. You should offer suggestions or request changes to the direction of the design, so that we can adjust and develop the web theme that you envision. The layout will most likely not contain the finished content, but have ‘placeholder’ images or text indicating where your copy and images will be placed.

Content Layout –

We may have to fit your provided content within the design layout. Your text may be edited to fit. Images will be adjusted for fit and aesthetics. The design will be re-

submitted to you for your approval. You will be provided 3 editing periods before being charged for additional edits.

Navigation –

We develop the navigation based on the pages and interaction requirements, and one that works aesthetically with the approved design. You will need to request what kind of interaction you would like prior to design.

Final Design Approval –

When we receive final design approval for the pages (site design), the design period will be closed to any more changes. We will then make any final tweaks and adjustments and have the pages ‘sliced’ and coded for building the website.

Slicing / Coding / Transfer to Host –

After design approval the ‘pages’ will be sliced, optimized (for fast loading), and coded with HTML before being transferred to the coding department to be ‘reassembled’ in Dreamweaver, and the final coding, CSS and additions such as video, audio, slideshows, etc. are put in. The coded ‘pages’ are then uploaded to your web host under a password protected login so that they are not seen by the public. This process may take 5 to 15 business days to complete depending upon the complexity and size of the project. E-commerce sites will have the products and information installed, and the ‘back-office’ configured.

Client Preview –

You will be provided with a login to see your website before it goes ‘live’ in order to make minor changes or corrections. We also ask that you review all copy for any ‘typos’.

Go Live –

When all of the corrections are completed, the site goes live. If you have an e-commerce site we will schedule an hour-long appointment to teach you how to load or edit your products and use the ‘back office’ of your store. You will also be provided with 30 days of free support – meaning questions, corrections, and assistance – not design changes, additions, etc.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) –

We are not an SEO company, nor do we provide SEO services. We provide SEO friendly, easily navigable websites with SEO enhanced packages. Our focus is designing a site that is attractive, and works well for your customers. Good SEO can not make up for a bad site design.

Optimization Suggestions:

- 1) Be prepared to advertise your site. Postcards or other mailers work well.
- 2) List your business with search engines such as Google, Yahoo, Ask.com and others.

- 3) A Blog, Facebook and Twitter links, that are kept current and updated often are good ways to optimize your site.
- 4) Consider SEM – paid marketing for at least the first 3 months your site is up.
- 5) Google AdWords is a payed option that can move your site ‘up the list’.

Google Search -

Your site may not show up immediately on Google search. Google has ‘crawlers’ or ‘spiders’ that search the worldwide web, and it may take up to a month or more for your site to be found. There are things we can do to help this process to go faster, such as submit the sitemap to Google, so that Goggle notices all of the pages and content of the site.

Mobile Web –

Your site may not be easily read or navigable by smartphones – especially if it is not a mobile web application. We design Mobile Web for access by most major brands of smartphones and the cost is additional to the standard website. You may request a quote with your design package.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me:

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