

Prepare for a successful website development project through thoughtful planning. Here's help.

Put the needs of your business first. Ask:

- What are our business goals? What are our financial goals?
- How do we develop a website that achieves our business goals, measurably?
- How does the website fit with our current sales process?
- Do we need a different sales process for online customers?
- Did we change our offline sales process when we went online? If so, why?
- What is the lifetime value of a new customer for our business?
- How many new customers do we expect our website to generate?

Next, consider your buyers' needs, including usability. Ask:

- Do we know everything we need to know about buyer personas?
- Do buyers come to our website on PCs, tablets or smartphones?
- Do we offer mobile-responsive design for table and smartphone users?
- How can we make it easier for buyers to find what they need?
- What problems or needs are buyers trying to address?
- What steps do buyers go through in the buying process?
- What are buyers' questions at each step?
- Does our website address all the buyers' questions?

- Is it easy for buyers to understand what we do?
- What do we deliver to address buyers' needs? What is our value proposition?
- How long is the buying process, from start to finish?
- How do we prompt buyers to take the next step?
- How do we make buyers comfortable enough to share an email or phone number with us?
- What is our call to action? How's it working?

Address the needs of search engine algorithms such as Google's. Ask:

- What terms do buyers search for, exactly?
- How is my websites visibility on the major search engines?
- How is my websites visibility on Social and content platforms?
- How do we maintain our overall online visibility going forward?
- How will our website keep up with changes in search engine algorithms?
- How will we address search engines' evaluation of our website's mobile performance?

Then, focus on technology needs. Ask:

- Does the website need to communicate with legacy systems or in-house software?
- Does the website do enough to support sales? At what stages in the buying cycle
- How much functionality will it take to achieve our business goals?
- Which functionalities would keep customers coming back to the site again and again?

- How easy will it be to update our website as the business changes?
- Can we offer a mobile app? Can we create a handy tool?
- How can we prompt buyers to share our website with friends?
- Is our website fully standards-compliant?

Finally, address competitive needs. Ask:

- Which competitors are buyers looking at?
- What differentiates our offering and company from competitors?
- Why would buyers pick us, not competitors?
- How could we dominate our potential online market?
- Are we a big fish in a small pond? Are we a small fish in a big pond?
- How can we make our size into an advantage against competitors?
- Will we compete head to head, or capture a new “white space” in the market?
- How will our website look and feel distinguish us from competitors?
- How will we persuade website visitors to choose us over competitors?

Use these questions in the right sequence. You can't address technology needs until after you've addressed business and customer needs.

At a minimum, discuss all these topics need with website developers before you choose one. Depending on the needs of your business, you may have additional questions to add to the checklist.



Web Development **CHECKLIST**

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Asking all the right questions helps you get to a successful website much faster.

Still have Questions?

Call us at **(630) 393-1419 ext. 100** or email **Brianl@pwim.com**.