



Whether you have a website and want to improve it, or you're thinking of getting one, there are many things to consider before getting a design team to put together a mock-up.

To help you cover all the bases, here are the key points to think about.

Set a goal

As with any business, it's important to list your goals when launching or refining your website. Think also about how you'll achieve these goals by setting corresponding objectives. Examples might include:

Goal: Increase sales

How: Search engine optimisation, well-organised content, user-friendly site, effective calls to action, increase conversion rate.

Goal: Becoming an authoritative resource

How: Providing quality content on your website, regularly adding new information, establishing trust, marketing your site on other websites and social media.

Goal: Improve interaction with existing and potential customers

How: Email marketing lists, online support (live chat), webinars, and content designed to give your visitors a reason to come back.

Goal: Build your brand

Objectives: Active social media programme, promotions, reputation management.

Define your audience

A website aimed at everyone may not attract anyone.

When building your website, have your buyer persona(s) in mind. If you can, ask a couple of customers to test your website to make sure it's suitably tailored to them in terms of language, style and addressing their needs.

If you need further help in defining your audience, take a look at our [Marketing Persona Template](#) which asks the right questions so you target the right people for your business..

Technical requirements / site structure

This section also gives you the opportunity to highlight any new functionality required, a meeting booking system, adding multilingual pages, client logins etc.

How many pages and sections do you think the website will have? It can be useful to highlight existing websites that you like or that have features you'd like on yours.

Finally, do you have a Google Analytics or Webmaster Tools account that you plan to measure your visitors with?



WEBSITE BRIEFING DOCUMENT



Tone of voice

The easiest way to consider tone of voice is in terms of the personality of your brand or company. If it were a person, what would they be like? Assign three values that form a personality that defines your brand.

Here are some examples on how different industries would present their tone of voice:

| | Value 1 | Value 2 | Value 3 |
|---------------------------|---------------|-----------|------------|
| Organic yoghurt | Honest | Friendly | Principled |
| Children's shoes | Fun | Practical | Economical |
| IT support company | Knowledgeable | Reliable | Proactive |

Please use the following template as a guide to answering the key questions that need addressing before work on a new website begins. For any more tips on building your business, please check out the [Growth Series Library](#).



WEBSITE BRIEFING DOCUMENT



Stakeholders and third parties - who will be involved in decisions regarding the site and are there any existing suppliers or partners we will need to work with?

Why a new website? What are you looking to achieve?

Who is your target audience, who will be visiting your site and why?

What are your USPs, what makes you better than your competitors?

Design considerations. Are there any brand guidelines or imagery that should be incorporated? What look and feel are you aiming for? Please provide other sites as reference points, if relevant (not necessarily your peers).



WEBSITE BRIEFING DOCUMENT



What does your website need to achieve: traffic; leads; response rates; reputation; due diligence; search ranking?

Site structure (site map). Do you know what pages you require?

Do you have any competitors or are there any other important websites in your market? What are they doing well? What are they doing badly?

Functional requirements. Are there any special tools or features that should be included?

Content. What type of content will be on your site - e.g. text, audio, video? Who will produce the copy and content - yourselves or a third party?



Who and what is your current website host and hosting package?