

## How to Find the Right Company to Design Your New Website

You have the often unenviable task of finding someone to build your website. Chances are you know little to nothing about web design and how websites are actually built and, let's face it, in today's complicated online world you don't even know what you don't know!

That's why it's critical to find a web design company who can talk in your language (rather than "tech talk") and hand-hold you through the process of developing an effective online presence.



**So, let me start by making a few assumptions about you and your business:**

- You either own or are part of a small business involved in the aesthetic industry.
- You're not trying to do this on the cheap.
- You're looking for an experienced professional or organisation who does this for a living. Your cousin or your neighbour's son isn't going to have the in-depth knowledge of building a website that will effectively represent your business in today's competitive market.
- You care enough about your business that you're willing to invest some time and money to get the job done right the first time (see the above two points).

Forget about PHP, ASP, or any other acronyms you've heard, (these are different types of scripting languages that web designers use); the right web designer will work all that out for you. It's your job to create the wish list from the perspective of your business.

In the ideal world, this will be sketched out and written down so that both you and your prospective web designer will understand the job in hand.

When you've done that, you need to draw up a shortlist of companies from the thousands that you can find online or through friend recommendations.

The following checklist will then help you find the **right company** for you, which is important as your relationship with a web designer will last many months, if not years!

## Website Commissioning Checklist

1. **Company history and status.** You must be reassured that you are dealing with a company with a track record and one that can support your business now and in the future. It's also an advantage if they have experience in the cosmetic market so that they clearly understand your needs and how to make your site as competitive as possible from a search engine optimisation perspective.
2. **Their web solution.** Satisfy yourself that the solution you choose will be **easy for you to update and manage** online, and attractive to users. It is critical that you have full control over your website – rather than having to constantly go back to your web designer for any minor amendments or updates which can get very costly over time.
3. **The development process.** Make sure you understand how the site will be developed and at what stage you will be asked to review and approve the graphical design and page layouts.
4. **Time scales and deadlines.** Be wary of anyone who says they can develop a full site with an online control panel within a few days or even a few weeks. You may either get an off-the-shelf solution, which may not suit your business, or else they won't actually meet the agreed timetable.
5. **Intellectual property and rights.** Explore with the developer who owns the code and what would happen if they went out of business or if for some reason you wanted someone else to continue the development of your site at a later stage.
6. **Reporting and management information.** A good idea is to list all the information you will need to run your business effectively and ask the web developers whether you can obtain this information from the 'back office' function of your website. This is particularly important with e-commerce sites (online shops).
7. **Security and uptime.** Understand how and where the site would be hosted and confirm the reliability, back-up and security systems.
8. **Costs.** Be aware of all initial costs and any on-going licenses, hosting or other fees.

Web design as an industry is similar to the UK cosmetic industry in that it is very fragmented. There are many different types of solutions at varying price points with companies having differing levels of expertise and experience, so you'll need to do a bit more homework to ensure that you find and choose the right web designer for your business.

We've been in the web design business since 2003 and have grown and developed as online marketing has increased in importance for all businesses.

We only work in the cosmetic industry and we have the experience of helping many different types of companies to develop an effective online presence for their aesthetic business.

If you would like to discuss different online options for your business, why not call us on **01788 577254** to see if we can help?

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