Website

WEBSITE CREATION/REDESIGN

The creation or the redesign of a Website can be a complex project. It is not something that can or should be done quickly or haphazardly. It requires careful thought and planning.

Preparation and Design

▶ Define the need, the goals, the messages, the targets and the content.

▶ Identify the financial and the internal/external human resources required for the creation and for keeping it updated once it is online.

▶ Identify the related costs, i.e., purchase of the Domain Name, Web Hosting, Data Protection Tools, Search Engine listing, Statistics tools, Visibility, Consulting Fees, etc.

• Domain names: Think about the domain name about the abbreviation of the name (with and without "— ", for example) as well as the extensions (.org, .sn, .com…). Domain names can be purchased direct from a Domain Registrar without having to go through a website developer or a website design agency.

• Web Hosting: The main question to ask and answer is whether the organization will be in charge of finding its own web hosting service or will this be left up to the web developer? It is actually advised to avoid using a single provider for all the different tasks, e.g., web developing, purchasing the domain name and host space rental. Decide on the website security level. This will have an impact on the budget.

• Data Protection: Which data protection tools to use? What level of security for data protection? There is no need to invest in a very complex tool that is made for commercial sites if your website is simply institutional. There are some free data protection tools available.

• Visibility: Ask the web developer to plan for "natural referencing" visibility taking into account Google's search engine rules. An option is to budget for paid visibility (buying keywords through Google AdWords).

• Consultant Liability: Is there a need to budget for consultant liability fees? This should be checked regarding the individual country rules and regulations. In certain countries a liability compensation clause is a standard part of the client/communication agencies ethics charters.

▶ Draft a technical specifications requirement list along with a call the call for bids. The contents of the specifications list should look something like this:

• Presentation of the organization, context.
• Overview of the project:
- Roles of the organization and the service provider in the project.
- Objectives of the website, target audiences.
- Contents, technical framework (link with an internal information system, databases, etc.).
- Site structure.
- Web design, Graphics chart.
- Versions : international, mobiles (telephones, Tablets).

• Services to be delivered:
- Graphics Charter, Editorial Charter
- Site Mapping
- Content creation and recovery (if necessary)
- Site development
- Domain name registration, email address, if necessary
- Web Hosting, if necessary
- Visibility
- Data Protection

• Deliverables for the project (planning, detailed web structure plan, files, usernames, etc).

• Intellectual Property Rights.

• Consultation: Project plan, documents, provided to agencies and main contact persons with contact information, deliverables for execution of the work (planning, human and technical means implemented, draft design model, technical choices, a detailed budget).

▶ Launching the call for consultant proposals:
If this is just a modest sized website project,
you should look to make a selection for two to
three web designers/web developer agencies.
After meeting with the potential site developer
candidates set up a deadline schedule for the
consultancy proposal deliverables:

• Day-- XXX: Deadline for submitting specs
requirement dossier either in-person or by
email.

• Day XXX + 1 week: Meetings with each
candidate to answer questions.

• Day XXX + 3-4 weeks: Deadline for the web
developers to submit their final website
design proposal dossiers. Set the same
final submission deadline date for all in
order to be fair. On the Client side, call a
meeting with the key people involved in this
project (Communication, IT, HR heads, etc).
Establish a chart for evaluating and ranking
the proposals.

• Day XXX + 4-5 weeks: Winning bid selected,
announced first to the winner and then
announcement made to those not selected.

Carefully validate each of the different steps
in the development of the website. Do not
underestimate the length and complexity of the
system validation step (once the site is developed
but not yet activated online). This phase requires
the involvement of multiple parties so as to not
miss any potential design problem.

Another option is to establish a contract for
the web design and web maintenance (flat rate
or fee-based). Attention: It is also important to
think about keeping the website up-to-date
and refreshing your web content. If you want
to be independent and not have to rely on a
web developer or web agency the option for
this should be planned for, request that the web
developer include a 'back office management"
feature that makes it possible to do this in a
very simple way. This option is going to be a bit
costlier at the outset, but is economical over the
long-term.

⊙ The management

Remember that once it is online line the
Website requires attention:

▶ Refreshing Content: Update, content
production, linking on social media
networks. Keeping your website up-
to-date and refreshing the content
is essential for the site to become
a reference source that will keep
visitors returning.

▶ Maintenance: Technical monitoring,
troubleshooting.

▶ Data Security.

▶ Domain Names: Keeping a look out
for new extensions; Renew domain
name subscription

▶ Hosting: Technical monitoring;
Renew web host space contract.

▶ Improvements, redesign: In general,
a website has a shelf-life of 3-4
years before it needs to be given a
'facelift'. Before embarking on a full
redesign though, first do some small
changes, for example, adding a new
graphic presentation or adding new
features, etc. By regularly monitoring
your website as well as keeping
informed about what's happening
with other sites, you will remain up-
to-date about new trends, features,
etc.