

Get a Website Quote

When it is time to get a new website or refresh your existing site, your starting place is the quote.

Before enquiring, however, it pays to sit down and think through how your website needs to change or what content you need on a new site.

Giving the addresses of sites you like is a great way to communicate the kind of look and functions you require and can be a big time saver.

Here are some important questions you might consider asking a prospective supplier during the quotation process:

- ***Will I be able to edit my own website?***

In other words, will there be a content management system (CMS) for your site? If there isn't then that commits you to returning to that web designer for future edits which they will charge for. It would also be good to know if training or orientation is provided in the CMS. If not, there may be a very steep learning curve.

My company uses the open-source WordPress CMS to make new websites. We offer training by screen share in Skype and have wordpress.dynamicwebs.com.au as an additional resource.

- ***What are the backup arrangements for my website?***

Most hosts say they have a nightly back up in place, but if you press them for this, they will not be able to produce it. This is especially important for database driven website (as most websites are now) as they are not stored and edited locally, but are always live on the server. It's best to get a backup facility built into your website at the time it is made. My company makes two backups a week and sends them to Dropbox so they can be shared quickly with the owner of the site.

- ***Who has copyright over my website?***

This is an important question and one that is seldom addressed during the pre-purchase phase. And it is a vexed question as there are three parties involved: you, the web designer and normally a software provider like WordPress. Its safest maybe to make it clear that your claim copyright over anything you write and pictures you supply, but leave it there.

- ***Does the price include marketing on Google?***

This service is called “search engine optimisation” or SEO and is a specialist’s area. Most web design form will outsource this to a partner. so, mostly the answer to this will be “no”, this is because it costs more than a website to set up and it is a distinct and ongoing service, so probably billed separately.

- ***Will I be able to move my site to another supplier easily?***

This is very important, and many services like Wix and Squarespace offerings *cannot* be moved – they need to be migrating one page at a time – cut and paste. This is costly and unnecessary.

Conversely, a website in a CMS like WordPress *can* be moved easily. All the page content can be exported as an XML file, or a SQL database can be imported into a new instance of WordPress, or a CPanel to Cpanel back up can be made. *So there are many options PROVIDED you start with the right software.* It would also pay to get clear about termination arrangements – in what form and how much notice do you need to give if you want to move.

- ***Ask the web designer “What do you require from me to make a website?”***

Be clear that building a website is a *collaboration* between you and your chosen web design company. If you are organised and clear, the project will go smoothly. If you drip feed content it will drag the time frame out and inputs and directions from you will be mislaid.

Typically you will be required to write the text for

your site, provide a logo and photography. If you don't have these on hand and want the web designers to produce these items, then you need to specify that from the outset.

- ***How long will it take to make my website?***

Get the web design firm to say when they can start on your project. You don't want to find out that they can't deliver within the next month three months after you paid your deposit!

But remember, if you drip feed inputs, you will slow the whole process down, so you have to hold up your end.

The quote is an important document. Not only does it state a firm price, but it also details legal information, like who you are actually buying from, where they are located, GST tax status, the terms and conditions and so forth. Remember, in IT the devil is always in the details, so read your quote carefully and ask if you don't understand anything.