

# Business Technology Program

## How-To Guide: How to Choose a Web Development Team

If you do not have the in-house expertise needed to create your own website, one option to consider is hiring an outside Web development team. This typically includes:

- The **Web Developer** helps determine the page layout, graphics, text location and colors of your site, as well as navigation and how pages cross-link. He or she is also the project manager for your site design.
- The **Graphic Designer** is the “visual artist” of your site. He or she is responsible for developing all the graphic elements, including page layout, colors and images.
- The **Programmer** creates the code for the back-end functionality needed to make the site run and appear as the Developer and Designer planned it.
- The **Internet Marketing Consultant** helps you determine how your website fits into your overall marketing strategy, and how you can increase site traffic and get more sales.

Use the checklist below to assess each company or individual you are considering working with.

### Experience:

- How long has this company/person been in business?
- How many similar projects have they completed?
- Do they frequently work with companies in your industry?
- Do they frequently work with small businesses?
- Can they provide all the elements you want your website to have?
- Does their portfolio of work or templates look professional and appealing?

### Growth:

Can the company handle your future needs? These may include:

- Routine site updates
- Expanding your website
- Adding new content
- Adding new functionality

### Cost:

- How are fees set (hourly, per page, per package?)
- What are the payment terms (upfront, multiple payments, upon completion?)
- What is the total cost estimate for developing the site?
- Exactly what is included in that cost?



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- How are extras or unforeseen costs handled and billed?
- If the company will be maintaining your site going forward, what is that cost?
- How much will updates to the site cost?

## **Project Management:**

- Who will oversee the project?
- How often will your team need to meet or speak with the company to complete the project?
- How much time will these meetings take?
- How long will the total project take?
- What are key milestones and when will they be completed?
- Will the company outsource any part of the work? If so, to whom?

## **Legal Issues:**

- Will the developer sign a release stating that you own the code to your website?
- Will the site be “portable” (able to be hosted on a variety of hosting sites)?
- Is there a written contract establishing all costs, responsibilities, ownership rights and a project timeline?

## **References:**

- Get three references from the company and check them.
- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

