Project Start

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|  | Start a new project to be able to maintain this checklist with your team |
|  | Setup first meetings(s) with client |
|  | Define and collect briefing document from client |
|  | Define and send project questionnaire to client and wait for the client’s response. |
|  | Research client’s company to understand their brand, the way they communicate, their demographics, target audience |
|  | Research client’s industry to find ways of communicating specifically to their industry, strengths and weaknesses, trends and other industry specifics |
|  | Get quotation(s) for development effort for project |
|  | Get quotations(s) for design or estimate design work with your own designers |
|  | Get quotation(s) for copy / content or estimate work with your copywriters |
|  | Get quotation(s) for photography / video production or estimate effort involved |
|  | Get quotation(s) for Hosting / Domain |
|  | Prepare and send proposal to client – use the web design quotation tool to send an itemized quotation |
|  | Get approval from client of proposal and features to be implemented |
|  | Create the Project Acceptance Form , and propose timeline with milestones |
|  | Send Project Acceptance Form, with timelines to client and wait for client signoff |

Stage 1 – Project Kick off

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|  | Kick off email to developers, designers and other stakeholders |
|  | Create sitemap of website with proposed sections, pages |
|  | Research and buy template used as a basis for design |
|  | Create wireframe of specific pages which require custom designs |
|  | Allocate time and effort for designer to create the wireframes based on the estimates sent to client and brief designers on wireframe designs. |
|  | Allocate time and effort for content creation / copy |
|  | Research, buy and tweak stock images or find free images you can use |
|  | Allocate time and effort for photography (based on estimates sent to client) |
|  | Allocate time and effort for video productions (based on estimates sent to client) |
|  | Define privacy policy and other legal text required for website |
|  | Send design(s) to client for approval and wait for approval from client |
|  | Get designers to perform any required design changes |
|  | Send designs to web developers including template, together with designs, for start of research and development |
|  | Send specifications and updates to client and wait for client signoff |

Stage 2 – Website Development Checklist

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|  | Send finalized designs to developers |
|  | Allocate development checklists to the various developers |
|  | Agree with all developers + client on a date for Alpha |
|  | Reach out to content creators and ensure they are on target |
|  | Ensure you’ve bought hosting or created a hosting space for your website |
|  | Create new database(s), and database users as necessary if you are using a CMS, or a website which requires a database |
|  | Upload the website source files |
|  | Install / configure the CMS to use the database you have created |
|  | If your website has been created already and you need to migrate it, export the database from the testing/staging server and import it to the production server |
|  | Change the nameservers of the domain you will be using to the nameservers of the hosting server you will be using |
|  | Create the website site map and structure you had defined with the client via your favourite CMS or the framework / technology you have chosen to develop your website |
|  | Collect all content from the various content creators you have outsourced |
|  | Quality assure each piece of content you have outsourced or bought – and ask for changes where necessary |
|  | Populate the website content with the various content items you have agreed with the client |
|  | Define a Contact Us page with correct client details and a map |
|  | Populate links / icongraphy with links to relevant social media details |
|  | Create a link to your website in the footer (if agreed with client to do this) |
|  | Send current iteration to client and request feedback |
|  | Fix and change any requests by client |
|  | Send updates to client and wait for client sign-off |

Stage 3 – Quality Assurance

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|  | Validate HTML using and HTML Validator , or your preferred Browser extension |
|  | Validate CSS using a CSS Validator |
|  | Lint your CSS to make it better |
|  | Use JSLint and JSHint to make your JavaScript better |
|  | Check whether your website is internationalization ready |
|  | Ask for changes from developers based on the results of the above tests |
|  | Make sure web copywriting has been proofread, and ran through a spelling and grammar checker to check for correctness. |
|  | Check that generic content, such as lorem ipsum, has been properly removed and replaced. |
|  | See that all images are in the correct places, smushed, formatted, width and height specified and working on all devices. |
|  | Confirm that videos and audio files are in the correct places, formatted and working on all devices. |
|  | Test all linked content, such as case studies, ebooks, and whitepapers, and verify that they are correctly linked |
|  | Test to see that all internal links across web pages are working properly |
|  | Ensure that Contact Us and other forms are submitting data properly. |
|  | Verify the Thank-you message or page displayed after form is submitted |
|  | Check that Auto-responders are working properly and text in emails has been proofed |
|  | External links across web pages are working properly, and open in a new tab |
|  | Ensure that Social media share icons are working properly – that there is a good image for sharing and that the description for sharing is appropriate. |
|  | Correct your metadata as necessary to ensure social media sharing is working ok. |
|  | Use the Facebook linter to ensure your Facebook sharing will work well |
|  | Implement Twitter Cards and confirm it works well on the Preview tool |
|  | Ensure that company logo is linked to the homepage. |
|  | Check that load time for site pages is optimized (confirm with multiple sources) |
|  | Try a non-existing address on your page to check the 404 page and 404 redirect pages are in place |
|  | Integrations with third-party tools, such as your CRM, e-commerce software, and/or marketing platform should be tested to ensure they are running smoothly |
|  | Choose www vs no-www and make sure that ONLY one of them is working to ensure you don’t get penalized for duplicate content. |
|  | Check website on multiple browsers |
|  | Make sure you are using the viewport meta tag: <meta name=”viewport” content=”initial-scale=1′′> |
|  | Check that your website is mobile-friendly with at least a MobileOk score of 75 and Google sees your page as Mobile Friendly |
|  | Use correct input types for email, phone and URL input form fields to ensure these are rendered correctly on mobile phones |
|  | Check how the site looks on phone and device emulators |
|  | Test the site using real devices you have accessible to you |
|  | Send the finished site to your client and get feedback |
|  | Fix and change any requests by client |
|  | Send updates to client and wait for client sign-off |

Website Design Checklist Stage 4 – Launch

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|  | Register and verify site with Google WebMasters |
|  | Create a new property and implement Google Analytics code. |
|  | Make sure you link Google WebMasters and Google Analytics to be able to get better insights from within Google Analytics |
|  | Exclude relevant IP addresses (such as office IP) from analytics tracking to ensure your own company’s and the client’s company do not inflate their website hits |
|  | Set up any funnels, goals or tracking events which have been properly created in your analytics software |
|  | Implement visitor tracking software |
|  | Implement any site uptime monitor |
|  | Implement a website backup service as necessary |
|  | Sign-off the deliverables and invoice your client |

4.1 Search Engine Optimization

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|  | Check that all pages have unique page titles (with a recommended length of fewer than 70 characters, including any keywords). |
|  | Check that all pages have unique meta descriptions (with a recommended length of fewer than 156 characters, including keywords) |
|  | Verify that pages have your chosen keywords included without any keyword stuffing (do not over emphasize particular keywords) |
|  | See that all pages have metadata which is properly in place (with correct spelling and grammar) for any content which you want to be shared via Social |
|  | Ensure that relevant Alt tags have been added to every image. |
|  | Make sure that a dynamic XML sitemap (which gets updated with every post you make) has been created and verify that the XML sitemap has been submitted to search engines via Google WebMasters. |
|  | Ensure that Google is able to read it correctly. |
|  | Submit to Bing and possibly Yandex WebMasters too. |
|  | See that all page URLs consistently reflect site information architecture. |
|  | If you have had another older website, make sure you have 301 redirects in place for all old URLs (redirecting old pages to new ones). |
|  | Where necessary ensure that rel=”nofollow” tags are in place on applicable links and pages. |
|  | Use schema creator to insert Microdata into your pages (or tag your content in google WebMasters Data Highlighter) |
|  | Check the semantics of your site |

4.2 Performance

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|  | Try to get a PageSpeed score of 90+ |
|  | Minify your javascript |
|  | Minify your CSS |
|  | Add Expires Header – Leverage browser caching to ensure that files which don’t change often are fetched from the browser cache rather than downloaded again |
|  | Ensure a Yslow score of 85+ |
|  | Optimize the size of images using Smush.It and replace the existing images with the optimized images |
|  | Specify image dimensions for each image |
|  | Enable gzip compression on your hosting server |
|  | Ensure there are no bad requests, such as missing images or files |
|  | Combine images using CSS Sprites (use SpriteMe.org to help you generate the sprite image) |
|  | Reduce the number of HTTP requests by combining the CSS and JS files into as few files as possible |

4.3 Usability

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|  | Check for HTML5 compatibility |
|  | Create a Favicon generator for each platform here |
|  | Enable user and search engine friendly URLs |
|  | Set up a print stylesheet |

4.4 Social Media

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|  | Add Facebook Domain Insights to your page to see how people are interacting with your website on Facebook |
|  | Link your website to your Google+ Brand page |
|  | Add humans.txt |
|  | Create new cover images for other Social Media you use such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn company page, Pinterest, Instagram or others as necessary |
|  | Send the finished site to your client and get feedback |
|  | Fix and change any requests by client |
|  | Give access to client to all accounts created on their behalf |
|  | Send updates to client and wait for client sign-off |
|  | Close project |