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WED DEVELOPMENT

WEDE5020

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Website Project Proposal: Unique Finds

1. Organisation Overview

- **Name:** Unique Finds

- **Brief History:**

Unique Finds is an online marketplace founded in 2022 with a vision to revolutionise the way people shop for handmade, rare, and vintage products. The idea was born from a simple yet powerful observation: mainstream e-commerce platforms were saturated with mass-produced items, leaving little space for truly unique, creative, and meaningful products. The founder, inspired by travel experiences and encounters with local artisans across different countries, recognised the need for a digital platform that would give smaller creators and independent artists the exposure they deserved.

Initially starting as a small, curated shop on social media, Unique Finds quickly gained traction among consumers looking for more personalised and ethically sourced items. In just one year, the platform grew from a single-person startup into a recognised online brand, partnering with over 100 artisans globally. Its catalogue includes handmade jewellery, eco-friendly home décor, custom art, vintage collectibles, and other unique, story-driven products.

- **Mission Statement:**

To connect people with one-of-a-kind items that inspire individuality and support small creators.

- **Vision Statement:**

To become the world's leading online destination for unique and meaningful items that celebrate creativity, culture, and individuality.

Core Values:

Authenticity: Every item on the platform tells a story and reflects the identity of its maker.

Sustainability: Unique Finds promotes environmentally responsible production and shipping methods.

Empowerment: The platform supports small businesses, especially those owned by women and underrepresented communities.

Community: Unique Finds aims to foster a global community of creators and conscious consumers.

- **Target Audience:**

The primary target audience of Unique Finds includes individuals aged 20 to 40 who are digitally active and value personal expression, quality craftsmanship, and ethical consumption. These customers are often creatives, gift buyers, or collectors who appreciate aesthetics, story-rich products, and socially conscious shopping. They seek alternatives to mass-produced goods and are drawn to platforms that offer meaning, sustainability, and uniqueness.

2. Website Goals and Objectives

- **Goals:**

- Increase web traffic by 40% in the next 6 months.
- Improve conversion rate from 2.1% to 4% by optimizing user flow.
- Grow newsletter sign-ups by 25% through lead magnets and pop-ups.

- **KPIs:**

- Monthly traffic (Google Analytics)
 - Bounce rate and average session duration.
 - Number of completed sales and cart abandonment rate
 - Subscriber growth rate
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3. Current Website Analysis

- **Strengths:**

- Beautiful product photography
- Well-curated collection of items
- Secure payment integration

- **Weaknesses:**

- Slow loading speed

- Cluttered navigation
 - Lack of mobile responsiveness
 - **Areas for Improvement:**
 - Optimise for mobile users.
 - Simplify user navigation and search functionality.
 - Enhance product filtering and categorisation.
-

4. Proposed Website Features and Functionality

- **proposal contents**





- **Essential Pages:**
 - Homepage with featured products and categories
 - About Us page highlighting mission and story
 - Contact page with inquiry form and store info.
 - Product Pages with images, descriptions, pricing, and reviews
 - Shopping Cart and Checkout
 - Blog to share artisan stories and product features.
 - Customer Account/Login section
 - **Functionality:**
 - Responsive design
 - Secure payment gateways
 - Real-time inventory tracking
 - Wishlist and save-for-later feature.
 - Live chat support
 - SEO-optimised structure
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5. Design and User Experience

- **Colour Scheme:**

Earth tones with accent colours to reflect a natural, artisanal feel.
- **Typography:**
 - Headings: Playfair Display
 - Body Text: Lato or Open Sans
- **Layout and Design Approach:**

Minimalist design focusing on large visuals and storytelling. Grid-based layout for consistency.
- **User Experience Considerations:**
 - Clear CTAs
 - Sticky navigation bar
 - Colour contrast for accessibility.

- Fast-loading elements and lazy loading for images
 - **Wireframes:**
To be attached separately — low-fidelity sketches of homepage, product page, and checkout.
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6. Technical Requirements

- **Hosting and Domain:**
 - Hosting: Bluehost or Site Ground (scalable e-commerce plans)
- **Languages and Frameworks:**
 - HTML

7. Timeline and Milestones

| Phase | Task Description | Due Date |
|--------|---|--------------|
| Week 1 | Requirements gathering, wireframes | Aug 08, 2025 |
| Week 2 | UI/UX Design approval, initial homepage dev | Aug 10, 2025 |
| Week 3 | Product listing & cart functionality | Aug 15, 2025 |
| Week 4 | Final testing, bug fixes, client review | Aug 20, 2025 |

| Phase | Task Description | Due Date |
|-------|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| | Week 5 Launch and post-launch support | Aug 27, 2025 |

8. Budget

| Item | Estimated Cost (ZAR) |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Domain Registration | R265,79/year |
| Hosting (1 year) | R2126,30 |
| Payment Gateway Fees | 2.9% per transaction |
| Maintenance (6 months) | R3189,45 |
| Total | R10897,30+ variable fees |

9. References

- Smith, J. (2024). *E-commerce Design Best Practices*. UX Design Journal.
 - Doe, A. (2023). *Artisan Marketplaces: Growth Trends*. Small Business Monthly.
 - Shopify Documentation (2025). *Custom Storefronts and Integrations*.
 - Google Developers. (2025). *Web Vitals and SEO Guidelines*.
 - User personas and market research developed from internal surveys conducted by Unique Finds (2024).
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