**Writing Proposals**

There are three types of proposals:

1. Business Proposals

2. Workplace problem-solution proposals

3. Academic research proposals

**1. Business Proposals**

**1 Read the information box and the summaries of the three parts of a business proposal (a–c). Then read the sections (A–C) of the model proposal. Match these to the three summaries, then put them in a logical order 1–3.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| In a business proposal, a company tries to win a contract from a client by showing that it understands the problems the client faces, that it can offer solutions to those problems, and that it has the experience and market knowledge to be trusted. | a) The problem statement In this section, the proposal shows an understanding of the problems the client faces.  b) The proposed solution In this section, the proposal offers expert solutions to all the problems.  c) The promise of reliability In this section, the proposal makes a statement of your company’s credentials, experience, knowledge, reliability and costs. |

**UNIVERSAL OFFICE SOLUTIONS**

A) It is strongly recommended that *Ostrich Publications* promotes its products on all of the major social media channels. However, that is just a first step on the road to an effective marketing strategy. While showing the products on social media platforms is all well and good, it is vital that the company creates a revitalised brand that is more suited to being promoted on social media platforms. Notwithstanding the company’s wide range of publications, few of them are obviously adapted to this new and expanding market. It is clear that this has to change.

A marketing campaign must be created which engages with its young audience. In order for this to be successful, it is essential that *Ostrich Publications* acquires fans, followers and subscribers. Moreover, it is advisable to make connections with subscribers by inviting them to join in particular discussions or attend specific events. The purpose of this is not only to promote *Ostrich Publications*, but also to gather useful feedback from the target audience.

B) At *Universal Office Solutions*, we pride ourselves on our expertise in the growing sector of social media marketing. In contrast to other marketing solution providers, we have experts worldwide who have unrivalled experience in dealing with the marketing problems of evolving businesses in a wide variety of contrasting sectors. For further details and a breakdown of costs please contact our head office.

C) Although *Ostrich Publications* continues to be a significant player in the world of magazine publishing, it is beginning to lose market share. This is a consequence of the company’s reliance on a traditional approach to marketing. In today’s digital world, it is necessary to make the leap to social media marketing.

Our research shows that rival publishing companies have increased their market share by 10 to 20% as a direct result of adopting social media marketing techniques. It is likely that this trend will continue.

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**2 Following is a website proposal.**

**1. Introduction**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a proposal for the redesign of the Sample Company website. Working together, I believe we can create a site that is simple to navigate and has a professional yet welcoming design. Based on our preliminary discussion at your office, I have identified and listed below the Needs and Solutions that we will want to address in this project.

Sample Company needs a website to reach out to the community and also to serve and support the

current Sample Company clients. Furthermore, Sample Company needs a website that can be maintained by a Sample Company employee, without the need to regularly employ Sunny Web Shops to make changes. The Sample Company employee needs to be able to add and revise both text and photos and additional pages if necessary.

**2. Proposed Solution**

Sunny Web Shops will provide Sample Company with a fresh new web design that is easy to navigate and

provides useful information to current subscribers. The design will also convey to potential subscribers

that Sample Company is a professional, reliable company.

The design will integrate the current logo and color palette so it will maintain a familiar look to current

subscribers, but will at the same time show them that Sample Company is improving its web presence in

order to serve them better.

***2.1 Content Management System***

Central to the new design from Sunny Web Shops will be a robust Content Management System (CMS)

that will allow Sample Company to make changes easily to the website, without requiring a dedicated

workstation or additional software. Not only will the CMS save Sample Company website revision costs

but it will also ensure that the website stays fresh and up to date.

***2.2 Website Organization***

The new design will have five main landing pages:

* Home Page
* About/Contact
* Gallery
* Portfolios
* Blog

These five pages will be "hardwired" into the new design by Sunny Web Shops and links to them will

appear in the horizontal menu bar at the top of the page (below the logo and other header content).

On each of these pages, we will include a left-hand column that Sample Company can use to create links

to as many "subpages" as they wish. Therefore, the CMS allows for as many pages as necessary, without

incurring additional cost beyond the original design and landing pages fee.

**3. Workflow**

***3.1 Preliminary Design***

Working in conjunction with Sample Company, Sunny Web Shops will provide Sample Company with a

preliminary design concept for the new website. That design concept will include the basic layout, color

palette, font choices, etc.

Sample Company can at that point request one round of design revisions within the scope of the Fee

Schedule (see below). If more revisions are deemed necessary at that point by Sample Company, the work

will be done at our hourly rate of $40. (This is rarely necessary, especially for a simple website project such

as this, but if necessary will be discussed fully before any fees are assessed.)

***3.2 Integration of Content Management System***

Once the design is approved, then Sunny Web Shops will incorporate the Content Management System

into the design.

***3.3 Training***

Sunny Web Shops will then run a two-hour training session with Sample Company employees, showing

them how to use the Content Management System. This can be done on site or online.

***3.4 Launch***

When Sample Company has finished incorporating all the content they wish to have at launch, they will

ask Sunny Web Shops to move the website from the development sub-directory to the main root level of

the domain, thereby making the site go live. Congratulations!

**4. Fee Summary**

Website Design and Setup **$395**

Includes:

* work with client to create a custom website interface - layout, colors, and fonts
* set up website architecture and navigation system
* implement nameplate/logo placement and design
* create website mirror for beta testing purposes
* integrate content management system

Website Pages - 5 @ $40  **$200**

Using the webpage template developed during the initial design phase, this includes

integration of the main landing pages into site architecture and navigation:

* Home Page
* About/Contact
* Gallery
* Portfolios
* Blog

Free One Year Hosting  **$0**

As part of our current CMS package, we are offering a free first year hosting.

Free Domain Name Registration **$0**

As part of our current CMS package, we are offering a free one year domain name

registration.

**Project Total $595**

**5. Fee Schedule**

If Sample Company wishes Sunny Web Shops to go forward with the project, here is the schedule for

payments of the fee:

* 50% due upon acceptance of the proposal before work commences
* 25% due upon delivering the completed design with the content management system in place
* 25% plus any incurred additional hourly fees no later than 30 days from when the completed
* design was delivered to Sample Company

Sunny Web Shops will launch the website when requested, providing that there is no balance due.

**6. Terms and Conditions**

Once project fee is paid in full to Sunny Web Shops any elements of text, graphics, photos, contents, trademarks, or other artwork furnished to Sample Company for inclusion in website are owned by Sample Company.

Sunny Web Shops assumes Sample Company has permission from the rightful owner to use any images or design elements that are provided by Sample Company for inclusion in the website, and will hold harmless, protect, and defend Sunny Web Shops from any claim or suit arising from the use of such elements.

Sunny Web Shops retains the right to display graphics and other Web content elements as examples of their work in their portfolio and as content features in other projects. Sunny Web Shops also retains the right to place a discreet text link at the bottom of the website page(s). The agreement contained in this contract constitutes the sole agreement between Sample Company and the Sunny Web Shops regarding all items included in this agreement.

**7. Next Steps**

To proceed with this project, Sample Company is required to take the following steps:

* Accept the proposal "as is" or discuss desired changes. Please note that changes to the scope of the project can be made at any time, but additional charges may apply.
* Finalize and sign contract.
* Submit initial payment of 50% of total project fee.

Once these steps have been completed we will begin the project.

**Examples of Our Work and References**

You can see a list of some of the current websites designed and developed by Sunny Web Shops here:

http://sunnywebshops.com/work.php

References are available upon request.

**Exercise**

**3 You work for *High Street Solutions*. Read the information about *Lemon Bookshop* and write an business proposal for it to suggest an e-bookshop.**

**Lemon bookshop**

1. Traditional family-run shop selling fiction and non-fiction books
2. Need to diversify to reflect changing trends in the book-buying industry
3. Need to have website where customers can browse and order books

**2. Workplace Problem-Solution Proposals**

**Workplace proposals are documents that aim to persuade another person to approve a particular project or action and to support its implementation.**

This project or action normally helps to improve a situation or solve a problem. For example, you may write a proposal to suggest a venue for an event, open a new shop or update the IT system, alternatively it could be a way to improve sales or suggest a location for new offices. Proposals are normally written by the person or team seeking approval of their suggestion.

People may be persuaded by your reasons and by the evidence you provide but also by the clarity of your explanations. One of the main difficulties with real-life problems is that they are messy. Well-structured communication can reduce the apparent complexity to the point where you can envisage a starting point for a solution.

A clearly structured and well-argued proposal is likely to be very persuasive. A clear structure not only helps the reader to quickly gain an understanding of what you are proposing and see its rationale, but also inspires them with confidence that the solution will be workable.

**Writing a proposal**

**Here, you will look at a typical proposal structure. You will do this by focusing on each section of a typical proposal and looking at an example.**

A workplace proposal typically consists of five contributory sections aiming to persuade the reader that a problem needs to be resolved and the course of action that should be taken. These five steps are:

* Problem statement
* Statement of goals
* Solution statement
* Benefits statement
* Call to action or management/action plan

## Sample Proposal

## Problem statement

Following our expansion, grievances put forward by bar assistants and cooks against our restaurant managers have increased. Common themes in these grievances are managers’ authoritarian style and micro-management. While some members of staff perceive this behaviour as bullying, in-depth investigation has established that in fact managers lack the skills necessary to lead large teams and work under pressure. For example, eight out of ten of our central London managers have been found to communicate ineffectively with staff and nine out of ten lack teamwork skills. This has led to low staff morale which, in turn, has negatively affected productivity and motivation.

## Statement of goals

Our goal is to create highly supportive and positive working environments that motivate and engage all staff. In these environments managers will adopt a management style appropriate to the situation and person, and one that fulfils our company’s core values of open-minded and respectful communication.

## The solution statement

In order to develop our restaurants as positive environments in which staff are valued, supported and motivated, we propose training for our restaurant managers in core management capabilities.   
  
Under the management of the HR training department, the development of our restaurant managers will involve three phases. In the first phase, the HR training team will conduct further analysis of the current situation in each restaurant to identify the specific training needs of each manager. This involves helping them to devise their individual objectives, learning plans and evaluation criteria. In the second phase, the training team should select an appropriate management course for each employee. These courses should be selected from the range offered by the organisation that provides training to our company. The final phase will consist of a meeting with each manager to help them evaluate the attainment of their objectives and, in particular, their improved ability to create a positive working environment.   
  
The cost of the training will be met by HR. It will amount to no more than £1000 per manager. This will include access to online training materials, the assessment fees and travel to the assessment centre.

## Benefits statement

We are convinced that training our managers in line with the proposed action will enable us to make significant improvements to working environments and eliminate grievances. The training will allow restaurant managers to remedy the current situation by teaching them to adopt the management style that is most appropriate to their contexts and which reflects our core values. By the end of the training period they will be able to build better working relationships and communicate more effectively which, as a result, will increase staff motivation and productivity.   
  
It could be argued that training is expensive and not the best use of the company’s limited resources. It may also be suggested that an online course would be sufficient in these circumstances. This approach would be cheaper and would not require arrangements for the release of staff for the duration of the course.   
  
However, such an approach would not be successful in this case. Team members are already under considerable time pressures and to expect them to study in their own time is likely to provoke resentment. Such an approach may therefore prove ineffective in the long run. We recommend the proposed training course to the management team for approval.

**TASK:**

**Write a proposal to the librarian in your university suggesting three books that should be added to the library. Explain their value to the students, give publication data and prices. Organize the proposal using clear, defining headings. Your proposal should have the following sections:**

1. **Introduction and Problem Background**
2. **Proposed Solution**
3. **Benefits of the Proposed Solution**
4. **Work plan (costs, suggested publishers and a timeline to procure the books) [20 marks]**