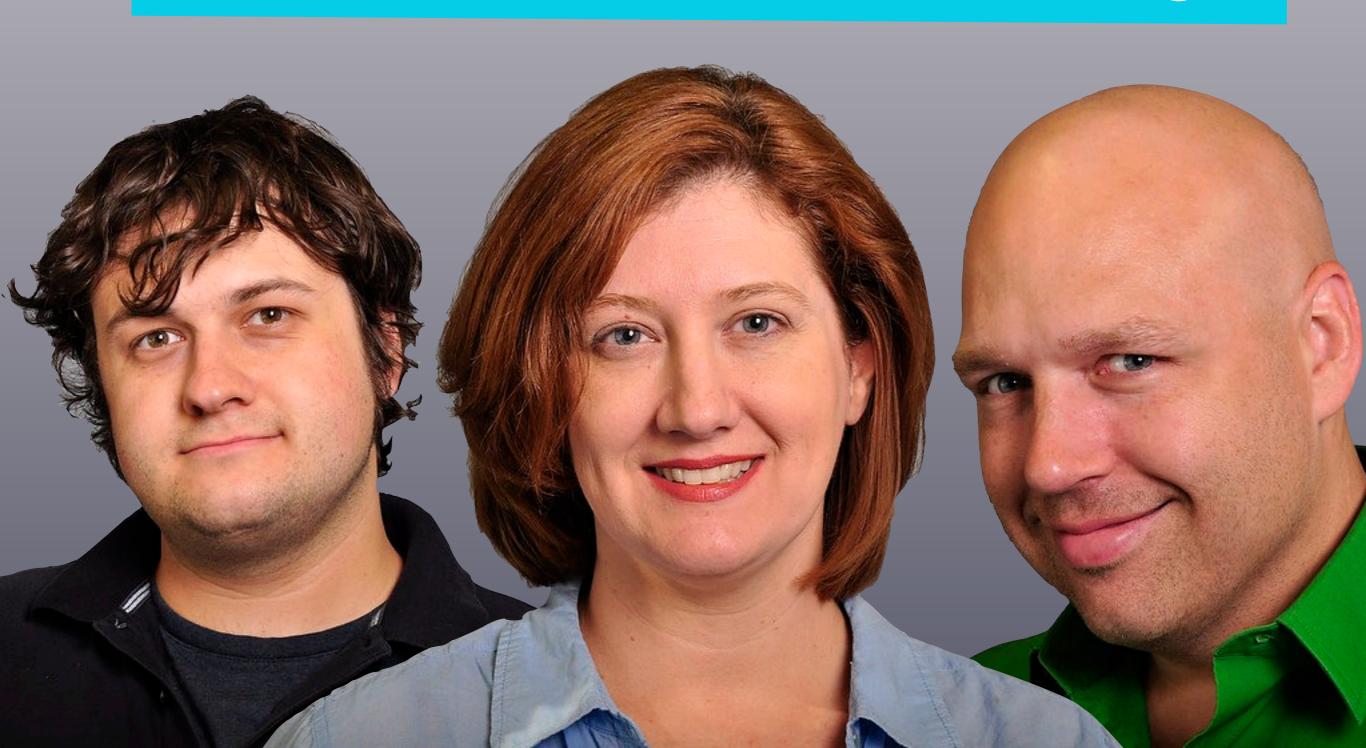
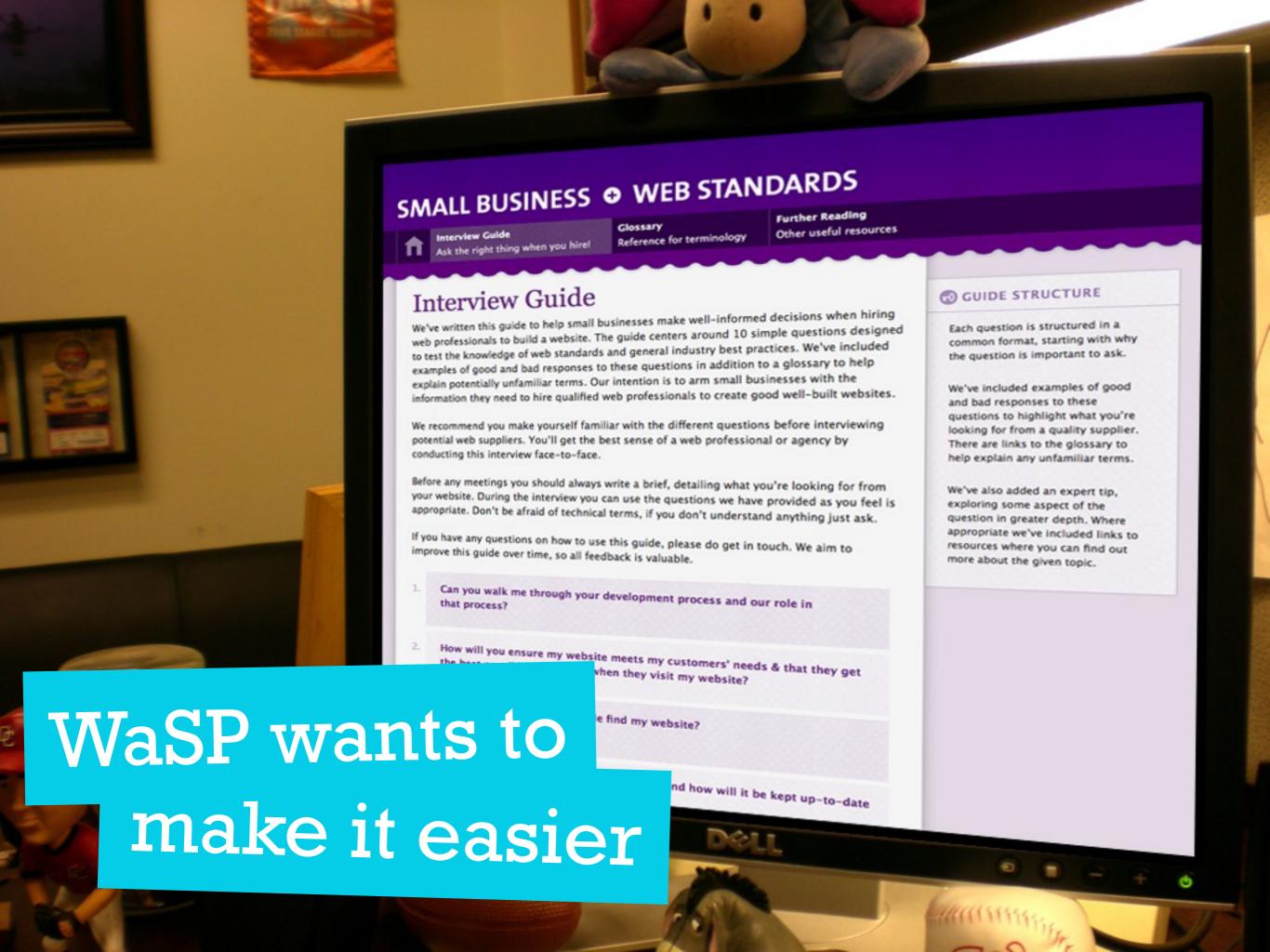


a Web Professional

How do you know who's mediocre & who's amazing?





Before you sit down

- What is the purpose of your website?
- Who is your audience and what should they be able to do on your site?
- What is your budget?
- Do you have a deadline?



Process



Is organized

Has a process

Can explain it & it makes sense

Has a place for you in it



Wannabe

Is disorganized

Promises immediate results

Doesn't ask for your input



have a great experience?

User Experience



Will discuss user goals in relation to your business goals

May propose interviewing your users

Will discuss research informing design

May propose testing the site with real users throughout the project



Wannabe

Will want to start designing right away

Is confident the design they come up with will work

Doesn't discuss user goals or key tasks



Findability

Professional

Will discuss the importance of well-written content

Will explain how proper coding makes a site easier to index

May want to talk about URL structure and link text

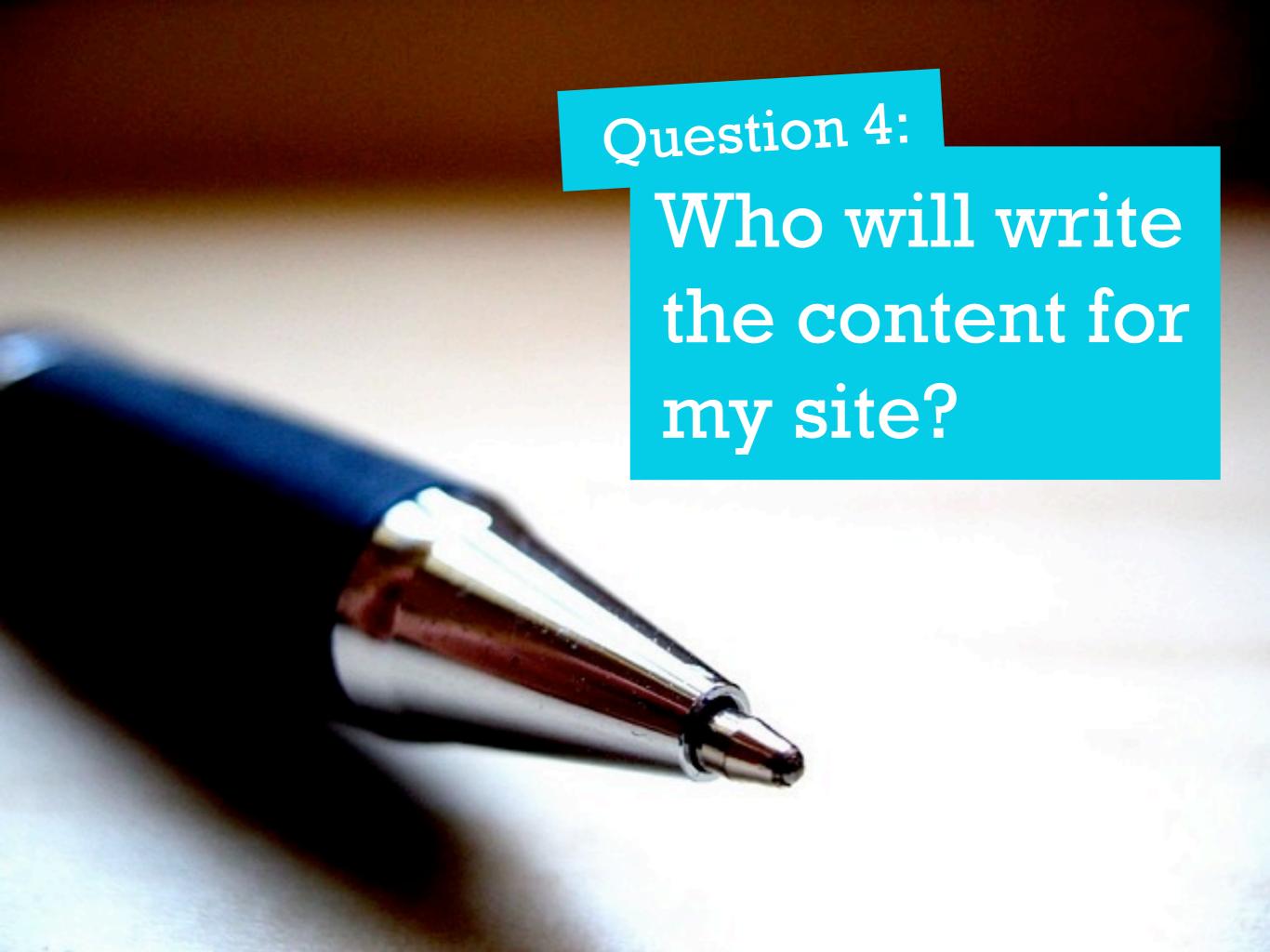


Wannabe

Promises you a #1 Google ranking

Will focus on "meta" tags and keywords

May suggest multiple landing pages with duplicate content



Content

Professional

Will recommend authoring new content for your website

May offer to write copy, recommend a copywriter, or simply provide guidance

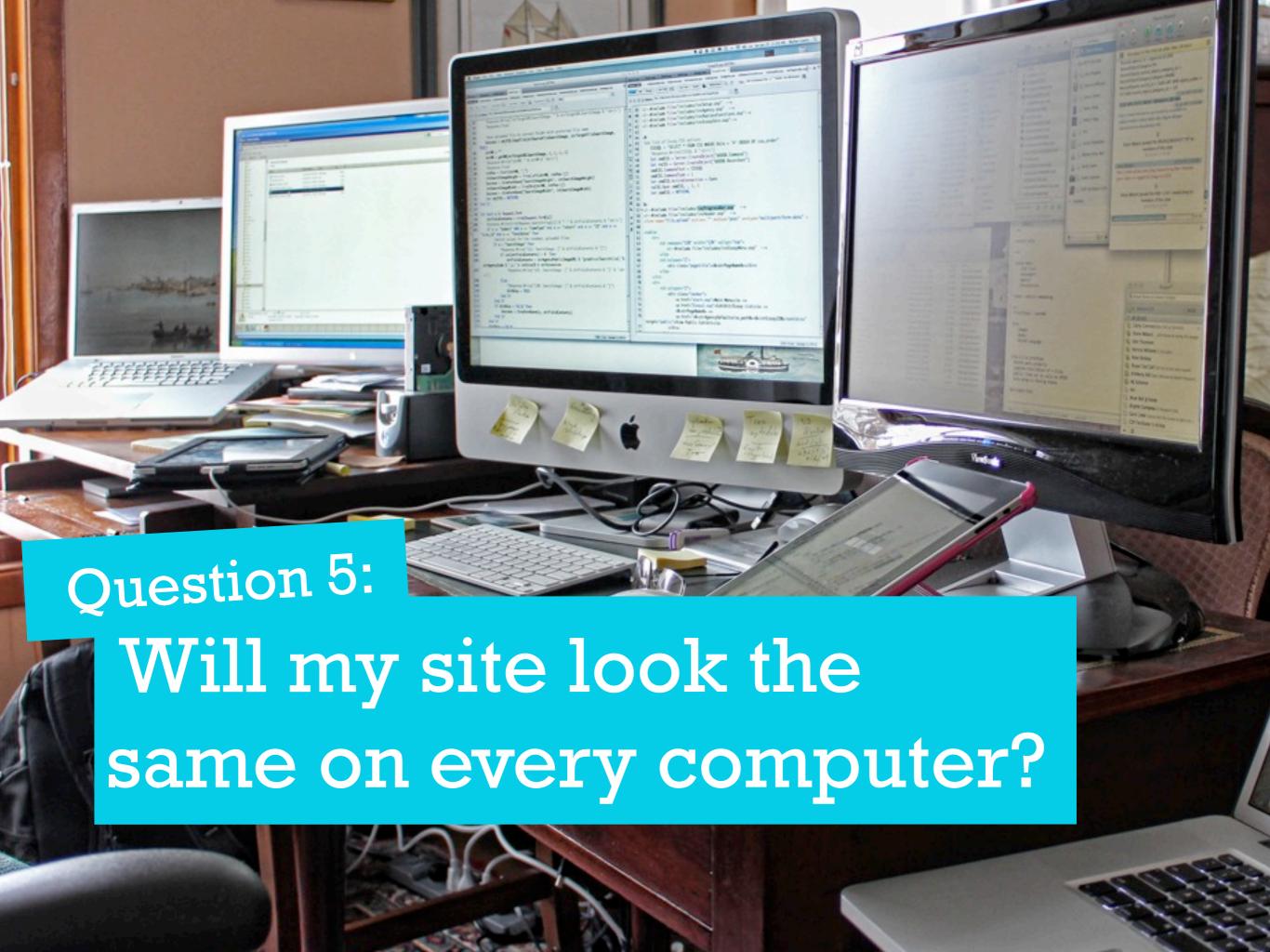
May recommend a
Content Management
System



Wannabe

Will be happy to take content directly from your brochures

Will offer to update the site for you if you give them a call



Browsers

Professional

Will discuss the fluidity of the web as a medium and explain why sites will look different on different computers

Will focus on design consistency over pixel-perfection

May bring up progressive enhancement



Wannabe

May promise an identical design in every browser

May try to talk you into only supporting a handful of browsers or screen sizes



Accessibility

Professional

Will discuss the importance of well-written copy

Will explain how markup enriches your copy

May bring up color contrast, font sizing, video captioning & transcripts, and/or WAI-ARIA



Wannabe

May seem confused

May try to brush off the question

May simply declare that everyone will be able to use your site without explaining how they will achieve that



Mobile

Professional

Will discuss creating adaptive layouts that flex to the dimensions of different browsers and devices

Will talk of prioritizing key tasks

Will explain how they test your site on a variety of devices



Wannabe

May dismiss mobile browser usage

May suggest building a separate mobile site

May discuss hiding content on mobile

May try to sell you on developing an app



Technologies

Professional

Will refer you to their developers if they don't know or they will wax philosophical about HTML, CSS, and JavaScript

May mention progressive enhancement

May mention that they hand-code every site



Wannabe

Won't know

Won't mention CSS

Won't be able to tell you which version of HTML will be used and why

Will say they design in Photoshop and then generate the code automatically



Cost

✓ Professional

Will be able to give you a ballpark cost estimate and rough timeline based on similar projects

May not commit to a price until the scope is fully understood

Will require a deposit and establish a payment schedule



Wannabe

Will be non-committal when it comes to price

May quote you a figure that seems incredibly low (e.g. \$1,000)

May not require payment until the project is complete



Ownership

Professional

Will be able to discuss issues of copyright, ownership, and licensing

Will assign copyright (or a license) to you upon receiving final payment

Will be willing to provide source files as appropriate



Wannabe

May be unwilling to assign copyright to you

May be unwilling to hand over source files







biz.webstandards.org

How to Hire a Web Professional

by Aaron Gustafson

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