

Technical Standards and Requirements for Third Parties

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Goals

- The provide third party developers and designers with a guide to integrating with the V&A website infrastructure.

Background

When developing microsites and additional features that come into contact with the main vam.ac.uk website, or the CMS which runs it, we would like to provide vendors with some pragmatic guidelines.

Requirements

#	Title	User Story	Importance	Notes
1	Responsive	Content must work from a mobile-first perspective, if not a screenreader-first	High	
2	Accessible	Content must be accessible to all users	High	
3	Analytics	All projects must be delivered with sound analytics in place	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• we use Google Analytics and will provide access on request. Tags are deployed via Google Tag Manager
4	Semantic HTML	Pages must be built following semantic best practics	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• semantic pages will also help with accessibility
5	Hosting	Vendors will be responsible for hosting	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the V&A will need to be aware of the hosting choices before the projects starts
6	Scalable	Sites will need to scale to a large audience	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• we would like to see plans to scale the content in the event it becomes very popular
7	Moderation	User generated content will need to be moderated	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• UGC will need stop-word filters, human moderation and reporting/removal tools built in
8	Secure/SSL	Vendors will need to host their content over SSL	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• we do not support non-HTTPS hosting
9	Peer-review	Code and assets supplied by vendors will be peer-reviewed by our own technical team	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• hosting the code on Github where out developers can review it is the ideal
10	Tests	Code should include tests	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• pragmatic testing is preferred over 100% coverage
11	Documentation	Vendors must supply documentation for review by the V&A Digital team	Medium	
12	Legally compliant	When collecting user data, vendors must comply with data collection law	High	
13	Brand identity	Sites will need to reflect the V&A brand identity	Medium	

Hosting

In situations where the V&A are not responsible for hosting, we expect that our partners consider hosting to include any assets generated by the product. E.g., when a microsite allows users to generate a customised image, the partner is responsible for hosting, backups, etc of that content. We're addressing this directly since our content often has the ability to go viral, which can impact hosting and asset generation costs especially when they are held in the cloud (e.g. the cost of hosting user-generated S3 assets would rise in line with any peak in traffic).

Web standards

Whilst all web content should be standards compliant where possible, our goal is to make sites that are accessible on as many devices as possible, and are as usable by as many people as possible. That means building sites in a progressive way, enhancing them with features where applicable. No flash or Java, for example.

Page speed is also important to us, along with scalability. The content we work on together can become suddenly popular, so we ask that you know how to scale up your sites in response to traffic surges, and use a CDN to help spread the load and increase the speed of your sites.

Microsites

When working with partners, we have two options - embedded content on vam.ac.uk or microsites (on subdomains or distinct urls).

In general, we should decide on these on a case-by-case basis. However, as a general rule we will look to embed content marketing (quizzes, games) and host larger projects as microsites.