

# Websites

Making the Web Work for Your Business



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## Corporate Web Design

There are almost as many distinct types of website design as there are sites themselves, and there are many differences between website designs for individuals, sites for online enterprises and corporate website designs which are the online presence of an existing business or organisation. This paper is a guide to the important features of corporate websites and how they differ from websites with different purposes.

### Making the Web Work For Your Business

A corporate website is the online home of your business, so you can think of it as being a bit like your business premises on the world wide web. You would surely prefer your customers to visit you in a modern office block than in a lean-to or garden shed, so a corporate website should have a professional website design. As such it is always worth spending money on a great design agency like Origin Multimedia Design compared to using budget web designers or even attempting web design yourself.

### Company Image

Since a corporate website represents your business or organisation, it should illustrate your values and qualities as part of your overall brand image, in much the same way as printed materials or advertisements would. We also provide a range of design services beyond web design, but ensure that your website design is integrated with your existing logo or branding guide lines if you have one. We try to get a full understanding of your organisation – your unique selling points, your customer base, your products, services and principles – so that we can translate this into your website design.

If you pride yourself on customer service, your website should offer a similar level of information, support and service. If your products are known for their ease of use, your website should also reflect this. You should also look at similar companies to get an understanding of their website, and you may notice some web design features that you think would work well as part of your own website design.

### Content and Features

Somewhat separate to the look and style of your website design are the information and facilities it provides. The content and features of your website design will vary according to your needs, but there are some elements which should always be a part of a corporate website design. As an absolute minimum, your website should explain to the visitor what your company does and give details of how to contact you. If you don't use email you should still include a telephone number and postal address. The world wide web means that these basic features can be augmented in a number of ways.

The next step from simply providing contact details is having a form as part of the web design. Visitors to the site can enter information into the form and press a

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button to send their enquiry to you via email. These contact forms can be as simple as a name, phone number and enquiry, or allow visitors to choose from options so that you can deal with their enquiry appropriately.

A corporate website must provide information about the company. Your mission statement, aims and objectives succinctly describe your organisation. A logical progression from this is to expand on these points with further information, more details and examples or case studies. These can be placed on different pages of your website with links to them from wherever they are mentioned. In this way, a professional website design can take a visitor on a journey through the background of an organisation and allow them to find comprehensive information to whatever level of detail they require, giving them confidence in the integrity of the organisation.

## Compatibility and Accessibility

Compatibility and accessibility are key considerations in corporate website design. The world wide web evolved on the basis that web designs should be available on any computer system, and modern technologies like CSS web design mean that a professional web design can look beautiful on modern computers (which usually comprise the majority of visitors to a website) whilst remaining functional on older, obscure or limited devices (e.g. mobile phones). Additionally, a proportion of internet users have disabilities or special needs, and just as your business premises would provide for these customers, your website design should too. This is a relatively simple task and can be as simple as including a text description with images for vision impaired screen reader users, but may only be included with a website design if you ask for it.

## Adding Value

With the basic elements in place, there are a number of ways you can expand your corporate website and add value to it, and the simplest is by adding more information. For example, a dentist's surgery could include some advice on how to care for your teeth. Such information costs you nothing – you provide it to your customers as a matter of course – and it is very easy to include in a web design as additional text, but it adds value to your website and promotes your image as a responsible organisation. This concept can be expanded for marketing purposes (for example, a mortgage rate calculator) and the possibilities are almost limitless.

We will be able to help you develop concepts like this, as we have an understanding of what is most practical and effective in web design terms.

The ultimate way to develop your corporate website is to add an online element to your business. With the examples above, this could mean the tooth care guide recommends regular check-ups with the dentist and allows visitors to make appointments online, or the mortgage calculator results in an advisor contacting a visitor to discuss their financial situation and requirements. Retail businesses can of course develop website designs with online shopping features.

These sorts of features are highly dependent upon the organisation in question, we can offer advice and guidance on how to make the most of your corporate website, so contact us.

