How to Write a Website RFP / Brief

The point of a website brief or RFP (request for proposal) is to give potential agencies a good understanding of what you need them to consider when quoting to build your website.

The best RFPs I’ve read are clear, concise and to the point. They don’t need to be long and complicated, and they can include your company personality, style and tone of voice.

A good agency will be able to work alongside you to develop the brief, discover new opportunities or areas that may not have been thought about.

So, it’s good to give them enough information about who you are as a company, but also give them some room to shine and show their expertise and excellence when they come back to you with a quote.

Below you’ll find a starting point and suggestions for you to write one for yourself.

Things you can include in your RFP:

1. Summary
2. Company Background
3. Core Objectives
4. Project Scope and Deliverables
5. Sitemap
6. Timeline & Milestones
7. Functional/Technical Requirements
8. Budget
9. Criteria for Selection

1. Summary

This should be a broad outline and a general introduction to the company. It should detail why you are seeking an agency and what you hope they can do for you.

**Example:**

We are a performing arts charity based in the heart of Birmingham.

Our mission is to provide high quality, relevant and inclusive opportunities for people across The Midlands to engage with live events, performers and audiences. Through performances, artist development, and participatory work we create opportunities for people to learn about themselves and others, and to understand and shape the world around them.

We are approaching agencies to redesign our current site. We feel it is complicated to use, is outdated and no longer meets our requirements.

We need the new site to focus on raising awareness around our events and activities, promote ticket sales, encourage donations and help us with data capture.

2. Company Background

Use this area to share a short history of the company and outline who your main visitors are.

**Example:**

Founded in 1944 we have been putting performing arts into the heart of the Midlands. We aim to bring artists, audiences and communities together so that everyone can find, explore and share extraordinary performances in one of the most vibrant areas of Birmingham.

The main types of visitors are musicians and actors who perform with us, and schools and residents to attend our events and donate to our charity.

3. Core Objectives

Use this section to outline what you hope to achieve with the new website. Be honest about why the current site isn’t performing as required.

**Example:**

The current site is built with WordPress, which we are happy to stay with. We need the new site to be easy to use. Currently the backend is very complicated and hard to make changes to and update.

We feel the design needs modernisation. We would like to integrate a video component on the homepage, some animation of our logo with handwriting design, big, bold images that are static when scrolling down the page, just an overall more modern and fresher look. We really like the look and feel of the Birmingham Hippodrome website.

We are happy with the content on the site and have lots of images and video assets that we can use on the new site, so won’t need much of this to be created.

We need the new site to focus on raising awareness around our events and activities, promote ticket sales, encourage donations and help us with data capture.

4. Project Scope & Deliverables

This is where you tell the agency what kind of services you need. Whether that be logo design, image sourcing, animation, film, copywriting, website build etc

It’s important to let them know about any special features or requirements so they can factor this in and evaluate the time that will be needed to carry out the work.

**Example:**

We would like the new site to have a fresh and modern look and feel and be easy to use and navigate.

In addition to the WordPress website, we will also need a sixty second video for the homepage and a short animation loop created with our logo. We will need both to be in high quality file formats and multiple aspect ratios so we can use them on social media.

We will need a training session for our team to allow them to feel confident to upload new content onto the new website.

5. Sitemap

Forming the heart of your user experience and customer journey, the sitemap is probably one of the most important planning stages of the process. It dictates how the users will navigate your site and find the right information.

Clean and simple navigation is crucial. If you have a lot of pages on the site or a complex navigation menu, it might be worth taking out some of the elements and creating smaller menus within other areas of the design - such as the top of the header area or in the footer - perhaps even flyout menus.

This is something your new agency will be able to help you with, so use this section to give an overview of a suggested framework. Think about your goals and the customer journey involved.

You may need several navigation plans as visitors may see a different selection when logged in, or you may want to have different menus on different parts of the page, or sidebar menus in your blog or what’s on section.

**Example:**

**Main Menu:**

Home page

What’s On

Donate

Latest News

* Category
* - Blog Posts
* Category
* - Blog Posts
* Etc (500 blog posts in total)

**Header Menu:**

Search bar

About Us

Accessibility

Contact Us

Login

**Footer Menu:**

Press

Privacy & Cookie Policy

Our Partners

T&C’s

Contact Us

6. Timeline

This is where you state your aims for the site to be completed by.

**Example:**

We would like the site to be ready for the Autumn to coincide with the launch of our new season programming.

7. Functional Requirements

This is the place to give details about what special functionality the site will need to have.

**Example:**

The site will need to integrate with Spektrix as we use this for our ticketing and email marketing.

The site must be easy to navigate and find information about our events and buy tickets. It must encourage visitors to donate via our paypal.me link / just giving portal. It must also have strong conversion points to encourage data capture.

The site will need to be built to W3C AA+ accessibility standards in order to meet some of our visitor’s needs.

We will need the contents on the current site ported over to the new site in the new style.

The site must include strong calls to action so people can easily donate to us via PayPal or our Just Giving page.

The site must be built with best SEO practices in mind and the new site must take measures to preserve the old URL structure or put in place the relevant 301 redirects needed to direct traffic to the new pages.

8. Budget (optional)

You may want to give an indication of how much you have to spend on the project. This way agencies can tailor their quotes to suit your budget.

**Example:**

£2000 - £8000 to redevelop the site

£500 for the logo to be animated

£1000 for the video content.

£350 per quarter budgeted for the site hosting and maintenance support

9. Criteria for Selection

You can use this selection to give an indication of your selection criteria so that agencies can tailor their quotes to meet this as best as possible.

You may want to have an agency that is experienced in Spektrix integration or one that has specific expertise and offerings.

**Example:**

We will be basing our decision on agency experience, knowledge of Spektrix, ability to demonstrate in their quote they understand our needs.