

Completing the Web site Pre-Flight Checklist

Just as you would want to crunch numbers and run what-if scenarios before launching a new company, you want to put your plan to paper for your Web site design as well. Collect information on these 25 top items when submitting your project scope to a Web site designer for a price quote:

- ◆ Company information, including name, address, phone, and e-mail
- ◆ How long you have been in business
- ◆ The primary goal of your business (what you sell)
- ◆ A description of your business in 25 words or less
- ◆ A list of three groups of people that might benefit from your product or service
- ◆ Your branding slogan
- ◆ The main domain name for your Web site (I use www.uownitdomains.com to search for available domain names and then register them.)
- ◆ A list of at least three Web sites you like and what you like about them
- ◆ A list of at least three Web sites you dislike and what you dislike about them

- ◆ A list of at least three competing Web sites
- ◆ A description of your potential customers' demographic profile, which you can find by searching www.quantcast.com for a high-traffic Web site related to your target industry
- ◆ Whether your potential customers are Internet savvy or technically challenged. (You learn this by attending seminars or networking events where your target audience is present and talking with them.)
- ◆ What you would expect if you were one of your potential customers
- ◆ The goals of your Web site (sell product online, generate leads, and so on)
- ◆ Whether visitors ever need to print pages from your site
- ◆ What the top navigation buttons will be
- ◆ What the left navigation buttons will be
- ◆ What special features will be displayed in the right navigation area
- ◆ What should be included in the footer of every page of the site
- ◆ Whether you will supply photos, or whether the designer should include photos in the quote
- ◆ Whether you will supply content, or whether the designer should include copywriting in the quote
- ◆ Whether you will supply a logo, or whether the designer should quote a price for logo creation
- ◆ Whether the Web site will require an online shopping cart
- ◆ Whether you already have an Internet-capable merchant account
- ◆ Whether there will be an online newsletter signup form on the Web site