

Helping Businesses Grow



Website Design For Beginners

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Welcome to Website Design For Beginners! Whether you're completely new to website design or have a brief understanding, this guide is designed to help you better understand the ways in which good website design can benefit your business. Web design can seem straightforward to begin with, but when you get down to the nitty-gritty, a bad website design can destroy your brand reputation in a heartbeat. That's why we're here to help you figure out what's important when it comes to the design of your website to help you continue to grow and maximise your business.

It's safe to say that nearly every business needs a website in today's digital market and your company's web design speaks volumes about your business and your brand. A professionally designed website makes you look more credible, gives you more authority and gives visitors a way to learn about you and what you offer before getting in touch.

In fact, eight out of ten people trust businesses with websites more than those without them, recent studies suggest. So, if you want to beat the competition then you need a professional website that advertises your business!

Luckily, if you don't want to do it yourself, there are plenty of options out there to help you build the perfect site and we happen to be experts in it.

What is website design?

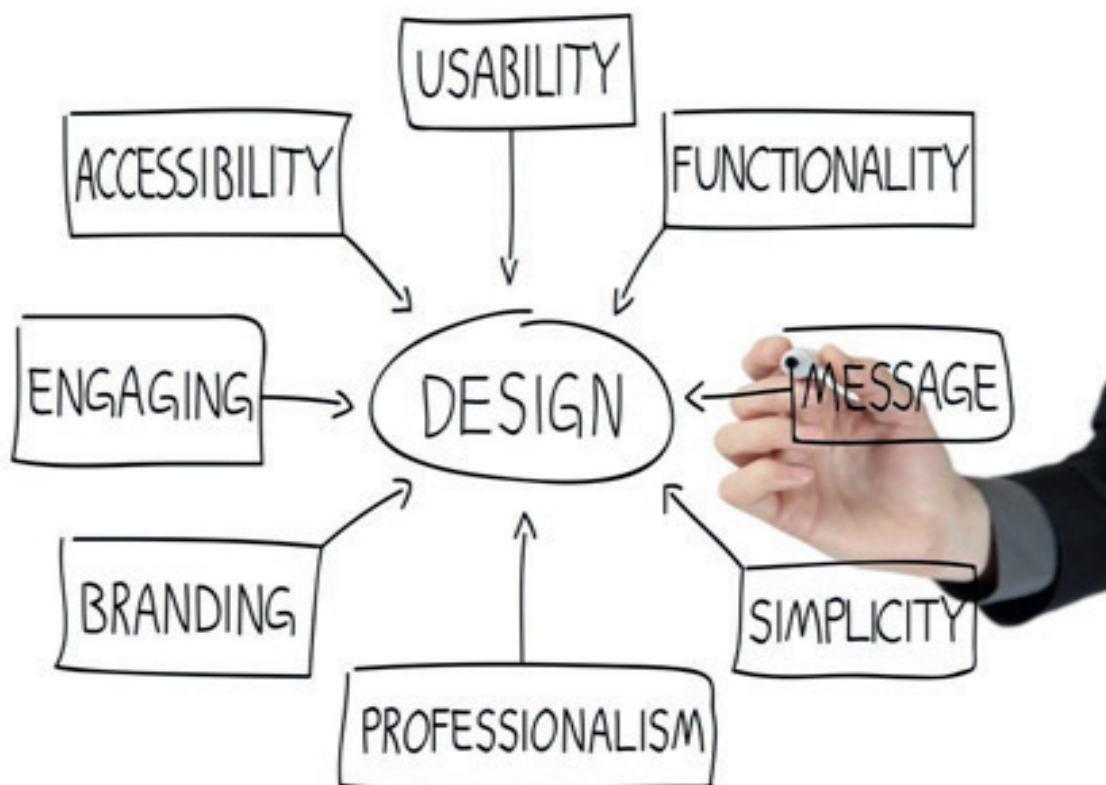
Website design is the act of designing and creating websites, and it is quickly becoming a modern art form. The design of a website can often be the deciding factor (within seconds of landing on your page) of whether or not visitors leave or stay.

Everything about your website - including the content, the way it looks, and the way it works - is determined by the website design. Web design is a process of conceptualising, planning, and building the layout, colors, text styles, structure, graphics, images, and use of interactive features that deliver pages to your site visitors. Some people even refer to it as a "technicalised" art.



Visual + Interaction = web design

A web page is designed to be used by people. As users interact with a website they will make a decision on whether it's user friendly and whether it offers them what they're looking for. The design needs to be in line with the brand positioning, ensuring that production, operation, and user needs are met. This is the difference between a good website design and a bad website design.



What do I need from my website?

Put simply, a website needs to be good looking and easy to use but let's delve a little deeper shall we.

Firstly, you need to decide what you want or need your website to do. What do you want to achieve from your website? For most businesses, a website is a key element of generating more leads and conversions, but for others it's an information tool or a way for customers to find their business. How is your website going to serve the needs of your visitors? Work out what you want your website to do for you.



Secondly, know what's out there when it comes to off the shelf solutions. This is why it's important to know what you want to achieve from your website. If it's more than just an information platform you will probably benefit from the advice of an industry expert to both customise and optimise your website for your business. Otherwise, if you're looking to give it go yourself, there are some great platforms out there such as Wordpress, Shopify, Magento and many more.

There are lots of questions you need to be asking and elements you need to consider before you begin building your website:

- Do you want to advertise your business or sell your products online?
- Do you want prospects to contact you, buy your products, or do you want site visits to make money through advertising?
- How old is your target audience? Will they visit by desktop or mobile?
- Analyse your competition
- Make sure your branding is consistent, both in terms of visuals and voice
- Make the content you produce consistent and understand what this will be
- Keep your design attractive but simple
- Know your budget and stick to it
- Understand your recurring costs
- Have a plan to keep content fresh and relevant

The above are just a few things to consider but the list is pretty lengthy. Once you know what you need, who your target audience is, the scale of your project, and how you want your brand represented, it's time to pull everything together.



What do I need from my website?

1. Visual design is key

“A picture tells a thousand of words”. This phrase forever rings true. Pictures can convey the real value of the content, capture the user’s attention, and help explain complex concepts. We are very visual beings and are easily drawn in by images. Images generally stick with us longer too. However, it’s also important not to just use any old image, just for the sake of using an image. It must be relevant to what you’re trying achieve.

2. Mobile friendly

Responsive design has never been so essential. On March 26, 2018, Google officially announced Mobile-Friendly Update. This update penalises sites that aren’t mobile-friendly. Plus, an increasing number of users are now mobile-only, which means if you can’t meet their needs you’re losing potential customers. At its simplest, mobile friendly design means your website’s information – images, texts, videos, links – is easily and readily accessible across all different platforms and, most particularly, on the much smaller screen of phones and tablets. This requires better user experience design for the user. So, responsive design is a necessary fundamental for every website.



3. Clear navigation design

One of the most important elements of a site is the navigation menu. This is how your visitors browse your site and move from one page to the next. It's essential that this feature is simple and intuitive. Easy navigation is an absolute priority when building your website, simple ways to achieve this are condensed and readable text, simple copy that's easy to digest and understand, and clear call to actions.

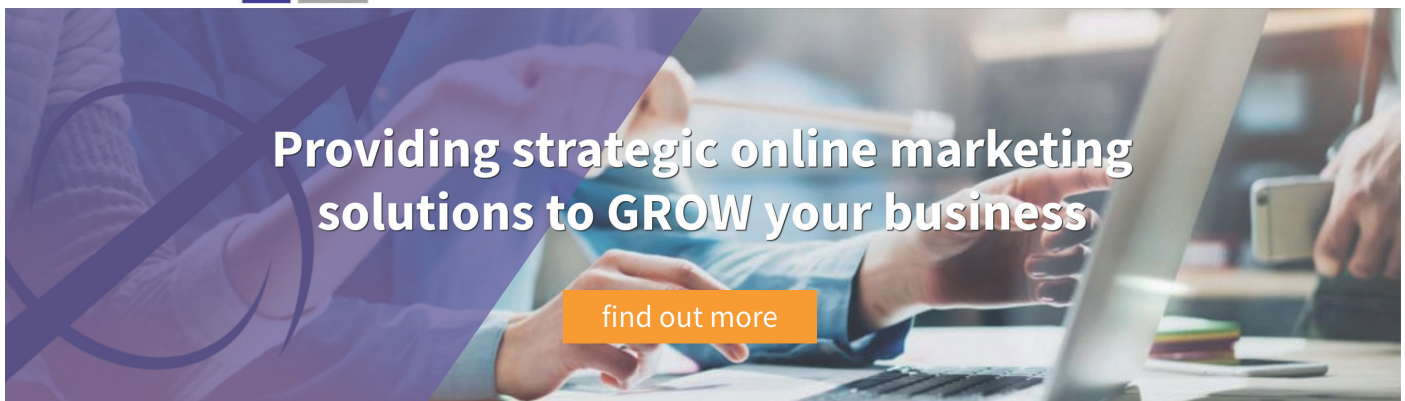
You should also try and limit the items in a menu to less than 7; too much choice can over complicate or confuse the user. And remember, the user should always be able to get to where they want to be within 3 clicks of the homepage. Clicking on your brand logo should also direct users back to the homepage as this is a familiar habit for users.

Finally, try and avoid drop down menus where possible, as it's difficult for search engines to crawl drop-down menus and they can also be off-putting for the user.



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4. Highlight main content of your website

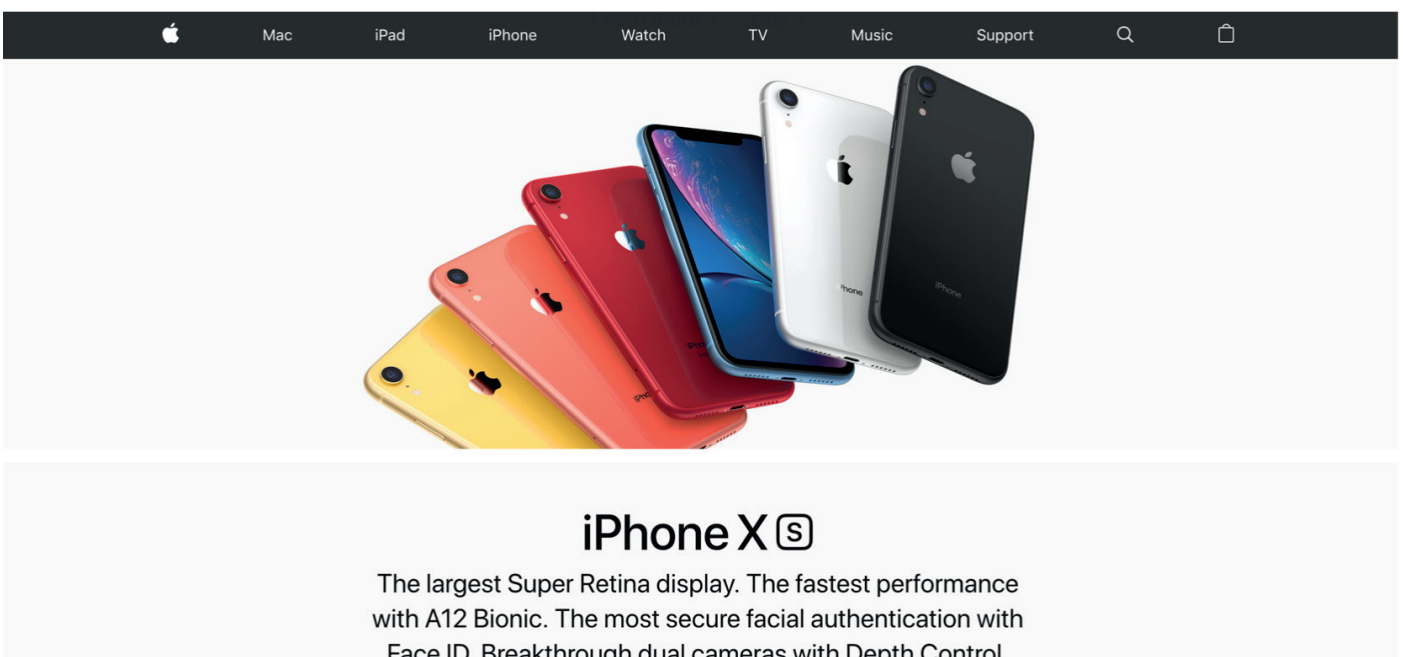
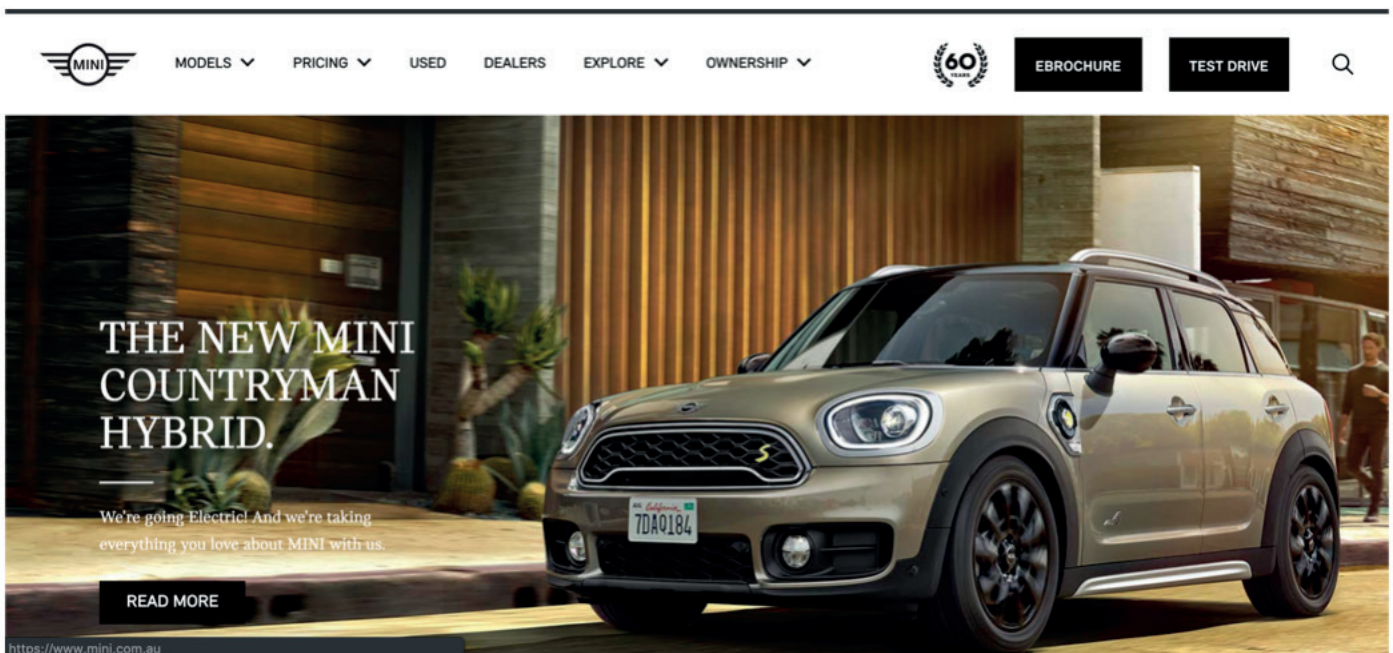
Remember to highlight the main product or content of your website to make it easy for users and to ensure they know your website's selling point at a glance. A couple of really simple ways to do this are to bold the text of the product information and show the product image to attract users.



5. Use of white space

White space creates a more appealing design with a balanced layout, it clearly shows off what's important and helps attract the users attention. When a website's layout is poor, users will find it difficult to understand what it is that's being offered to them. Good spacing between words, images, and segments makes a website easier to digest for the user. A website that is busy is also extremely distracting so keeping it simple helps the user find what they're looking for quickly.

Here are some great website design examples:





Should I use a Web Design Agency?

In a word or two, it depends. Hiring a professional web design agency is not for everyone and if you're a new business without much revenue or profit, then using an affordable website builder is an attractive option. However, if you own a small or medium sized business, using a free website builder could end up costing your company a lot of money in wasted man hours and even more money in the opportunity cost of lost potential revenue.

One of the first things to note, is a good web designer can take your vision and bring it to life. By having an in depth conversation they can take your vision and what's in your head and turn it into a living breathing genius website creation.

Whilst doing this, they also get an understanding of your business and your customers, which means they can tailor the design and structure of your site to facilitate conversions to help generate more sales.

A good web design agency can also help establish a unique and interesting design to set you apart from your industry competitors. The last thing you want is to invest lots of time and money into a website that offers exactly the same as hundreds of other sites out there with your product offering.

Should everyone hire a professional web design agency? No. In fact, for many, it's the wrong move but this is something you can establish in the early stages of your website build.



What will this cost?

As you probably guessed, there are too many determining factors to answer this question simply. The number of pages, complexity of your design, content, and much much more all play their part. The best thing you can do is sit down and discuss your website design requirements and go from there.

A closing thought

A good, user-friendly website design is now one of the most important assets your business has access to. Gone are the days where people only shop online using a desktop, now people want to access anything they want instantly. This means using mobile and tablets while on the move.

At AIM Internet we create web designs with flexible layouts that align with the latest web trends and adapt to the capabilities of multiple devices and screen sizes. In an increasingly competitive market our goal is to ensure your site has a strong reputation, builds trust with visitors, is easy to use, presents your business in an authentic, memorable way and, importantly, wins you new traffic that converts. With our expertise in technology, we help design a simple, memorable and transformative experience for your consumers.

Affordable web design need not mean getting a site that's amateurish or light on functionality. It takes time, patience, and research, but finding the right web designer doesn't have to be difficult. Understanding your business's needs and objectives is a vital first step.

Whether you're building a new website or improving an existing one, website design is one of the most important criteria to take into consideration.

Here at AIM Internet we can help you improve your user experience and grow your business simply call us on 0870 062 8760 or email us at info@aiminternet.co.uk.

