



# **Stand out from the crowd**



**Essential reading when  
planning a new website**

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# Website Design Guide

## 1.0 Introduction

Whether you're new to website design or want an existing website redesigned and upgraded, this guide will introduce you to all the essential ingredients and explain the many options available and reasons why you may wish to consider them.

The items contained in this document are by no means exhaustive, so please enquire about anything not listed. Once you have read through the guide please fill in the questionnaire to create a 'brief' and describe your website requirements. If you need any help at any stage, please e-mail or telephone and we will be happy to guide you through the choices.

## 1.1 Purpose & Function of Your Website

It's important to decide the purpose and function of your website, as well as the look and feel of the graphics. If you have several diverse aspects to your business, you may need more than one website! A site that tries to be a bit of everything can confuse the visitor and it may not achieve the results of a more concise and focused approach (especially for Google).

Websites can be electronic brochures to introduce your products or services to the world. They can be a data repositories that allow people to search for information through a database, an on-line shop or other form of e-commerce, it can be an advertisement for an off-line campaign, a tool for generating sales leads, and many other things and combinations of things, to suit your business and the way you trade (or want to trade in the future).

## 1.2 How Will Visitors Find Your Website?

If you plan to rely solely on search engines for people to find you, your site will need to be optimised for maximum impact.

SEO (Search Engine Optimisation) is subject to many different factors and considerations, from the size of the market you are in (number of competitors), to the subject matter, content, type of site, keywords and metadata, all have a vital part to play.

Optimisation is achieved using a set of rules for the technical coding and by using certain key words and phrases. You can further enhance your search criteria by strategically placing keywords and phrases throughout each page. This adds considerable time and complexity to the written copy as it has to make sense and read well, while using the right number of keywords (keyword density).

Nineteen to the Dozen use good design practice and Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) techniques to achieved first page rankings for many clients; however it is not possible for anyone to guarantee a first page ranking without looking at the sector and understanding the keyword competitiveness for your industry – there are just too many variables! There are many companies that specialise in SEO and sponsored ad-words. Nineteen Dozen has optimisation capability in-house and can achieve top rankings for you on a monthly fee basis. Please ask for an SEO overview document as this is a large subject.

For the majority of people basic SEO will yield good results; however you can support your new site in additional ways to help people to find you;

- Advertising your site –
  - ❖ Printed literature, brochures, business cards
  - ❖ Signature boxes on your e-mails
  - ❖ Display adverts in magazines
  - ❖ Press releases
  - ❖ Mail shots
  - ❖ Telephone campaigns
  - ❖ Telephone answering messages
  - ❖ Free-to-list portals /directories (good for SEO)
  - ❖ Host a competition and place the answer is on your site (advertise where visitors might find the answer)
  - ❖ Television / Radio etc
- Another good way to drive traffic to your site is to write a special feature report(s) or provide other useful information that your target audience will want to read, such as an 'industry guide' or latest news. You must offer it free of charge for it to be effective and your target audience must be able to download it easily. You can bring it to people's attention through press releases, and editorial. People are much more likely to take the time to look around if they can get something useful for free. That is also why your home page is critical; once you have the reader there.....you have the opportunity to catch their eye with something else.
- Google Ads or Pay Per Click (PPC): Sponsored links are a fast and effective way of appearing at the top of Google and other search engines. You should view this type of advertising in the same way as magazine advertising and budget accordingly. You will need someone to create a campaign (researching keyword phrases and writing the text for the ads) setting it up and getting it running. There are ongoing costs for this plus and you will have a monthly media cost to pay Google (or other search engine).

### **1.3 Establishing Your Identity**

The home page is usually the most critical area and focal point of your site. It's effectively your shop window. It is therefore imperative that it is visually good, reads well and invites the reader to explore other pages. Once the Home Page has been graphically designed you will be asked for feedback before continuing with any other part of the site design, as the home page sets the tone and feel for all the other pages.

**Your home page creates your first impression...**  
**...so make sure it's a good one!**

### **What's involved?**

Many people will look at a company's website before making contact. They want to see if the services or products match their requirements and gain an initial impression of your professionalism. People's boredom threshold on the internet is incredibly low so it's doubly important that they can instantly identify with your image, understand the information on your home page and navigate your site!

Establishing your web identity is not simply a question of choosing a name and logo. In order to create a website as part of your overall corporate ID it's important that the visual impression, background, style of writing, as well as the – colours, font, point size etc, are consistent throughout and reflect your existing brand and other selling materials.

Certain colours are commonly used for different types of industry. For example, engineering companies are often dominated by blues and greys. If you were a children's nursery you may want lots of bright vivid colours: but you probably wouldn't want bright vivid colours if you were a solicitor or a funeral director.

Your website is a window for the outside world and it's vitally important that it reflects your business correctly. Accessing your website is one of the quickest ways for potential customers to find the information they want to know about. Significant savings in print and postage costs can also be made using downloadable brochures and data sheets (especially for overseas enquiries).

## **1.4 Website Copywriting**

We've established the importance of creating a design with an identity that is both aesthetically pleasing and functional. Visitors are far more likely to return to a website that is easy to use and easy to read.

The written material or copywriting (especially on the home page) is also a crucial factor in your sites success and bears significant relevance for search engine rankings. It must provide a succinct description of 'what you offer' and invite people to explore other pages while using key (searchable) words.

Many websites talk inwardly and are dull for the reader – how many site say "WE, US and OUR" throughout the text, copywriting helps you to identify and promote your benefits in a clear and succinct way and in a style that talks to the reader using "YOU, YOURS and IT'S"

## 1.5 Design Process

The design phase starts with the initial meeting and follows six basic steps;

- **Marketing Aims & Objectives** - Defining your target audience and their needs and determining the information your visitors will be looking for.
- **Information Architecture** – Detailing the actual information required by the reader / defining the number of pages, pictures, downloads, links, and any purchasing stages (if applicable).
- **Navigational Model** – Designing the flow structure and site map to show how all the pages will integrate so the reader can find the exact product they want in the smallest number of steps.
- **Creative Modelling** – This is the graphic design stage, where the appearance, style and tone of the site are created. A home page is constructed for graphical approval and its style is reflected throughout the site.
- **Implementation Phase** – Putting all of the content together within the parameters that have been set.
- **Testing** – Once the site is ready, it has to be tested and 'debugged' before it goes live. After the in-house test phase, we ask you to 'click' on everything, try every link and download, print every form and do everything to ensure you are completely satisfied before signing the project off.

### Note

Building your website to the creative modelling stage (graphical representation of the home page) sets the tone for the entire site, which is then mirrored throughout.

Your site can reviewed and amended to make any necessary adjustments in-line with your requests. You will be asked for approval before generating the rest of site with moving menu systems, working links and compressed images for fast and efficient loading.

## 2.0 Domain Names, E-mail & Hosting Options

Nineteen to the Dozen Ltd provide everything you need to make your website work on the internet including instant domain name registrations, hosting and e-mail accounts.

### 2.1 Domain Names

Internet users access your website via your domain name. A domain name is a unique text name corresponding to the numeric IP address of a computer on the Internet (the server where your website is held).

**Domains Cost just £2.59 for a .co.uk & £8.99 for a .com / annum  
That's just 4.9p/week**

When you buy domain names they also need to be managed. Many people say they have bought a domain name for just a few pounds but have no idea where the domain is currently held or which server it's pointing at (if any).

Domain management costs are charged at £1.49 /month. This includes transfers, re-pointing your DNS, (tag changes) and domain alerts to ensure you do not lose your name by missing renewals. It also includes the cost of raising the renewal invoice and provides a helpline should any problems occur.

#### Managed Packages

**.co.uk .me.uk & .org.uk**  
cost £20.00 per annum to buy, set up and maintain

**.com .net .org .biz .info .name .eu**  
cost £26.50 per annum to buy, set up and maintain

**.tv .uk.com .eu.com .gb.com .gb.net .uk.net .mobi .cc**  
cost £42.50 per annum to buy, set up and maintain

**Note: Prices based on biannual renewals & exclude VAT**

#### Please Note

If you would like 'Nineteen to the Dozen' to manage your domain names, please allow Nineteen to the Dozen to purchase them on your behalf. Purchasing independently may offer a tiny saving on the domain name cost but often adds transfer delays and sometimes additional costs to transfer them from another provider to our control panel. If you are proficient in DNS settings you are welcome to manage your own domain name.

### 2.2 E-mail & Hosting

Nineteen to the Dozen hosts its own fully managed servers with 24/7 technical support in London's Docklands. Clients benefit from proactive monitoring with 4 daily back-ups to an offsite data centre, hardware firewalls, antivirus and the latest anti-spam protection. Email using pop3 accounts will be created or liaison with your IT people for those using exchange servers – are all included in the set-up cost.

Please see our separate Hosting Terms for full details of hosting packages as this varies depending on your website's size, bandwidth requirements and support needs. Costs are typically between £7 and £35/month

### Server Specification

- Operating System – Centos4 (Linux)
- Software: MySQL / PHP 5
- Processor(s): Dual Intel Xeon 5310 Quad Cores (8CPU)
- Memory: 4GB
- Hard Drive Space: 2 Terra Bytes
- RAID Type: RAID 5
- Bandwidth: 500GB pcm (available)
- Data Backups: 4 times per day of entire server included as standard to OFFSITE
- Data Centre Location
- Server Location: UK London Docklands
- IP Address: Exclusive
- Anti Spam (Mail Foundry & Spam Assassin)
- Secure Data Centre Hardware Firewalls
- Pro active server monitoring 24x7x365 ensuring the server remains online / updates /

## 3.0 Types of Web Page

Every website needs a coherent and consistent network of pages that are easy for the visitor to understand and simple to navigate. The menu system should remain in the same location and be visible from every page. The button text should indicate to the visitor what they are likely to find in each area.

### 3.1 Key Website Pages

#### ◆ Home Page

Every site must have a home page. It will be designed to show an array of visual imagery and text that provides concise details of the company's offerings and compliments your corporate ID or brand awareness, using company colour schemes where applicable.

#### ◆ Products / Services

Products or service pages can be individual pages or long pages with page anchors. Page Anchors are used with active headings – Click on the heading and jump straight to the relevant area of the page (you can jump back to the top afterwards). Please add any preferences to the questionnaire.

#### ◆ About Us

The About Us page should display your company overview and should include any standards or awards. You may want to include key staff photos / positions, pictures of your building, vans etc, to create a personal feel with the reader. With so many faceless entities on the internet it's good to show real people with a human aspect to the business.

#### ◆ **FAQ's**

FAQ's (frequently asked questions) show people that you have lots of visitors and allow you to create questions and answers that will be useful. You can also use questions to highlight key sales points you wish to get across e.g. 'Where do your products come from?' or 'Is your product guaranteed?' etc.

#### ◆ **Testimonials**

The testimonials page is your chance to reassure potential new customers that you are a good supplier or provider of services. Testimonials need to be as genuine as possible to be effective. We will provide you with a simple method of obtaining fantastic testimonials from your customers and explain the crucial information you need to include, once your project is underway.

#### ◆ **Useful Links**

Useful links that are relevant to your business such as trade bodies, accreditation bodies, associated products or services (non competing) etc, will all help drive traffic to your site and are good for search engine rankings. Ensure you ask for reciprocating links wherever possible as you want to drive traffic to your site and not just away from it. Most companies have a web policy and will link to suppliers and customers on request.

#### ◆ **Contact / Address Page**

The contact form will detail your address and contact numbers and will be routed to your designated e-mail address. Auto responders can also be created so that the visitor gets an automated response after filling in the form. Contact Pages are better if they use a predefined form that does not allow attachments (rather than just opening the visitor's application software e.g. MS outlook). It stops people inadvertently sending attachments with viruses and can prevent spam robots from getting your e-mail address.

#### ◆ **Directions & Map**

You can have written directions (please supply) and a map linked with Multimap / Streetmap, Googlemaps or similar, which provides a graphical map that people can manipulate (zoom in/out, print etc).

#### ◆ **Site Map**

The site map is a list of all the pages in your website. It's good for search engine optimisation and helps visitors who want to quickly see the whole site in a nutshell, they can click on any of the page titles and jump straight to that page. XML sitemaps are similar and design to help Google index your website – these are included in the SEO process.

### **3.1 Additional Features & Considerations**

#### ◆ **Special Offers / News Flashes**

Special Offers or News Flashes can be added to an area of the home page where the reader can see the offer heading or news headline and 'click to get the full details. The content is controlled from a user administration area. The owner of the website can login to the administration area and update the headlines and main story – editing, deleting, creating new or suspending any of the items.

### ◆ **RSS Feeds**

Latest news sections can be labour intensive; RSS (Really Simple Syndicate) can be an alternative way to keep your website supplied with fresh new stories with no work for you to do. The best example of this is the BBC News syndication. The news headlines change automatically on your website – the reader can simply 'click' the link whenever a story catches their eye. It's not just the BBC that offers RSS feeds, there are many for all sorts of industry types!

### ◆ **Download Area(s)**

You may want a specific area for downloadable files such as technical data or 'how-to' guides or you may wish to have downloadable documents littered throughout the site! Having one area keeps it simple for updates. You can have links to the download page from anywhere in the site that will always remain current.

If you want an administration login to update /add new files whenever you want - you can. However from a cost perspective if you want to have user control of news and links, you are a short step from a full CMS system (see CMS below). File downloads can be in many formats such as, Jpg, Gif, PNG, Tiff, Mpeg, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, CSV or PDF etc. If your changes are infrequent it may be more cost effective for Nineteen to the Dozen to complete minor updates for you.

### ◆ **Search Box**

The search box facility can be an extremely useful feature. It allows the visitor to quickly find the item they are looking for. This is particularly useful for database sites where there are large amounts of products or information available. Typical applications include on-line shops, data reference library, archives etc. Search facilities can let you search by any word in the product title or the description.

### ◆ **Help Button**

It can be useful for visitors to have a help button in some circumstances. If you are asking visitors to fill in forms on-line or have a complex structure or a game that requires instruction or guidance; then a help button is a good way to achieve this.

### ◆ **Private Members Area**

Using a secure login your members can have access to a private area of the website. You may wish to allow access information that isn't available to the general public. Members can self-register or if you have a Content Management System - you can activate their password individually after conditions have been met – e.g. they qualify or on receipt of payment.

### ◆ **Forum / Chat Rooms / Blogs**

Forums can be a great way to attract visitors to your site and are great for search engines. A good forum will attract visitors from far and wide and it will take on a life of its own. But you do need to ensure you moderate it properly and have rules for bad language, unsuitable material or offensive behaviour. You also need a reporting mechanism that you must react to. Once a forum visitor has registered and logged-in, they can respond to other visitor's discussions and can add to the subject matter or post new questions or topics for others to answer. If you have a

topical subject related to your site, then placing adverts around the forum login area can be a good way to attract sales or gain sponsorship.

#### ◆ **CMS (Content Management Systems)**

There are various ways to have control of the content within your website. That is to say, once the site is built you (the owner) may want to amend, add or delete - pages, text, pictures, downloads, and links throughout your site – a CMS allows you to do this through a user friendly interface without any IT skills.

See section 5 for a detailed explanation of CMS

#### ◆ **E-commerce**

E-commerce is generally considered to be the buying and selling of goods and services on the Internet. In practice, this term has become synonymous with on-line retail selling which is also known as e-tailing. See section 6 for a detailed explanation of e-commerce and shopping cart options.

## **4.0 Design Considerations**

Every website is constructed to meet your brief and fulfil guidelines regarding:

### **4.1 Navigation**

### **4.2 Screen Resolution**

### **4.3 Browser Compatibility**

### **4.4 Accessibility & Web Standards**

### **4.5 Site Statistics**

### **4.1 Navigation**

One of the most important functions of a website is navigation. Visitors must be able to find information and get from A to B as easily as possible and always know exactly where they are within the site.

It's good practice for menu systems to remain visible and static on each web page so that the user can access the whole website irrespective of where they are. The user can also see what sort of information is going to be available on other pages.

You should have no more than 7 or 8 option buttons down the left hand side (or across the top), although your buttons can subdivide into specific choices and sub-menus thereafter.

Special offers or critical information should be 'boxed' or placed in a right hand page border, as your eye is naturally drawn to boxes and the right hand side of the page.

## 4.2 Screen Resolution

It is important that your website is constructed to function properly in the most common screen resolutions. The main navigation functions and critical information should be visible without scrolling, although this is not always possible.

Date	Higher	1024x768	800x600	640x480	Unknown
January 2009	57%	36%	4%	0%	3%
January 2008	38%	48%	8%	0%	6%
January 2007	26%	54%	14%	0%	6%
January 2006	17%	57%	20%	0%	6%
January 2005	12%	53%	30%	0%	5%
January 2004	10%	47%	37%	1%	5%
January 2003	6%	40%	47%	2%	5%

(source: w3schools.com – Apr 2009)

Designing a website for 1024 x 768 resolution means that when the site is viewed on a higher resolution screen, it will have more screen available than it needs. To combat this, your site may be a fixed the width within the space available or be scalable (sometimes called liquid). The unused area on higher resolution screens will simply be filled-in with a contrasting or complimentary background colour.

## 4.3. Browser Compatibility

There are four main internet browsers and many browser versions, each of which can render a website design very differently. It is important to ensure that a website can be viewed correctly by the vast majority of internet users; Nineteen to the Dozen will ensure your site is compatible with Internet Explorer 6&7, Google Chrome & Firefox, which by default will make it compatible with many of the smaller ones.

**Global Web statistics show the following browsers as the most popular:**

2009	<a href="#">IE7</a>	<a href="#">IE6</a>	<a href="#">IE8</a>	<a href="#">Firefox</a>	<a href="#">Chrome</a>	<a href="#">Safari</a>	<a href="#">Opera</a>
August	15.1%	13.6%	10.6%	47.4%	7.0%	3.3%	2.1%
July	15.9%	14.4%	9.1%	47.9%	6.5%	3.3%	2.1%
June	18.7%	14.9%	7.1%	47.3%	6.0%	3.1%	2.1%
May	21.3%	14.5%	5.2%	47.7%	5.5%	3.0%	2.2%
April	23.2%	15.4%	3.5%	47.1%	4.9%	3.0%	2.2%
March	24.9%	17.0%	1.4%	46.5%	4.2%	3.1%	2.3%
February	25.4%	17.4%	0.8%	46.4%	4.0%	3.0%	2.2%
January	25.7%	18.5%	0.6%	45.5%	3.9%	3.0%	2.3%

(source w3schools.com ) Key= IE-Internet Explorer, Fx-Firefox, S-Safari, O-Opera

## 4.4. Accessibility & Web Standards

In 1999 the Disability and Discrimination Act (DDA) required that disabled people must have effective access to services and information for UK organisations. This requirement also included access to company websites and on-line services.

The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) has established universally recognised standards so that web developers and designers can conform. There are three levels (A, AA, and AAA) of accessibility for websites to adhere to. Since October 2004 it has been possible for organisations to be prosecuted if requirements have not been met. Whilst policing of this legislation is somewhat nebulous, all sites are legally required to comply with this standard wherever possible.

## 4.5 Site Statistics

Google Analytics can be installed on your website. It tells you everything you want to know about how your visitors found you and how they interact with your site. You'll be able to focus your marketing resources on campaigns and initiatives that deliver ROI (Return On Investment), and improve your site to convert more visitors.

### **Integrated with Adwords.**

Google Analytics has the enterprise level capabilities you'd expect from a high end web analytics offering and also provides timesaving integration with AdWords (PPC). Of course, Google Analytics tracks all of your non-AdWords initiatives as well.

### **Actionable insight into your advertising and website design**

Google Analytics helps you discover which keywords attract your most desirable prospects, which advertising copy pulled the most responses, and which landing pages and content make the most conversions (money) for you. You can learn how visitors interact with your website and identify the navigational bottlenecks that keep them from completing your conversion goals.

You can find out how profitable your keywords are across search engines and campaigns. Pinpoint where your best customers come from and which markets are most profitable to you. Google Analytics gives you this and more through easy-to-understand visually enhanced reports.

### **Easy to use.**

Google Analytics is easy to use for novice marketers, while delivering all of the capabilities that experienced web analytics professionals expect.

### **Integrated with AdWords.**

If you have an AdWords account, you can use Google Analytics directly from the AdWords interface. Google Analytics also calculates ROI metrics from automatically imported cost and keyword tracking data, saving you time.

### **Tracks all campaigns.**

Google Analytics tracks all online campaigns, from emails to keywords, regardless of search engine or referral source.

### **Safe.**

Google takes the trust people place in it very seriously, and is pledged to safeguard the privacy of your corporate data. We understand that web analytics data is sensitive information, so it accords the ironclad protection it deserves.

## 5 SEO (Search Engine Optimisation)

SEO is a method of "getting found" in search engines. Your site is judged for its content and code (metadata), it's given a ranking against the various search terms and keywords contained within it. The search engine logs and categorises the data it finds to return a relevant result for its users. SEO is sometimes referred to as natural listings for this reason.

There are many factors involved in SEO and it involves considerable work and a degree of monthly on-going work to maintain your position and keyword densities. Nineteen to the Dozen has dedicated staff for SEO work and it has written a separate document called 'SEO the process'. Please ask for this document to be emailed if you are interested in SEO.

## 6 CMS (Content Management Systems)

**Nineteen to the Dozen provide three ways to achieve CMS functionality.**

1. Depending on the requirements of the site build you can have an off-the-shelf pre-written software engine to operate at the heart of your website. It will give you access to the content through an administration interface.

This type of CMS is extremely powerful and cost effective - you can control virtually every element listed in section 3 (Types of Web Page). You simply login to an administration area and are presented with a menu system to select the pages you wish to amend.

The company offers two award winning open source systems - Drupal and Joomla. Both have a variety of off-the-shelf modules available such as ticking support desks, photo galleries and many other.

Alternatively you can have a bespoke system written for you.

2. Bespoke systems will always be more intuitive and straight forward than generic systems as they are written to do exactly what you want - and nothing else. However bespoke programming takes time and cost money! The first option is very cost effective and can give you a very powerful system for a relatively low price.

3. A degree of functionality can be a good 'halfway house' allowing the user to alter only predetermined areas - such as a news page or special offers section. Nineteen Dozen has developed a module for just this event if you don't want a full CMS.

**Please ask for demonstrations of these types of site.**

## 7 E-Commerce Options

Electronic Commerce includes all forms of business communication and transactions conducted across the internet. This can include e-tailing (shopping carts), B2B, intranets and extranets, online advertising (e.g. advertising banners), and simply put – an online presence in any form, that is used for some type of trading communication (customer service for example).

E-commerce may also refer to electronic data interchange (EDI), in which one company's computer queries and transmits purchase orders to another company's computer.

From a website design perspective e-tailing (buying and selling of goods and services, and the transfer of funds) are the most commonly requested aspect of e-commerce.

The basic elements required are:

1. An SSL Certificate – provides an encrypted area for the checkout, securely coding your personal details and credit card data.
2. A payment gateway to talk to the credit card company electronically to check if you have the credit available and the card is not stolen.
3. An internet merchant bank account to deposit the funds into after the transaction

Some provider such as PayPal, NoChex and WorldPay offer item 2 & 3 combined, whichever route you chose, and there are many, they all take around 3% of the transaction value and some have additional charges for processing or maintaining your account.

Note: If you have FSB (Federation of Small Businesses) membership you can get very good rates through WorldPay and a free virtual terminal (allows you to take credit cards over the phone and process online).

Please request our e-commerce guide for more details of payment processes and shopping cart systems.