

How to write a website brief

- 01 Introduction
- 02 Overview
- 03 Purpose
- 04 Audience
- 05 Scope + Features
- 06 Measure Success
- 07 Technical Requirements
- 08 Sample Brief
- 09 About Together

This document will help you outline your project goals, requirements and constraints, allowing a prospective agency to understand whether they are the right fit for the project, and what the project timeline and budget will be.

01 Give us an overview of your organisation

We always start with you. Many briefs forget to include background information on the business or organisation. While it is useful to include links to any existing offline / online marketing collateral, a quick overview of your organisation is immensely helpful at the briefing stage.

Start your brief with information like:

- * When was your organisation established?
- * Where do you operate?
- * What are the main products or services you offer?
- * Who are your major competitors?
- * Tell us about your DNA.
- * What are you known for?
- * What is your vision and mission?
- * How do you differentiate yourself from your competitors?

What is the main message that you wish your website to convey? (If you have an existing content strategy, please include your key messaging from that strategy here.)

Examples are:

- * We are market leaders in...
- * We deliver thought leadership in the areas of ...
- * We have an international team of
- * We are technical experts in ...
- * We have vast expertise advising clients on all forms of ...

02 Outline the purpose of this brief

Now that we know who you are and what you stand for, it's time to tell us more about the overarching business problem you want your website to solve. If you are building a new site, we want to know:

- * Are you hoping for the website to drive sales?
- * Build brand awareness?
- * Generate leads?
- * What business function will the website support through its existence?

If you are revamping an existing site, what are your reasons for doing so?

- * Is the existing site dated? Does it have issues with traffic, stickiness or customer retention?
- * Does it need to be refreshed to reflect an updated brand identity?
- * What are the major pain points that users have described on the current website?
- * What are your main likes and dislikes about your current web presence?
- * Are there existing processes (such as billing, invoicing and content management) that could be streamlined or improved?

EXAMPLES OF BUSINESS GOALS

Raise the firm's profile	Reflect updated brand message	Communicate our expertise and experience	Differentiate us from our competitors
Drive and increase in monthly sales	Increase the scope of enquiries	Drive subscriptions	Boost online sales
Build and strengthen our network	Serve as a hub for connecting our target audience	Consolidate content channels	Increase efficiencies

03 Tell us about your audience

To create a website that addresses your goals, we need to get to know your target audience. Specifically, we would like to know:

- * What does your typical client look like?
- * What sectors and geographies do they operate in?
- * What are the main problems they are trying to solve when enlisting your services?
- * Is your audience segmented into specific groups with different needs (e.g. clients, prospective employees, media and press)?
- * What online user activity would you define as a "success"?

Examples of "success" could be...

- * Purchase a product / subscription
- * Sign up for a newsletter
- * Contact a member of your team
- * Access resources in a knowledge centre
- * Sign up for events / webinars
- * Fill out an enquiry / registration / quote form

04 Outline the website scope

With a fuller picture of what you do, who your audience is, and what you want to achieve, it's time to dive into the details of your prospective website.

We consider this the 'meat and potatoes' of the brief because it's where the technical and creative possibilities are addressed. Please give us an outline – a rough draft is okay – of your prospective website navigation structure. Next, please list the major features that need to be coded.

Where possible, please include a brief description of each feature, with links to online references.

For example, does your website need...

- * User registration and login
- * Member management interface
- * Member restricted resources
- * eCommerce platform
- * Blog or news platform
- * Events and online bookings
- * Knowledge centre
- * Contact / other forms
- * Help desk
- * Vacancy portal
- * Search functionality
- * PDF converter
- * Interactive map
- * Social media integration
- * Multi-lingual platform

05 Outline project responsibilities

Who's going to do what as we work together on this project?

DESIGN

Does your firm have existing brand guidelines that dictate the approach of fonts, colours and photography, or do these need to be compiled as part of the project?

TRANSLATIONS

If the site is multi-lingual, do you require the services of a translation agency or will you provide all translated text?

CONTENT

Will you be writing the content for the website, or do you expect a web agency to provide copywriting services?

POST-LAUNCH MARKETING

What are your post launch website marketing plans (e.g. PPC, social media marketing, email marketing) and do you need assistance with post-launch marketing efforts?

IMAGERY

Does the project require custom photography services? Do you anticipate using stock photography / photoshoot / illustrations in the project?

POST-LAUNCH UPDATES

Do you require assistance managing the website content, or do you have an in-house team that will be responsible for post-launch content updates to the site?

MEASURING SUCCESS EXAMPLES

Google Analytics usage metrics	Number of subscribers and their usage of the site	Monthly increase in leads	Scope of event registrations
Scope of newsletter subscriptions	Website rankings compared to competitors in a post-launch client survey	Feedback from clients during project pitches	Feedback from prospective job applicants
Company press coverage	Recognition from external bodies and industry awards	Cost savings achieved as a result of specific online features	

07 Please include technical requirements

Where are nearly there! Before you hit send, please give us an overview of legal and technical requirements relevant to your region.

Here are a few questions to get you thinking:

- * Does the site need to meet WCAG or ADA accessibility requirements?
- * Does it need to comply with EU cookie regulations and GDPR?
- * Is there a specific platform it needs to tie in with?
- * Do you have a preferred CMS?
- * Do you have a preferred payment gateway when it comes to online billing?
- * Do certain features of the site need to integrate with an existing CRM or accounting platform?
- * Does the site require integration with third-party APIs?
- * What are your hosting requirements, and do you have an existing hosting provider?

08 Timelines, contacts & requirements

For the concluding portion of your brief, please let us know when the project is due, how many people will be involved, and what you are looking for in a prospective agency.

PROJECT TIMELINES

- * What is the proposal due date?
- * How long will you take to review the proposal and by when will you appoint an agency?
- * What is the targeted project kick-off date?
- * Do you have a target launch date? Should this be divided into specific project phases?

YOUR TEAM

- * How many decision-makers will be involved in the project?
- * Will the project have multiple points of contact or a single project manager at your firm?
- * Who is the point of contact for questions surrounding the project brief?

AGENCY REQUIREMENTS

- * What are you looking for in a web agency?
- * What skills and expertise do they need to demonstrate?
- * What aspects of the proposal are most important to you?

BONUS CONTENT

The following is a fictional brief based on a non-profit organisation. All names, email addresses and organisational references are fictional.

<p>01 Introduction</p>	<p>Pikago is currently accepting proposals to redesign and redevelop its website on www.pika.go</p> <p>The project will cover concept, design, development and hosting, as well as post-launch maintenance and support.</p>	<p>05 Target Audience and Goals</p>	<p>Persona 1: The Retro Gamer</p> <p>Name – Craig Stock Age – 35 Occupation – Software Engineer</p> <p>Background – Alex grew up playing classic games on consoles like the NES and Sega Genesis. With a stable career in software engineering, Alex now has the disposable income to indulge in a passion for retro gaming. Alex loves the nostalgia and simplicity of vintage games and often searches for rare finds to add to a growing collection.</p> <p>Goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To connect with other retro gaming enthusiasts - To discover and purchase rare vintage games - To participate in online discussions and events related to classic games <p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finding reliable sources for authentic vintage games - Connecting with a community that shares a deep appreciation for retro gaming - Balancing a busy professional life with leisure activities <p>Persona 2: The Aspiring Streamer</p> <p>Name – Zach Benson Age – 24 Occupation – Part-time barista, aspiring full-time streamer</p> <p>Background – Jamie is a passionate gamer who dreams of turning a hobby into a full-time career. Currently working part-time, Jamie spends evenings and weekends streaming games, building a following on platforms like Twitch and YouTube. Jamie is always on the lookout for engaging content to entertain viewers and grow an audience.</p> <p>Goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To build a successful streaming career - To find unique and interesting games to stream - To network with other streamers and gamers for collaboration opportunities <p>**Challenges:**</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Standing out in a crowded streaming market - Managing time between part-time work and streaming - Creating a consistent and engaging content schedule <p>Person 3: The Community Builder</p> <p>Name – Sarah Martinez Age – 29 Occupation – Community Manager</p> <p>Background – Sarah works as a community manager for a tech company but is also deeply involved in the gaming world. Sarah loves bringing people together and has experience in organizing both online and offline events. Sarah is keen on creating a welcoming environment where gamers can connect, share experiences, and support one another.</p> <p>Goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To create a positive and inclusive online gaming community - To organize events that bring gamers together - To support charitable causes through gaming-related initiatives
<p>02 Bid Timelines</p>	<p>Bids should be submitted to Jennifer Reed via email jennifer@pikago.com by March 25th 2024. We will choose a supplier within two weeks of receiving bids. All other candidates will be notified by April 30th 2021.</p> <p>Agency appointed: 5th May 2024 Desired project kick-off: 10th June 2024 Target launch date: 1st August 2025</p> <p>Please address any questions to Jennifer Reed. In her absence, please contact Tom Stanford (tom@pikago.com, 0800 123 456 7).</p>		
<p>03 About the Organisation</p>	<p>Pikago, established in 2020, specialises in selling vintage games while fostering a vibrant online community for gamers to connect and share their passion.</p> <p>Our mission goes beyond just business; we are dedicated to making a positive impact through our charity work. We regularly host events and initiatives to support various charitable causes, combining our love for gaming with a commitment to giving back.</p> <p>We want to create a space to relive classic gaming experiences, connect with fellow enthusiasts, and contribute to meaningful charitable efforts</p>		
<p>04 Current Website Issues</p>	<p>Our current website was developed 2 years ago and is slow, dated and hard to navigate. It is also difficult and time-consuming to maintain. We would like to revamp the site to better reflect our mission and messaging, as well as make better use of our project photography and multimedia.</p>		

06 Website Activities and Objectives

We would like users to engage in the following activities on our website.

General users:

Donate online
Subscribe to our newsletter
Register for an event
Share content with other users
Purchase our merchandise
Follow us on social media channels like Twitter and Facebook

Prospective recruits:

Apply for a job vacancy
Register for an event
Follow us on social media channels like Twitter and Facebook

Press:

Subscribe to our newsletter
Download our press kit
Follow us on social media channels like Twitter and Facebook

The above ties in with our major website objectives:

Boost awareness of Pikago
Advertise the uniqueness of our programme
Raise funding through donations and merchandise sales
Serve as a hub for connecting people
Become an online destination for resources on gaming
Create and inspire community discussion around gaming

07 Website Scope

The website will contain the following navigation structure. Alternative suggestions on page structure are encouraged:

About

- Our story
- Core values
- Our team (10 profiles)
- Our products
- Event Signup
- Press kit

Get involved

- Donate
- Online shop (40 products for launch)
- Volunteer
- Designers
- Partnerships
- Event signup

Resources

Knowledge centre with downloadable resources, videos, guides, walkthroughs

What's new

- News articles
- Events calendar

Careers

- Overview
- Our vacancies

Contact us

- Where to find us
- Contact form

<p>08 Website Features</p>	<p>The website should contain the following custom features. Additional feature suggestions are welcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online donation form with ability to pay via EFT, PayPal or credit card. We would like users to choose between recurring and once-off donations (please see www.plantwithpurpose.org/donate as a reference). • Online shop selling our branded merchandise (this should accept payment via EFT, PayPal or credit card); we currently have 40 products in our shop ranging from branded t-shirts to bags • Resource centre with robust search and filter functionality; resources may be in HTML, PDF, video or podcast format • News platform with search, filter, and Newsletter subscription • Events calendar with online events booking form (no online payment) • Interactive image galleries with dynamic captions • Vacancy platform with online job application form • Contact form, routing enquiries to specific mailboxes at the organisation based on the subject matter selected 	<p>11 Measure of Success</p>	<p>We have not yet defined metrics for success and wish to do so in collaboration with our vendor.</p>
<p>09 Competitor Websites</p>	<p>Competitor website worth referencing are</p> <p>OnlineGaming – online-gaming.co.uk We like the design of the site, the high quality photography and interactive village feature.</p> <p>Dice&Roll – diceandroll.com We like the projects landing page and visual approach to storytelling on the site.</p>	<p>12 Legal and Technical Requirements</p>	<p>We are looking for an affordable and reliable hosting solution that can handle up to 30 GB monthly traffic and up to 10,000 monthly visitors. Due to the global nature of our audience, the site should meet ADA Requirements and as well as Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1, as set out by the W3C.</p>
<p>10 Project Responsibilities</p>	<p>Pikago has an existing logo and well established colour palette. We have many high quality photographs from past projects and events we have hosted. We also have a few regular fonts that we tend to use but are open to new typography suggestions. Post-launch, our marketing team will be responsible for the creation and population of new content on the site, but we wish to review options for website maintenance and support.</p>	<p>13 Agency Requirements</p>	<p>Proposals that meet the mandatory requirements will be evaluated with the following criteria in mind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience creating sites with similar level of functionality (such as knowledge center, events calendar and online donations platform) • Aesthetic capabilities of vendor based on quality of portfolio and project references provided • Expertise in communicating appropriate technical and creative solutions • Proven track record with successful project delivery

Want to work Together?

Together agency are a Nottingham based multi-discipline agency that specialises in a large range of digital services, find out more on our website or get in touch!

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