

It's Never Just A Website

Brought to you by a savvy design studio,
lunch time, and the letter "A."





ABOUT ME

Owner: Points North Design Studio

Organizer: Baltimore Women in Tech

Manager: B'More Creatives

Creator: Have A Nice Day Project

Likes: Travel, hiking, really good tacos

Friends: Snoopy (see photo)

Working on: Travel Memoir





I just want to
design websites,
eat tacos and sleep.



It's just a website. How much does that cost?

[example of typical nervous breakdown]

Oh man, what does that mean? Have they had a website before? How am I supposed to quote something like this?

Do they even know what Wordpress is? What about responsive design? Are they selling anything? What is their website supposed to do? Do they have a budget range? Will they be able to afford me? Where are my tacos?



THINK ABOUT IT

It's never just a website, so...

How do we speak the same language as our clients so we can learn to ask smart questions, make them a partner in their own success, and avoid the “deer in headlights” look?



#TRUESTORY No.1

Every client has a story

Make sure you are asking the right questions



Questions you're already asking

- What is your business/organization?
- Do you have any competitors?
- How are you different from your competitors?
- What brands and websites do you already like and why?
- What do you want your website to accomplish?
- Who are your clients/customers/target audience?



Why are you passionate about your business?

Learn how they got started and what this company/organization means to them.



What feelings/emotions do you want your website to portray?

You can use this to help direct how you design
(colors, imagery, placement of buttons, etc)



What are your long term goals?

Find out where they are going, and use that information
to create a website that gets them there.



Why does your work matter?

Understanding the goals and visions behind a business or organization can be helpful when designing.



#TRUESTORY No.2

People DO NOT Read

I have read the terms and conditions.
LIES!!!



Set up a Meeting

- Requesting a “quick estimate” doesn’t work without knowing the details about the project.
- A phone call now can save time later.
- If they are not ready for a meeting to talk about their project, they are not ready for a website.
- Sometimes a one-sheet estimate can save the trouble of doing a full proposal prematurely.



Be prepared to answer these:

- How do you manage a project like mine?
- What's the completion time for my project?
- What do you need from me to get started?
- What happens after my website is done?
- Do you have any client references or examples?
- If they don't ask these questions, bring up a couple of them anyway to show you're thinking ahead.



When writing your proposals

- Are there creative ways to call out specific information that is really important? (project timeline, communication expectations, payment terms)
- How can you make sure important details are understood?

IMPORTANT

DELIVERABLES

Company Website

(public facing product marketing website - responsive framework)



#TRUESTORY No.3

Website design and development is not magic.

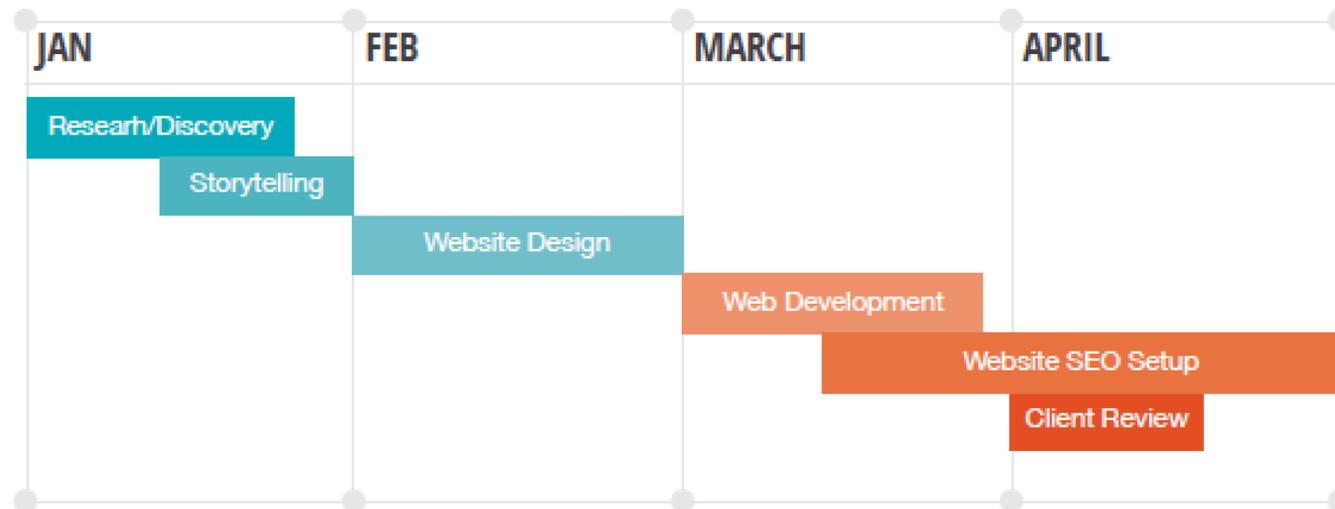


ABRA CADABRA!



Showing Work Flow

YOUR ESTIMATED PROJECT TIMELINE



- Since no one is reading, how else can you show the way projects usually flow with you?



Managing Communication

- What systems do you use to help manage your project?



Basecamp



slack

Wrike



FRESHBOOKS
cloud accounting

HARVEST



Ask About Important Assets

- Do you have logo files?
- Are there any colors or fonts you should be aware of?
- Is there a (gasp!) brand style guide?
- Do you have professional photography (hey, you should define this, as smartphone photos usually don't cut it)



What is the client responsible for?

- Their website is not all on you.
- Timely feedback and responses (set your expectations/terms)
- Primary contact person for the project
- Timely payments



#TRUESTORY No.4

The client is not always right.

You are the expert. Your knowledge and professional experience are included in your costs.



Save Your Life/Sanity:

- **We/I can do whatever you want!**

You can't. And if you say yes to everything, you'll get to a point where the website no longer resembles the scope and cannot achieve the original goals.

- **Sure, it's out of scope but we'll just do it.**

This is a sure way to burn through your budget and it devalues the time it takes to do what you do. Don't be afraid to reference the original scope and quote for a new feature. Don't be afraid to question the reason for adding a new feature.



#TRUESTORY No.5

You are so worth the money.

You are worth your price. Be confident about that.



Save Your Life/Sanity:

- Have the money conversation FIRST.
- Consider doing a breakdown so clients understand what's involved. Don't be afraid to explain the costs.
- Discuss items like training, warranty and ongoing maintenance up front so clients know what to expect going forward.
- Keep clients informed about their project.
- Follow up and thank you after project is done.



#TRUESTORY No.6

A website is not a product. It is a solution.

Turn pain points into opportunities.
Listen and respond.



[PAIN POINT]

I didn't have a good experience with my last design studio/web developer.

- Talk about that and find out what went wrong.
- Offer solutions to make this project run smoothly
 - Better communication
 - Work more to understand client's needs/business
 - Timely responses from you



[PAIN POINT]

I feel like I paid a lot for my last website, and it never brought me new business.

- Walk through their current website with them.
- Be clear about project goals and what looks like success.
- Make user experience suggestions that can be incorporated into the new website.
- Websites are living/breathing things.



[PAIN POINT]

My last web designer/developer disappeared.

- Hmm, did you scare them away? Just kidding...
- Find out the situation and what happened.
- What are your communication practices?
- Manage expectations.



In Conclusion

A client will get out of a website exactly what they put in.
This is and has always been a two way street.

You are not a “yes-man.” You’re here to listen to their story,
hear their problems, hear what success means to them,
and provide the solution.



<http://tinyurl.com/NeverWebsite2017>

Use this link to get:

- Presentation Slides
- RFP Checklist with definitions
- Infographic: Tips for Results Driven Websites
- Brand/Website Questionnaire

Monthly newsletter - <http://eepurl.com/c7Cv4D>

You can follow me too, just not in a creepy kind of way.

