

How to select a web designer

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What's their marketing perspective?

Dogs are good marketers: they make you seem like you're the center of their universe. Marketing is like that: it's not about you, but what you do for your customers to make their lives better, easier, and making them look good. Read the design firm's website: if it's all about them, and not what they do for you, they're not marketing-focused. People will judge your website [in the first few seconds](#).

Is their design style, your style?

Are they using a template that makes your site look like so many others, or are they developing a custom design that shows your organization is unique? If the designer's site looks like it's based on a template, with bad stock images, that's what you'll be getting for your site.

Can they write the content?

The words on your website have the power to make your website a success. Content needs some planning because good content will work to convert visitors into clients and [on-page optimization helps with SEO](#).

Are they keeping up on Google's algorithms?

Google's algorithms change often, so if a design firm can't share what Google's algorithms are currently, that should be a concern. Google also ranks your site based on your visitor's perception of the value your website. [See Google's algorithm updates here](#).

Are they researching Google's Keyword Tool?

[Do they research what phrases people Google to find your products & services](#) and know **how** to use them in your website? Using the wrong keyword phrases is like doing **no** SEO. [See how Google uses your Page Titles & Meta Descriptions in the first 40 seconds of this video](#).

As with all things in life (from haircuts to websites), you get what you pay for.

Inexpensive websites usually mean the designers are cutting corners along the way. If your website is the your business' main marketing tool, make sure it's working as hard for you as it should. It's a good idea to make sure your web designer's experience building websites, closely matches the experience you have in your industry. [Cheap usually doesn't mean good](#).



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Can they customize online web-building templates?

If you want them to use an on-line web-building tool like [SquareSpace](#), can they inject custom code into the DNA of the template's code? If not, you're stuck with [the limitations of those online templates](#), with no option to truly customize them.



Do they provide other services to help you reach customers?

In marketing, as with kinetic energy, one thing affects another, so your website is the first step of creating a presence among your audience. In addition to building a website and offering SEO, can they help create your [e-newsletters](#) and [social media](#). Because if your prospects' first experience with your e-newsletter or social media isn't really good, no one will want to see your second e-newsletter or social media posts.



Do they do Google 'Speed Boost testing'?

[Because load time is a ranking signal for Google](#). Ask a web design firm if they run Google's Speed Boost test on your website to assure it gets passing grades in both mobile, and desktop, formats. If not, it affects the [amount you pay for Google AdWords](#) as well as your users' experience.



Do they know more about SEO than just the tip of the iceberg?

Ask what they do for your website when it comes to SEO. Some might just talk about Page Titles, but if they don't give you a list of at least 10 things they do, you should be concerned about their working SEO knowledge. [Read about the SEO we do on custom website here](#). Online web-building templates have too many structural limitations for us to do all these things.



What happens after launch?

Ask what they do after launch. How long after the launch do they fix things for free? Ask how often, and how much, they charge for security updates and maintenance. Ask if they walk you through how to use your new website's CMS (Content Management System).