

How to **SAVE** Thousands  
of **DOLLARS**  
When You Build  
(or update)  
Your Website

While Getting The Exact Design You Want!

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## How to Save Thousands of Dollars When You Build (or update) Your Website While Getting The Exact Design You Want!

There's no getting around it, building a website can cost a small fortune.

You've had a look at the cloud based [website builder platforms](#) and sensibly concluded that you're going to need something that's all yours.

The big corporations can afford to throw the task at an internal team or an expensive digital agency. These agencies know exactly what's required and will charge premium rates to take responsibility for every single element.

But you're not Walmart and your budget is a little more ... shall we say ... modest.

Getting exactly what you need when building a website is a potential minefield.





You know that there's a lot of technical expertise involved and you're going to need people who know what they're doing.



It's just that experts usually have a high price tag.



You want to get the best deal.



Of course, there's a lot of non-technical stuff too.

If you can do a bit of the legwork yourself and work with the team you'll be surprised at how much you can save.

You'll get exactly what you need into the bargain.

**A Simple Website Brief Will Get You  
Where You Need To Be**

When pricing an estimate, digital agencies like to have certainty. They know that you'll remember the first figure they give you, so they'll build in a big contingency for uncertainty.



They know that if you're just asking them to quote for a website, you're going to want lots of redos. They'll build in extra time for communication and wasted design work.

The answer is to reassure them that you know exactly what you want and are prepared to give them everything they need in a timely and efficient manner. Web development is still a competitive market and you'd be surprised how **the estimate will reduce with an increase in certainty.**

Your website brief will show them you mean business and they can look forward to a supportive working relationship.








For most digital agencies that's money in the bank!

## Start With What You Know




Your first section is easy. It's all about you and your business. Outline your philosophy, your mission statement, and details about your enterprise. A complete list of contact and location information for both public display and private communication with the developers is a good start.



Then let's dig a little deeper:

-  How did you get started?
-  Who are the people that work with you?
-  Have you got an impressive list of clients who sing your praises in testimonials?
-  What's your unique selling proposition?
-  How do people buy your products - do you want them to buy online?
-  Where do you see your business in three years?
-  Who are your competitors - what do you think of their sites?

Take a look at who you want your site to appeal to:

-  Who are your ideal customers and how do you want to speak to them?
-  What information do they need to make buying decisions?
-  What sort of content would appeal to them?



This isn't necessarily going to be content that goes on the website, but it gives them plenty of scope for asking all the right questions and suggesting some innovative approaches if they know the full story.

## How Important is a Completely Unique Design to You?

This is something that has a big influence on cost. Design work is expensive and often very subjective. A good designer with UX (user experience) skills has the ability to create a unique website but it will cost a lot more than a developer who is just putting together plugins on a standard or premium theme template.

If you go for a Wordpress theme you can see what you're getting ahead of time. Even a standard theme can be customised with your own corporate color scheme, fonts, logos and images.

It's remarkable how much this injection of certainty will reduce the price.

If you really need a unique online shopping experience and have a very large inventory then a custom site may be unavoidable.

**The point is to know ahead of time what your options are.**





## Web Designer Vs Web Developer - What's The Difference?

Most digital agencies are a bit of both. Indeed, most designers will do a bit of development and developers can usually manage a decent stab at design too. The difference becomes important when you need specific functions built into a website that require some custom programming.

If you want a custom theme developed then a web designer will do all the design work and use a developer to make things work right.

WordPress provides thousands of functional plugins that can do practically anything you want. However, if you use too many or poorly designed plugins, they will ***slow down your site and affect your ranking on Google***. Worse, if the plugin is not being properly maintained it can ***create security risks***. A professional web developer will choose the right combination of plugins and create custom ones to cover those unique situations like linking to a particular online database via an API(application programming interface).

Designers are like Architects and largely work on the esthetics and visual communication. They decide where to put the buttons and know what colors and fonts will make your customers buy.



WEBSITE

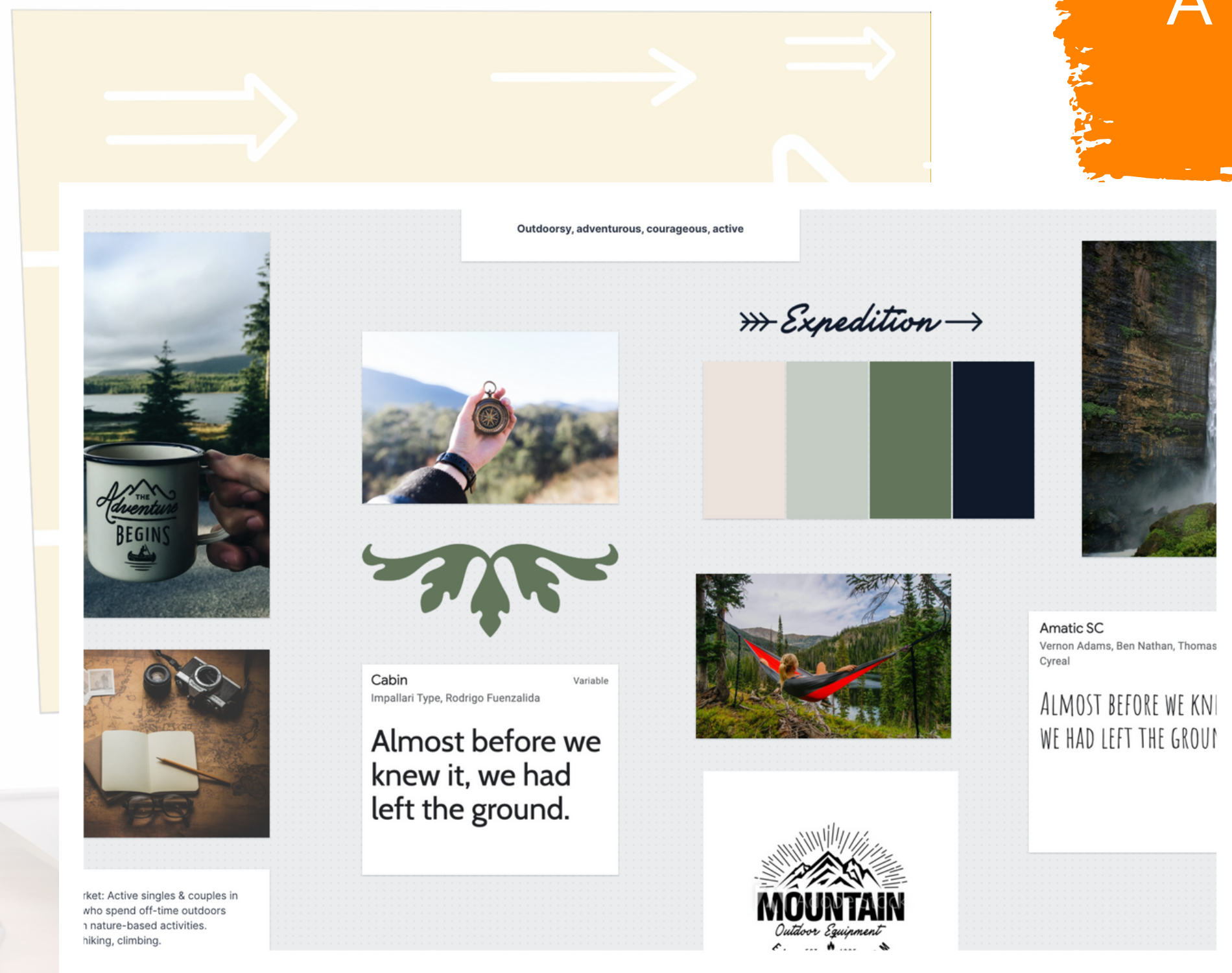


Developers are the construction experts. They take the design and make it work. They wire everything up so that the designer's vision works properly.

When quoting for a website, a digital agency needs to know how much of each skill they will have to use.

## A Web Designer Will Welcome a Starting Point

Designers tend to start with a mood board. This helps to get the creative juices flowing. If you already have a logo, corporate color scheme and preferred font for your documents and display ads then share these with the designer. If you have images of premises, staff, public events etc. this will help to inspire some creative design elements.





Examples of some other websites you like can also start a conversation about layout, color schemes and graphics.

What style or impression do you want to get across to your audience? Is it sporty, technical, professional, lifestyle, or fun?

Let your designer know ahead of time.

## Developers Like To Know What Functionality Needs To Be Included

If you're planning an e-commerce site this is essential. You'll want customers to register for accounts and fill their shopping carts online so you'll need a developer to get involved.

Many businesses that specify an e-commerce site overlook all the additional integrations which when built in at the outset will cost a lot less than if you try to shoehorn them in later once "the paint is dry"!

If you're selling your products online then remember all the stock control functions that can really make your life easier. Checking inventory availability and current details takes time, the less you have to do yourself the better.



Social media integrations allow you to automatically create posts with exactly the right image formats and captions.

Will you want a blog section? Do you want this linked to your email list, newsletter etc.? Which provider are you using? Do you want readers to be able to comment, search the archives and see related content?

You need to be sure that you have access to all of the marketing data connected to your site so you can monitor performance. Make sure the developer hooks up to your own Google Analytics, advertising accounts and social media metrics. You can give them developer access but **they must not use their own accounts**.

If you want a stock price, latest offers ticker, or just the current weather forecast then give the developer the heads up.



How Are You Expecting The Content  
To Be Created?

All websites need good content.





If you want your site to rank well on search engines you'll need some compelling, relevant copy. Google is particularly hot on this. Visitors to your site may just be coming to read your excellently researched articles but some will stay to browse your shop as well.

There are a lot of options here. If you're writing everything yourself then make sure the tendering agency understands this. Reassure them that the cornerstone copy will be available before the site goes live. Full pages of ["Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet"](#) are not a good look at launch time.

Many site owners like to do the blog articles themselves but will take advantage of skilled copywriters for the sales pages, landing pages and content funnels.

Everyone loves images.

Carefully chosen images make even a standard Wordpress theme pop. Are you happy to use free and public domain images from sites like Unsplash.com or would you like to pay a bit extra for Shutterstock's offerings? If you're really going to push the boat out then a photographer will be delighted to service your requirements.







Got a lot of products to list? Who will enter this information? You can save a lot of money by doing this yourself but you may take the view that your time is better spent on building your business.

A digital agency needs to know where you stand on all of this before they give you a price.





**You'll find that it's a lot cheaper to get premium images, professional copywriting and product data entry included in the design fees than to add them as variations later.**



## Who Will Host Your Site?

Many digital agencies offer hosting for a monthly fee, some may insist on it. There's no doubt that a good hosting service can make a big difference to the performance and security of your site. It's worth checking that the hosting provision being included in any quotation is up to the task of keeping your site up and running 24/7.

You need to consider the following:

-  Is a security certificate included? Having https:// in your URL is compulsory these days. For informational and blog sites you can get away with a LetsEncrypt free certificate but if you're taking personal information you will need a proper paid-for certificate and these can be a significant annual expense.
-  Does your hosting arrangement include hacking and malware protection?
-  Are backups regularly taken and how will you access them and restore your site in the event of a major problem?
-  What's the guaranteed service level agreement? This is not just availability. You need to check that if things really take off you're covered for high numbers of visitors and data transfer volume (bandwidth).



WEBSITE



You need to know who speaks to customer support in the event of issues.

**Be sure that any hosting arrangements are established in advance of signing the contract.**

## Communication Is Key

Creating a website is a team effort.

Everyone needs to know their responsibilities and what the timescales are. **Be clear and concise with your instructions.** If they have queries then these need to be turned around quickly.

If you lead the way it will encourage the agency to behave in a similar fashion. Most good digital agencies have a project manager and it's important that you know how to work with them.

If you're doing some of the work yourself **it's essential that this content is provided reliably on time.** You may need to check the contract for penalty clauses in the event of delays. Ensure that you are covered.





A great start is to present all of the above information in an easy to access folder with subfolders for each section and descriptive file names. **Make it easy for them to navigate your requirements** and they will return the favor.

## Show Your Prospective Designer/Developer That You Know What You're Doing

All of this reassures a tendering digital agency that you understand what is needed and you'll be easy to work with.

This is your opportunity to make clear exactly what you expect from them. It's worth spending some time working out how important this new site is to your business.

Presenting answers to the questions above puts you in the driving seat. You may want to include some KPIs (key performance indicators) which fit with your SMART business goals. If they're responsible for content then you should be sure it performs as intended.





Whether it's increased sales, newsletter signups or search engine ranking, make sure they know what you are expecting.

**A competent digital agency will be delighted to give you exactly what you want at a very competitive price. More importantly, it will be a price that could save you thousands of dollars in out-of-scope costs and extra hourly billing.**





## About CyberCletch LLC

**CyberCletch** is a boutique web design and digital marketing agency that works closely with your business and delivers real results. We are your one-stop shop for all things digital marketing. For over two decades, we've helped small to medium-sized businesses develop long-term online growth strategies and transform their digital presence.

CyberCletch offers a wide range of services—a complete solution for your website and digital marketing woes.

Watch your email because we will be sending you accompanying freebie to help you plan your next awesome website!



*Delve*



*Discovery*



*Web Design*



*SEO*



*Branding*



*Content Creation*



*Vision Board*




*Social Media*





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A lighthouse with a white body and a dark top, situated on a rocky island. The lighthouse is surrounded by large, dark rocks. The sky is a soft, hazy purple and blue.

**Pat Williams** founded CyberCletch in 2002, bringing computer, technical, organizational, and managerial skills from her formal education and professional experience.

After studying and training in Behavioral Science Technology, she adapted this data-focused approach into the field of digital marketing, helping businesses get from where they are to where they want to be.