Website Project Questions

answers prepared by ALX Creative Marketing Agency
October 25 2013

Background

- **How long have you been in business?**

  ALX Creative Marketing Agency has been open since 2010. The experience of the principal art director exceeds 30 years of professional work as an artist and graphic designer for a variety of different advertisers and printers before finally going into business for himself. The full-time staff of ALX include designers and developers that hold degrees in fine art, graphic design, and computer programming.

- **How many websites have you done? What about complex ones?**

  ALX has completed over 100 websites, in which we were responsible for every phase of the process; from the interface design, to the structure, to the development, testing and launch. ALX has completed many projects that could be considered more complex than just pure informational websites, including e-commerce and MLS real estate sites requiring the use of advanced database interaction and high expectations for user experience. We approach each new project with new requirements to face, and they all provide unique challenges.

- **Please provide references and examples.**

  We would be happy to point you to examples in the portfolio section of our website. Please visit http://alxvcs.com/portfolio/websites/.

Process

- **Can you detail your process and how long you estimate for each phase?**

  We approach each case with the needs of the customer first. We have the staff and resources to provide rush jobs, if an urgent deadline is looming. We provide hosting, design, development, testing, and launch phases.

  In our package, the design phase includes 1 revision based on customer feedback, and is estimated at 1 week. Further revisions will affect the project timeline. We are confident in our design work, and our customers generally only require 1 or no rounds of design changes.

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The time of the development and testing phases vary, depending on the urgency of our customer's launch deadline. We have the ability to deliver this phase faster than the 2-3 weeks we generally provide as a time estimate.

- **How will you learn the detailed feature requirements and expected user experience?**

We would be happy to sit down in a meeting to discuss features, requirements, and expectations for this website, and give you an idea of how we will be able to integrate these unique components into your company web presence. With our experience to back us up, we are confident that we will be able to tell you which features we can provide, and which may be unrealistic, and offer solutions or alternatives.

- **How will you take us through the design and navigation choice process?**

You will receive 1 initial design mockup, and 1 round of design revisions before the development phase begins. Your navigation architecture will be agreed upon before the design phase begins, in a face to face meeting where we will discuss your needs and expectations, and offer an initial sketch of what we think the information architecture should look like.

- **Will you set up a test site for us to view during development?**

ALX does not provide a testing site for client viewing during the development phase. We find this impedes our development workflow, when we have to field comments and questions from clients on half-finished work. We offer our clients expertise and professionalism, and work better knowing that our clients trust us to deliver the work we know we are capable of.

Once the design phase is approved, we take care of all the development and testing for the client. The client does not need to be involved in the development phase at all, and need not worry that the website will be fully functional and stable by the time it is delivered for the preview.

Note that we do not launch websites before the client has had a change to access it and test it for themselves. We just do not offer that privilege until all our development and internal tests are complete, and we are confident that our final product will meet expectations.

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- **What is the schedule for us providing content? (some exists on current site which can be easily migrated, other parts need redo)**

  In order to begin the design phase, we will need to agree upon your page count and navigation structure. The body copy of the pages can be provided on your schedule, since we can develop the website without it, using filler content instead. This way, your participation will affect the proposed project timeline. If you are delayed in completing the content, we will continue to develop your website, so you need not feel rushed.

Design/Content

- **What are the alternatives available for an interactive slide show on the home page?**

  We are glad to discuss your vision for your homepage in a face-to-face meeting. Most of our clients like having a homepage slideshow, and we have many options available with different image, text, and transition animations.

- **What e-commerce package will you use that will integrate with Authorize.net or is it custom?**

  All of our e-commerce websites are fully integrated with Authorize.net, which is the largest and most trusted online payment processing service available. We can develop a website to be compatible with any payment processor that you like, and Authorize.net is an excellent choice. Paypal is another common option.

- **How do you see the CMS functioning to allow us to showcase the latest news, hot features, company announcements, etc.?**

  For these and any other features that you will need, we will gladly develop easy integration within the CMS that will enable your access to these parts of your website. We will provide CMS training and teach you how to edit these rotating components of your website.

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- **How will the CMS be used to add to blog, update program schedules, add and delete events, etc?**

  See the answer above. All the access that you need to your content will be provided in the CMS. We can make every piece of content readily accessible and simple to change, with brief CMS training.

- **Have you factored in need for a Contact Us form, Newsletter sign-up, an FAQ section?**

  These are common requests that we deliver with all our websites.

- **Will you integrate our social media links?**

  See previous answer. We are happy to do this.

Website Development & Deployment

- **What information do you need from us to port content?**

  We will detail the information that we need from you in a face-to-face meeting, once we clarify all of your specific requirements. Generally, we ask for a navigation structure (which we can help you with), any media you will be using (this includes images and pdfs), and a text document with your body copy (which we can also copy from a live site, if it exists without requiring editing).

- **What information do you need from us to make the website live? What will be the go-live process?**

  After we develop and test the website, we will offer you a preview for you and the team to test. Once everyone is happy with the result, we will launch your website to the public by allowing public access to the content. Before launch, the content will be blocked to the public, and will only display a "coming soon/under construction" splash page.

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Platform

- **What CMS will you use and why?**

  We prefer to use Wordpress as our CMS. We find our clients love the user interface of the Wordpress administration end, and we have years of experience developing websites in Wordpress during which we thoroughly learned its 'ins and outs'.

  Some clients have specific needs in regards to which CMS they would like to use, and we can accommodate these needs as well.

- **Will the website adapt to mobile devices and platforms? Will the website display properly on all standard browsers?**

  As a part of our website package, a basic mobile platform conversion template is provided. If the client wants complete mobile integration with all the features that we have developed for their website, there may be a fee for further mobile development, and the project timeline may be affected.

- **What analytics tracking will be used?**

  Most of our clients prefer Google Analytics.

- **What SEO will you do? What tools will be used?**

  We are glad to discuss your specific SEO needs and expectations in a face-to-face meeting, where we can offer you some suggestions for higher visibility.

Training & Support

- **How much training is included in your quote?**

  We provide an hour's worth of CMS training with our quote, during which we will show you all the special features of your website and how to use them.

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- **How much support is included in your quote? How do you handle ongoing support and maintenance (if needed for more complex items)? What is a typical response time on maintenance issues?**

  After the completion of the project timeline, further support and maintenance are charged at a fee of $105/hr. We respond to maintenance requests in 24 hours, but depending on the complexity of the issue, may need more time to complete the request.

Pricing Structure

- **What is the payment schedule?**

  Should you decide to contract ALX to work with you on your website project, we will be happy to discuss a fair payment plan in a face-to-face meeting.