

## How to Purchase Web Design Services

### Are you about to launch a business web site or select a company to remodel your existing site?

If so, then careful consideration should be given to the following company backgrounds when researching the proper firm to develop your project.

1. Graphic design background
2. Computer programming background
3. Marketing communications background

If you select a company that has a primarily graphics background, you will indeed have stunning images and fascinating animation on your web pages. Your concern should be that graphics do not sell without a cohesive message. For example, in the motion picture medium, highly advertised visual-only movies many times prove to be box office duds because they lack a story. If a Web developer relies on the philosophy that tantalizing graphics will bring people to your web site, you may be very disappointed. Studies have shown that a strong message and current, relevant information is what brings people back to a site. This is much more than just graphics. In addition, excessive graphics require considerable time to download, possibly sending people on to another site and away from yours.

If you choose a company with computer programming background only, you will get some fascinating power in your pages. You may have the latest in on-line data gathering and information requests (e.g. cookies, forms, etc.), but again you risk the potential for a weak message. Also, you simply may not speak the language of and find it difficult to receive what you desire in your web site. Some of these technology-rich sites have the infamous reverse type backgrounds (white text over black), clever, but just as in print, not the best message delivery because it's difficult to read.

The solution... choose a company with a marketing communications background. This choice offers the highest level of message cohesiveness. This firm will choose graphics and programming that will add to your site's message rather than detract or clutter. Product marketing experience teaches to view literature or a web site as a total picture, a complete message. It teaches to view the product and company as a unit, just as a CEO views it.

By selecting WebExpress, you will be selecting a company with a perspective at the CEO level. This is indeed an ideal selection for a web site developer, a firm with the total picture of your business offering. Update this web site regularly with information that customers and prospects require and they will come back - just as you desire.

### Additional considerations when researching a web design firm.

Don't hesitate to ask questions, particularly about technical issues. A professional design studio should be willing and able to walk you through the entire development process, without sounding as if you're insulting their intelligence.

#### Questions to ask:

1. Does the design firm understand your organization's business objectives and goals regarding a Web presence?
2. Do they perform the actual Web design and development in house?
3. Do they perform related services in house, such as graphic and multimedia design, application programming, script development, database development and marketing, or do they contract this out?
4. Are they willing to give you a firm estimate or proposal with a timeline for project completion before proceeding with the design process?
5. Are there any hidden costs in the design and setup of your site, such as additional site storage fees on the server, listing your site with the major search engines, sending out press releases to key media, additional fees for exceeding bandwidth capacity.

6. Can they demonstrate results for their marketing efforts?
7. Are they knowledgeable about Search Engine Optimization (SEO), the constant change in search engine indexing, and do they use an automatic or manual submission service?
8. How often can you update your site and what is the cost of making additional changes?
9. Does the firm offer client self-editing or content management capabilities for your site?
10. If there are technical questions, is there someone at the design firm who can promptly answer them to your satisfaction?
11. Does the firm design sites from scratch, or do all their sites have the same look and feel (be sure to visit their design portfolio to get an idea of their creativity and client base)?
12. What do they charge for digitizing photos and artwork? Are these costs included in the site estimate?
13. Can they handle the registration of your domain name, such as [www.your-company-name.com](http://www.your-company-name.com)
14. Can you use your own ISP to host your site? Is the design firm willing to work with other providers to host your site on their server?
15. What other types of communication or marketing projects besides Web sites do they work on regularly?
16. Are they willing to integrate your web site into your other marketing/communication materials? (Multimedia CD's, print collateral etc.)
17. Can they explain the limitations of the current technologies, such as load time and the challenges involved with imbedding sound and video into your site?
18. Can they offer you marketing and public relations counseling and support?
19. Do they understand your business and/or industry?
20. Will you own the content of your website?

Answering these questions should assist you in selecting a web design company that meets your own unique needs.

It is very important to locate a company that can work with your own staff to develop a compelling, interesting and affordable web site; one that will promote repeat visits and meet your organization's sales and marketing goals and objectives.

Request your complimentary, no-obligation project cost analysis online or phone the studio at 303-295-1402 to speak with a knowledgeable design consultant.

**WebExpress, Inc.**

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