

Why should I prepare a Request for Proposal (RFP)?

A lot of minute things go into a web development project which you might not have even estimated. Find out the reasons why an RFP is important in the development of your project.

- When you draw out an RFP, you will have your planning done right.
- It will help you put across your thoughts and requirements in terms of detailing.
- With an RFP, you will have a written documentation of what you really expect from a project.
- It gives you and your project consultant a clear picture of the scope of the project. This will ensure that nothing goes unforeseen.
- With its detailed description of the project, it will be easier for your project consultant to tell you their estimated cost.
- An RFP will act as the basis of reference throughout the stages of project execution.

How can a Request for Proposal help Cross Creative serve you better?

With most clients we interact with it is a pretty difficult job from our side to understand fully what exactly you have in mind at the beginning stages of your web project. Eventually, we do get there through a series of conversations and good listening. By providing us a clear idea of what you expect out of your project, a well-thought out and written RFP will help us in giving you the most appropriate proposal and associated costs to complete your project.

When you are not in a position to give us a definite requirement, we will have to spend hours analyzing and determining your project. An RFP will help us give you a comprehensive quote along with the estimated time of completion of the project. Also it avoids the risk of over-estimation or under-estimation of the project from our side.

I know the importance of an RFP, please help me create one ...

The basic purpose of an RFP is to get a quotation which will be most suitable for your business requirements. But do not limit the scope of your RFP to this. Go one step further to see it as a core and critical document which will define the course of your project.

With this in mind detail your requirements and your expectations. The following pages are intended to help you detail your requirements and your expectations, to give you a BIG PICTURE look at your approaching web project.

What structure and core features do you want included on your website?

- Do you need to create a new website? Or redesign an existing website?
- What's the nature of your business?
- What are your goals and objectives for the site?
- What do you want the site to do for your organization?
- What would you like visitors to get out of your site?
- Who is your target audience?
- Who is your competition? What is your competition currently doing better or worse than your company? Creating a SWOT chart may help in this process.

A **SWOT Analysis**, is a strategic planning tool used to evaluate the **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities, and **T**hreats involved in a project or in a business venture. It involves specifying the objective of the business venture or project and identifying the internal and external factors that are favorable and unfavorable to achieving that objective.

SWOT ANALYSIS



- Will you be making sales on the site?
- How many products will you be selling?
- Will you be accepting credit cards?
- Do you want a shopping cart? Order form? Or e-mail to process orders?
- Have you already bought ecommerce software or will you need the system built from scratch?
- Do you want to accept donations?
- Do you currently have a merchant account? Payment gateway?
- About how many pages and sections will your site have?
- How many images/graphics are you planning to use on your site?



Preparing A Request For Proposal

- Do you have the images you'd like to use already in digital format? Or do they need to be scanned? Do you need the graphics/photos to be developed?
- What (if any) special features do you want to integrate onto your site?
 - Forms
 - Rotating ads or banners
 - Flash
 - Photo galleries
 - Calendar
 - Audio and Video Streaming
 - Live Streaming
 - BLOG
 - Event Registration
 - FAQs
 - News
 - Site registration
 - Site search engine
 - Quiz, Surveys, Polls, voting
 - Music/Sound effects
 - Message/Discussion board or sometime called Forums
 - Chat room
 - Animation, movies
- Will you need email accounts? If yes, how many email accounts will you need?
- Do you have a server to host your site?
- Do you need a server to host your site?
- Do you have someone in your organization who will be responsible to maintain your website?
- Do you want Cross Creative to be responsible for ongoing maintenance of your website once your website is launched?
- Do you want to capture leads?
- Do you want to create and send email marketing newsletters?
- Do you want to perform search engine optimization on your website so that search engines will be able to easily find your website? Ideally this will be integrated into the process from the beginning as it will save you time and money down the road.



Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing (SMM) is still in its infancy, but the art is quickly becoming a science, however, small business can no longer ignore the impact of social media. When integrated properly, SMM offers a multitude of benefits, including brand-building and reputation management. Social networks are ideal for personal brand-building and proactive online reputation management (ORM). Similarly, content syndication sites (i.e. Flickr, YouTube, iTunes, etc.) offer opportunities to distribute existing media assets (photos, videos, audio and more) to a much larger audience. Last but not least, blogging and micro-blogging (i.e. Twitter & Plurk) offer an opportunity for competent writers and technologists to spread the company's messaging and engage in direct conversations.

Do you plan to integrate social media marketing tools into your online marketing strategy? If yes, which tools are you interested in integrating or learning more about?

- Twitter
- Flickr
- You Tube
- Vimeo
- iTunes
- Blog
- Delicious
- ShareIt
- Facebook
- Skype
- Wordpress
- TweetBeep
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Cross Creative is happy to consult with you on the above social media tools to discern which tools will be best for your business.



What do you want your website to look like?

Now that you have determined what the structure and core features are of your website, you can move ahead with what you want the site to look like. Below are critical questions that need to be answered before development can move ahead:

- Do you have any URL's of websites that you really like?
- Do you have any URL's of websites that you really dislike?
- Do you have any particular colors in mind for your site?
- Do you have any particular colors that you DO NOT want for your site?
- Do you have a logo? If so, do you have it available in digital format, or is it currently available for print only?
- Do you need or want a logo?
- Do you want a custom designed website?
- Do you want to work from a professionally designed template?
- Do you prefer:
 - Horizontal Navigation
 - Vertical Navigation
 - Dynamic Menu System; a.k.a "Drop Down Menus"
 - Textual Menu System
- The final questions that need to be answered pertain to budget and timelines.
 - What is your budget for your site? ... in other words, how much money have you allotted to spend on this project
 - When did you want to launch your site?
 - Are there any other upcoming plans for your site?
 - Who will be the point person(s) that will regularly interact with Cross Creative?

Armed with the answers to these questions, you can write your RFP and submit it to Cross Creative for our review.



Proposals should/may contain the following sections:

- Summary containing a brief description of your project development approach and costs
- Corporate information including financial details
- Qualifications including previous clients with contact information and relevant URLs
- A description of your development process
- Asset and draft delivery methods
- Project stages
- Milestones
- Quality control
- Testing
- The proposed team and their qualifications
- Proposed schedule
- Costs and payment details along with a realistic budget ... in other words how much money have you allotted to spend on this project
- Terms and conditions

Can I make any additions to the project at a later stage?

An RFP comes in at the very early stages of project engagement. As it is not the actual contract agreement, changes can surely be made. All change of scope requests are subjected to additional costs beyond the original agreement.

Getting Started!

The next step is to get in touch with us with a detailed requirement for your project.

If you still feel that you will not be in a position to develop an RFP, please contact us. With our experience in developing web projects, we will be in a position to assist you in developing an RFP covering all the aspects of developing your project.

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