

The logo for bwh Web Designs features a purple butterfly icon on the left, followed by the text "bwh" in a green, cursive font, and "Web Designs" in a green, sans-serif font.

The Web Site Development Process

As you start looking at getting a web site, you'll want to talk with several web designers before choosing one. And that's fine with us, we want you to be happy with your choice. During development you'll be working closely with your web designer. It's important that you have a good working relationship.

I. Gather Information & Files

It's a good idea to start thinking early about what you want on your web site:

- ❖ What is the purpose of your site?
- ❖ Who is your target audience?
- ❖ Do you have a domain name registered? If not, do you have an idea what you want it to be? Have you researched it for availability? A good source for checking availability is Domain Tools (<http://www.domaintools.com/>).
- ❖ What colors, logos & images do you want on your site?
- ❖ What links might you want to other sites?
- ❖ How big do you want your site to be?
- ❖ How do you want your visitors to contact you?
- ❖ Do you want e-commerce on your site?

Here's some lists to get you thinking, broken down by category. These lists may trigger other ideas as well.

Web Site Development

- ❖ Text for all pages - especially the home page. Having trouble with your text? Let us know, we can locate a copywriter to help you write text. While we're talking about your home page, here are 3 things it should have:
 - ❖ A **Strong** Marketing Headline
 - ❖ Text that focuses on your products and services
 - ❖ A clear Call To Action - What do you want your visitors to do?
- ❖ Links - Are there sites with information that would benefit your visitors?
- ❖ Do you attend shows as a vendor? If so, you'll want to list those on your web site.
- ❖ Images - Do you already have quality, professional images that you want included? Perhaps a photo of your storefront?

Design

It's a good idea to have all these items gathered together. They will help you and your web developer design your web site.

- ❖ Business Card
- ❖ Logo
- ❖ Printed materials - brochures, pamphlets, etc.
- ❖ Pictures of your shop or shows. Any pictures you might want on your web site.
- ❖ Design ideas and thoughts
- ❖ Examples of web sites that you've seen and liked. Be sure to note what it is you like about them.
- ❖ Examples of web sites that you've seen and **not** liked. Be sure to note what it is you **don't** like about them.
- ❖ Ideas on colors you like for your site. These may well be included in your logo and business cards.
- ❖ Links to you top competitors' web sites

E-Commerce

- ❖ Do you have lists of your products, description, etc? If not, you may want to start working on them.
- ❖ Do you have a stock number or item number for each product? You'll need this to identify your products.
- ❖ Do you have someone who can take photographs of your products?
- ❖ If you'll be doing your own photographs: Do you have the proper camera equipment and lighting? Do you have software for working with your images?
- ❖ Do you, or someone who works for you, have the time needed to input your inventory?

II. Initial Consultation

We'll be asking a lot of questions here. The idea is to get an understanding of you and your business. This will help us down the road as we are creating your web site. So, it will be helpful if you can bring as much of the information you've gathered as you can. And remember, your estimate will be based on your budget and your web site needs. It's important that you have as much of that ready at the beginning. This will prevent scope changes and schedule delays.

During the initial consult, we want to determine your web site needs and your ideas of how your site will look and flow.

We'll also want to know about your long term plans. Do you have someone who can maintain the HTML/CSS portion of your site? Or will you be wanting a maintenance agreement?

Following the initial consultation, ***bwh Web Designs*** will put together a proposal for your web site. How long will that take? It depends on the site. But, you'll know when you should see it before the end of the initial consultation.

III. Quote

You'll receive the quote and a contract. Read it all carefully to ensure you understand it and that everything is as you expect it. The amount on your quote will be the total amount you pay (plus the governor's portion - taxes) - unless you make changes during the development process. All costs should be spelled out in this quote.

IV. Decision

Your quote will be valid for a specified time period. Once you've decided to go forward, you'll need to sign the contract and return it with the required deposit amount.

V. Schedule

We can't schedule your web site until we have all the required information. This should be spelled out in your proposal. Once we have your deposit, signed contract and files and other information, we will schedule your project. And we'll be able to let you know when your site will be completed.

VI. Build

We'll set up a private area for you to review the development as it progresses. **bwh Web Designs** will be doing most of the work, but we'll need you to review and make decisions along the way. Your prompt attention here will help keep your project on schedule.

Once your site is completed, you'll have the final approval. At that point, the final payment will be due. Upon receipt of the final payment, we will upload the web site to its server.

VII. Going Live

At last, the big day is here. But wait, don't stop now! A web site will need your care and attention for its entire life. It's like having a pet, and if you don't feed it, it just might die.

One thing to consider is promotion. Now that you have a web address, put it on everything: Business cards, letterheads, advertising, everywhere you have your logo. And consider others: bumper stickers and promotional items. You should also be constantly on the lookout for sites that might link to your site.

You may want to consider a special promotion to announce your web site. You could use your mailing list - either electronic or physical to let your customers know about your web site.

Remember, your web site is submitted to the Search Engines, but it's up to you to make sure it has a good ranking. And your primary tools for that are links and fresh content. Content, after all, is king.

Once your site goes live, it's a good idea for you to become familiar with your web site. You know, kick the tires, take it for a test drive. Seriously, you should try everything out yourself. Register as a customer, reset your password, sign up for your mailing list, even make a purchase. That way, when someone contacts you with a question, you'll be familiar with your web site and be able to answer their questions. You'll also be confident that the system works and be able to help them resolve their issues.

bwh Web Designs will always be available to answer our client's questions. And you'll get plenty of support for the first sixty days after your web site goes live.

After the first sixty days, you may find you need additional support. For example, you may need us to research customer issues or purchases. This type of support generally falls under a support contract. If you're familiar with your site, you'll be able to resolve many of these issues yourself.

Ready to get started? Contact **bwh Web Designs** today!

bwh Web Designs

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