



CREATING A WEBSITE - HOW IT HAPPENS

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ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

You could be reading this document because you are considering Info Rhino to create a website for you or your business. Building a website is an iterative process, which requires close collaboration between the supplier and the client.

This document explains some factors to consider when commissioning a website. Always do your own research.

Some items are linked to Info Rhino and how we build our websites, but most of this document can be used to gain a deeper understanding to create your website.

WHAT WE THINK A WEBSITE IS FOR

PRESENCE

We see the main reason to have a website is to provide a way for people to find out more about you and what you provide. It could be a few pages describing what you do, or a complete platform where millions of people interact through the services you deliver.

A website does not need to be found through searches and could be simply an address on a business card or an advertisement. A website is your chance to tell your story to complete strangers and let them decide whether they are interested in your products and services.

At Info Rhino – we no longer see a website as being just a website. There are business cards, social media accounts, shared services, directory listings, media content, and advertising all contributing towards your business’ presence.

BIRDSEYE VIEW OF GAINING AN ONLINE PRESENCE

NO WEBSITE IS PERFECT – IT WON’T APPEAL TO EVERYBODY

We continuously seek feedback on our efforts and accept that our websites will not appeal to everybody. Even Facebook with 2.2 billion monthly users has 5.3 billion people who won’t and can’t use it.

Here are some examples of our approach on websites versus others;

Our approach to building websites	Alternative approaches to building websites
Few menus, shallow depth.	Lots of menus, confusion. This is known as “Mystery Meat”.
Few or no animated effects.	Significant animated effects which distracts the user.
Fairly consistent templates, possibly not the most eye-catching.	Flashy websites, with lots of variety and colours which whilst initially attractive, become confusing.
Quite a lot of text and information when required.	No information, and more focus on pictures and icons to tell the story.
Use of consistent themes such as font-awesome to give a nice feel.	No consistent themes and per page views.





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Avoidance of panelled colouring to break the page up.

Panelled colouring and significant images.
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We do work with designers, so if you have a specific idea in mind, let us know.

ALWAYS SEEK FEEDBACK ON YOUR WEBSITE FROM USERS

When obtaining feedback, it is vital to recognise, every user has their own specific requirements;

- Users can have visual impairments and find it hard to access your website.
- You may be targeting a certain age group.
- Many users may like a lot of content, alternatively, many users are not prepared to read significant content.
- Be very wary of asking friends and family about your website – many won't have a real interest or skill to critically assess your website.
- Some websites will never work on mobile phones.
- Websites which has lots of visual effects may appeal in the short term and detract in the long term.
- Sometimes, it is better to just create the website you want it to be.
- Website page usage stats and analytics can give clues on which pages works well.

HOW LONG DOES A BASIC WEBSITE TAKE TO DEVELOP?

Creating a website is an iterative process. It will never be right first time, because it is an ongoing review process in terms of what does and does not work.

This means, companies offering to charge lower prices per page, or a set fee initially may suddenly become more expensive once you go past a certain point.

A four to five-page website, with email contact, contact page, hosting set up, form and some social media integration will take 4-6 days of our time and approximately 2 weeks for the site to be online.

During this time, there will be some alterations and rethinking. Once this two-week period has passed, for the next month, you will be thinking about new content, new ideas and we think another month of elapsed time will occur before you are comfortable with your standard site.

WHAT IS THE BARE MINIMUM TIME TO PUT A WEBSITE ONLINE?

We think we could put a website online with domains by around 2-3 days.

I WANT TO MANAGE MY OWN CONTENT

We do use a content management system approach for our websites. This makes editing content easier, although is often not the best approach for keeping the website stable and optimised for search engines.

We recommend thinking about using blogs and social media to add extra content. Widgets can be embedded into the site to keep content new.

WHAT ROLES BUILDS A WEBSITE?





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Building a website can be undertaken by an individual, a non-professional, or a specialised team.

STANDARD ROLES FOR DEVELOPING WEBSITES

WEBSITE DESIGNER

A website designer focuses more upon the aesthetics of a website. This is a specialised skill. Many packages can make websites look good without the need for specialised design of a website. Info Rhino uses Twitter Bootstrap to cut down on the time “designing elements”.

DATABASE DEVELOPER

Many websites use databases to store information. Databases require specialist skills to manage, store and access information.

SERVER-SIDE DEVELOPER – API

Websites are run from computers (web servers) on the internet. The code that runs on this is known as server-side code. Often, this code is used to manage security access and to allow data to get processed by the server and sent to the web browser.

CLIENT-SIDE DEVELOPER

The information from the web server to the web browser. This is mainly text known as markup, but also code which can make the web page more interactive. Client-side development is much to do with making the web page look attractive and interactive for users.

HOW DOES INFO RHINO STRUCTURE THEIR ROLES TO BUILD WEBSITES

All development of the website is achieved by one role. Most expertise is focused on server side and application development, because we use formalised approaches to design.

This can mean there may be a need for us to outsource more advanced design elements. We do partner with designers and logo creators when a client requires a more precise design.

WAYS TO BUILD AND HOST A WEBSITE

Info Rhino are a specialist data and application development company. We develop websites which can become scalable website platforms or can be simple websites. There is a never-ending source of options to build a website.

The biggest myth is, a website is cheap to do. A website takes a lot of a client’s time and a supplier’s time. Suppliers get to deliver websites quicker by automating a lot of the manual steps involved.

A website is a huge undertaking for companies wanting to increase their online standing.

***Please note – we are not discrediting or affiliating with any other kinds of business in this document. We are simply providing examples.**



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MECHANISMS OF CREATING AND HOSTING A WEBSITE

WHAT YOU SEE IS WHAT YOU GET WEBSITES (WYSIWYG)

Two well-known providers of this is WordPress and wix. We understand, they are very easy to set up and add content to. For a simple web presence, they are good. The challenge with these kinds of websites is they can require additional expertise to customise. They may not be ideal for larger website platforms – if you have specific data or commercial requirements for example.

We find these approaches good for simple set up, but struggle to understand how they can deliver more functional solutions.

HOSTING

The provider of the WYSIWYG platform provides hosting. This can make it easier to get a website online quickly.

DEVELOPING A WEBSITE BY YOURSELF

Simple websites can be designed by non-professionals. It is possible to find applications to help design the pages and style of the website.

The big disadvantage is the number of tasks required to make a website complete, non-professionals won't understand this. Website development companies taking over a basic website will often, simply start again porting content to your site.

HOSTING

There may still be free hosting opportunities, but normally you would host your website through an online web hosting provider.

HOSTING CONTENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA ONLY

Some businesses may prefer to not have a website at all. Many companies may have a combination of LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter to put enough information online for their customers to find.

ENGAGING A PROFESSIONAL WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT SOLUTIONS PROVIDER

This is often, the optimal method to get a complete solution for you. By engaging a professional company, they will have access to better skills and technologies. These providers can provide a more complete solution for you. Because they have experience of creating websites, they may be able to create something small, delivering more functionality in phases.

These companies should be better placed to provide expertise across all facets of websites and online presence for companies.

COMPANY IN YOUR OWN JURISDICTION





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Info Rhino are a website development company based within the UK. It means we are familiar with the UK and European ways of working. To try and create websites for Russia, South America or India would not be sensible. If a Russian company wanted a UK website, then this becomes a different matter.

ENGAGING A WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT COMPANY OUTSIDE YOUR OWN JURISDICTION

Many companies outsource work overseas because it seems cheaper. On the occasions we have tried to outsource overseas, we have found it expensive and ineffective. We will now, only outsource highly specific technical pieces of work overseas.

CONTENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM – ADAPTING AND EXTENDING

Info Rhino specialises in .Net and .Net Core. You may want to use a CMS solution which Info Rhino takes from a provider and adapts on your behalf.

We would be happy to do this, and it is a good approach to consider.

There are many php/Joomla style websites too.

CREATING YOUR WEBSITE

WHAT DOES A TYPICAL WEBSITE CONTAIN?

PAGE STRUCTURE

A typical website will have the following pages;

- Home
- About
- Services / Products
- Contact

TYPICAL WEBSITE CONTENT

Content will include;

- Page metadata. Information about your page to help it get found by social media and search engines.
- Content – text, paragraphs, icons, titles, headings.
- Pictures and galleries of pictures.
- Documents – these could be terms of reference, guides, brochures, terms and conditions.
- A navigational structure – often these are menus.
- Plugins from other providers – the Twitter icon or Facebook like are perfect examples of a plugin. More advanced examples include payment icons such as PayPal or shopping carts.
- Secure areas – many websites want their clients to be able to log in and have a personalised experience.
- Technical content – code.





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- Custom files and configuration to help manage the website and let the website get found.

HOW DO I CREATE MY CONTENT?

HOW DO I START TO THINK ABOUT WHAT MY WEBSITE SHOULD CONTAIN?

It is vital, you focus on telling the right story about your business. Some websites are very light on content, with coloured page sections, and large icons. Here are some ideas on getting ideas for content.

- Find a list of websites you like.
- Find websites you don't like.
- Decide whether you want lots of information, or are more interested in visuals?
- Consider getting a logo designed.
- Research competitor websites. Identify whether these competitors make it to the top of the search results.
- Type in keywords you think your customers would and see what comes up on search results.
- Go to free photo stock websites. This lets you find professional photos which can be great for filler content.

WHAT ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA?

CHOOSING YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE

Most companies are either B2B, B2C or both.

Medium	Main user group
Twitter	Professional and Social
Facebook	Social
LinkedIn	Professional
Pinterest	Mainly female
YouTube	Mainly male
Snapchat	Mainly younger audiences

You should do more research and decide which mediums you wish to use to connect with your audience.

USING SOCIAL MEDIA

Advantages

- You can interact with your customers.
- Get found by a wider audience.
- Increase reputation.
- Publish media and literature outside your website.
- Find out about your customers. If a customer connects with you, it will be possible to understand their interests better.
- Publish from social media to your website automatically.





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Disadvantages

- It is a constant process to keep information fresh.
- The platforms can change significantly, meaning extra maintenance.
- Not all customers will use social media.

TRUTH BASED SOCIAL MEDIA

One way to keep customers aware of what is happening to your company is to post automated publications to your social media. We can do this for you.

WEBSITE CONTENT

We feel the best way to create content is to create a folder of documents per web page or a OneNote Notebook with your pages and content. You can write content in OneNote, add notes, put down ideas.

MARKDOWN CONTENT

One excellent way to create and see content is to combine writing your content into word or OneNote as described, and then pasting it into a markdown editor. We at Info Rhino, have embedded our own Markdown display page.

Markdown allows you to copy and paste content from your word/OneNote editor into a markdown and save markdown files. We use the excellent - <https://stackedit.io/>

If you are feeling more adventurous, simply create your pages in Markdown.

PHOTOS/IMAGES

- We recommend saving photos in their original size to a folder.
- Try to ensure photos are similar sizes.
- Screens can be as large as 1900 pixels, sometimes 4000 pixels, but we typically work with pictures 1000 or less.
- Always provide us the largest images possible.
- Sometimes, we will resize photos to be the same size for a layout. This may squash expand the view slightly.
- A nice effect can be to take a photograph, and with an editor such as paint.net (or paid photoshop) combine a background colour filter.

LEGAL CONTENT AND PLUGINS (UK)

This is not legal advice, or exhaustive. We are highlighting areas websites may need to consider;

- Terms and Conditions.
- Company details such as company name and number.
- Cookie Policy.
- GDPR and Data Protection.





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- Consumer Rights Act (If selling goods and services).
- Professional Indemnity.
- Email policy and spam.
- Regulation and conditions of Professional Association – for example, if you are a lawyer or accountancy firm, you may be bound by your regulations.
- Extra consideration when providing goods and services to children.
- Copyright and Trademark considerations.

You may need to consider how you interact with search engines and social media, with regards to their terms and conditions.

LOGOS AND BRANDING

We recommend, the colouring and logo design are figured out at the beginning. Using a professional logo designer, will give you the flexibility to change the colours. They should provide raw files in formats such as SVG, to permit you to change the colour in a photo/design software tool.

WEBSITE DOMAINS, EMAIL DOMAINS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

BUYING WEBSITE DOMAINS

One of the most complicated things to get right, is to name a company and secure all domains at the same time. You may want to have a .com, .co.uk, .london to keep your brand alive.

Website domains can be expensive, they may already be owned, and the limited company you created may not have a suitable website name.

SOCIAL MEDIA DOMAINS AND WEBSITE DOMAINS

Some companies cannot create a suitably named social media account for their company. Don't harm your brand by having inconsistency between your online presence.

EMAILS

- Most mail hosting providers impose limits on the numbers of emails that can be sent and received.
- With our current hosting provider, we can give you administrative access to your mail accounts.
- You may need to back up your emails.

CORPORATE EMAIL

Corporate email refers to the ability for individuals within their organisation to send and receive email.

If you are a large company, you will already have a mail server already. If you are a small or new company, you will want to have an email linked to your domain. A key challenge is – these types of mail servers are not as resilient as managed services.





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We recommend starting small and then scaling up, remember these won't be as scalable as managed services.

AVOID MAILBOXES FILLING UP

- You should have a dedicated outlook mailbox per account, to manage the emails. We use Outlook.
- We ensure we remove files from the server after 14 days, but this is your choice.
- Backups should be undertaken.
- There are limits to the size of online mailboxes. Rather than us explain this, please refer to the terms and conditions of whichever web hosting provider you/we use.
-

INTEGRATED EMAIL TO THE WEBSITE

We have components which sends email to users and customers. If you use corporate email or our services, we will need to connect to these. This may require extra steps to configure.

AVOIDING JUNK EMAIL

All email boxes get spam. Our hosting provider works with "SpamExperts". Many hosting providers can help with this. It is best to remove junk mail at source.

MOBILE EMAIL

Small businesses should consider adding email accounts to their mobile devices. We can advise on this.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM YOUR WEBSITE

LOOK AND FEEL

STYLE FRAMEWORKS

We use Twitter Bootstrap. This is a web design framework for styling and theming websites. The key feature of Bootstrap is it is responsive. Responsive layouts size to different devices.

DESIGNING CUSTOM STYLE LAYOUTS

Some web designers write their own style definitions from scratch, known as css. If you have a specific designer you want to create your css, we can work with them. Whilst we can do CSS from scratch our time is best spent elsewhere.

OTHER FRAMEWORKS

If you have a need to work with a different style layout framework, please let us know.

SPECIAL ANIMATED EFFECTS





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One of the biggest things to avoid is animated effects. Certain designers, from certain areas put animations all over their website. We avoid them almost completely, perhaps for validating data.

We recommend avoiding web designers who spend lots of time on this.

THINK ABOUT THE DEVICES AND BROWSERS YOUR WEBSITE WILL TARGET

NO WEBSITE WORKS EVERYWHERE, FOR EVERYBODY

All websites use HTML, a markup language. HTML is a structure of text, which a web browser reads and interprets. Once interpreted, the browser decides how it wants to display that page. There are rules and compliance, but with the thousands of versions of browsers – guaranteeing your website will look good on every device won't happen. A website can, if you have little style.

- Some users will turn off functionality within their browsers.
- Another key consideration, some websites are designed for mobile and look poor on a desktop and vice versa.
- We can detect browsers to provide a warning about displays if requested.

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMISATION – GETTING FOUND ONLINE

CONSIDERATIONS FOR SEO AND GETTING FOUND

This document does not attempt to begin to explain the many challenges to getting found online. Neither does our websites promise to put our websites above your competitors.

We believe, the perfect website, with the perfect content created for the exact people searching for your services at the right time, can beat all other websites;

- For a while.
- If competitors are paying for higher search rankings, you won't succeed.
- Never - many industries cannot rank higher than the products they are selling.

Here are a few SEO considerations;

- A website with a secure certificate, https may be ranked higher than non https.
- Websites should be structured in a way that their content matches the page's headings.
- Pages should have correct content meta data to assist getting found.
- Websites should have specific files for site maps and website crawlers to find them.
- Many of the tricks which worked to help websites get found no longer works. Be careful of suppliers offering to magically make your website number one.
- Don't discredit real experts on SEO.
- Consider using social media plugins and integration to aid your online presence.

INFO RHINO'S STANCE ON SEO





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We try to ensure our web pages has many of the facets for being optimised for search engines. One of the key challenges any website owner will find, is the search engine provider will suddenly change their algorithm and your website no longer meets their requirements.

SEO requires fresh thinking. Companies may be offering to put you at the top of a Google search, and yet this is not possible most times.

SUPPORT AND MAINTAINING THE WEBSITE

DO I GET TO OWN THE SOURCE CODE?

The only artefacts, you own are the original open source database with your website content within it, and open source copies of code artefacts such as Twitter Bootstrap, Knockout.

SUPPOSING I WANT A THIRD PARTY TO DO EXTRA DEVELOPMENT ON THE WEBSITE?

This is possible. We may ask them to build on a copy of Piranha CMS, and we port their code over, or we could share parts of our code base under agreement.

WHO OWNS THE CONTENT?

You own your content?

WHO OWNS THE WEBSITE DOMAINS?

It may be, that we buy the domains for you. These domains can be transferred to your ownership. Alternatively – you buy your domains and simply point the naming servers to ours. We prefer the latter, but it is your choice.

WHAT IS YOUR RECOMMENDED APPROACH TO SUPPORTING WEBSITES?

Websites are content held on a computer connected to the internet. Web hosts manage these computers (servers) and try to ensure they are always running. We have SLA agreements with our web hosts. No web host promises 100% uptime.

HIGH TRAFFIC WEBSITES

These websites should have dedicated hosting. All our websites are on shared hosting, meaning we don't have high traffic websites such as e-commerce right now.

- Each client/website will have its own specific way of managing the application.
- High traffic solutions will have Service Level Agreements with the hosting provider and with the web development company.
- You may want to use your own staff to manage the website too.
- Disaster recovery will need more thinking.

LOW TRAFFIC WEBSITES





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Websites receiving less than 2000 unique visits a day, are probably low traffic. If the users are constantly pulling data and interacting with the website – this may become classed as a high traffic website.

Right now, all our websites are low traffic. Here are some recommendations to support your website.

- All website issues would get reported to us.
- We would determine whether the issue was a bug, hosting issue, performance issue, or maintenance issue.
- We would have a target SLA response time to respond.
- We may add monitoring processes to keep an eye on the health of the sites too.

CONCLUSION ON CREATING WEBSITES

Thank you for reading this document. We wanted to give you ideas on the how to think about creating your own website. Your business is unique and is evolving.

