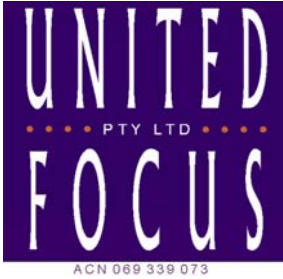


Website business plan outline



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website business plan outline

Purpose of this Document

Whether creating a new website or re-developing an existing one it is important to have addressed the business case underpinning the project. Developing the business case is extremely helpful in ensuring that the website project matches an organisation's mission and objectives and can be managed and resourced according to the organisation's resources. The business planning process is an essential risk management tool and is therefore undertaken prior to commencing a project. The Business Plan provides the basis on which the Brief for a web developer is constructed.

This document provides an outline of a website business plan covering the essential areas that should be addressed when developing a website ...

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How to use this Document

This document is an outline that can be downloaded from www.unitedfocus.com.au

It is intended that organisations work through each section considering the issues and arriving at decisions that are appropriate to their circumstances.

It is envisaged that the average length of a completed website business plan would be somewhere between ten and fifteen pages.

Organisations are encouraged to add additional sections to their Plan and/or alter aspects of this outline as appropriate to their organisation and circumstances.

It is recommended that the key stakeholders in the organisation be involved in the discussions and decision-making process on the key issues as this is likely to add value to the depth and breadth of the website business plan. An inclusive approach also helps to promote a better understanding of the project across the organisation from its inception.

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The Website Business Plan

1 Project Rationale

The following issues and topics are indicative of those that may need to be addressed in this section of the website business plan.

- Statement of the vision and goals of the development or re-development eg to cut costs, save time, increase audience, meet business requirements.
- How the goals meet or satisfy related objectives of your organisation.
- Who are the stakeholders and what are their needs and the degree to which the project meets those needs/demands/expectations – eg the results of market research into what the target audience wants and doesn't want on the new or revised site.

2 Project Description

The following issues and topics are indicative of those that may need to be addressed in this section of the website business plan.

- Description of the type of website being proposed – eg any one or combination of: information dissemination, entertainment, awareness, promotion, access to services and products
- If re-developing an existing site, outline of the extent of the re-development – how much of the old site will remain, how much will be new.
- Who the target audience is (these may or not be stakeholders) ie who you want to reach and what you think (or the result of research) they want to see and do on your site.
- Brief description of the scope and depth of its content.
- Brief description of what users will be able to do on the site eg download documents, order and/or pay for tickets or products, access the members' database and update their details.
- Outline what content and functionality will NOT be included in the site.

3 Project Management

The following issues and topics are indicative of those that may need to be addressed in this section of the website business plan.

- Statement as to who is ultimately responsible for the website, who will manage it and contractors day-to-day and what committee, group or team is overseeing the site and providing support to the day-to-day manager
- Outline of the project management methodology/strategy to be adopted – meetings, communication.
- What are the risks and how do you intend dealing with them eg. intellectual property, cost blow-out, only one person in the organisation knowing how to update the site, a signed agreement with the web developer
- Outline the project schedule – ie indicate chronology and likely milestones eg business plan approved, launch, first review.

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4 Marketing Strategy

The following issues and topics are indicative of those that may need to be addressed in this section of the website business plan.

- How will the site be promoted – eg via search engines, registration with portals
- What features will be included in the website to support its promotion eg email subscriptions, virtual postcards
- How does its look and feel and content complement and add value to the branding of your organisation
- What are the likely costs and required time allocations for implementing and monitoring the promotional strategies.

5 Resourcing

The following issues and topics are indicative of those that may need to be addressed in this section of the website business plan.

People

- The names of the organisation's personnel who will be involved in the development and maintenance and their respective roles – updating, technical, promotion etc.
- The approximate time commitment required of each during the development and in the on-going maintenance of the site.
- Training required – especially for the maintenance of the site.

Equipment

- The hardware and/or software that may be required by Organisation's staff in the development and maintenance of the site – eg a computer and Internet connection for all in the office

Funding

- The estimated amount required to fund the establishment of the site (or re-development) and its on-going maintenance and promotion.
- The source(s) of the funds.

Outsourcing

- What, if any, part of the redevelopment is to be outsourced.
- How the outsourcing is to be conducted eg open tender

6 Benefits of the Site

The following issues and topics are indicative of those that may need to be addressed in this section of the website business plan.

Who Benefits

- Who will benefit from the new or redeveloped site

Revenue Streams

- What if any are the likely revenue streams from the site over the next 2-3 years – eg from bookings, purchases of information,

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- What features will be included in the website to create these revenue streams eg e-commerce, shopping carts

Efficiency Gains

- What if any are the likely areas of efficiency gains resulting from the site and what is the likely extent and nature of those gains – eg 20 hours/pa saved via providing online application forms, reduced number of enquiries
- What features will be included in the website to create these revenue streams eg e-commerce, shopping carts

7 Challenges and Constraints

The following issues and topics are indicative of those that may need to be addressed in this section of the website business plan.

Technical

- Limitations placed on the range and sophistication of the features that can be offered on the site due to the audience's level of computer power, browsers, plug-ins, Internet access speeds
- Resourcing (time and money) required to interface the organisation's back-end databases, accounting systems etc with the website – especially if e-commerce is a feature of the site
- Security of data/information – what degree of security of the website is required

Legal

- Intellectual Property and copyright – does the Organisation own the IP and copyright to the content and concepts to be placed in the site or will it have to acquire or license them?
- Privacy – the privacy laws and regulations the site need to comply with
- Relevant State and Federal laws – relevant Acts with which the site has to comply and the ways in which that may impact on the project

Organisational Changes

- Potential changes in the organisation's role and how these might impact on the project over time

Resources and Timeframes

- Can the content be collated, edited and cleared in time to meet milestones – will some contents be impossible to gather/use
- The complexities and time involved in altering office work-flow and processes to incorporate maintenance of the site
- Special events or outside forces that may challenge the milestones – eg key staff on leave

8 Project Evaluation

The following issues and topics are indicative of those that may need to be addressed in this section of the website business plan.

- The criteria by which to judge the degree of success of the site - these will largely relate to the stated goals – eg 30% cost savings or reduction in staff time allocated to a particular area or task, level of site traffic equivalent to similar sites or the old one.
- Measurement methodology eg who will conduct the evaluation and via what method - collection of statistics, surveys, focus groups.
- Reporting on the evaluation: who, when and format.