

# Unit 34: Website Design Strategy

<b>Unit code:</b>	<b>Y/502/5490</b>
<b>QCF Level 3:</b>	<b>BTEC National</b>
<b>Credit value:</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Guided learning hours:</b>	<b>60</b>

## ● Aim and purpose

Now that almost all organisations have a web presence and the use of online transactions is rapidly growing, people in business need to understand how to contribute effectively to the design and content of websites. This unit aims to equip learners with sufficient understanding of the requirements of a business website to enable them to procure a website or work with technical specialists.

## ● Unit introduction

Initially the unit will provide learners with an understanding of the different purposes of websites and the various models of use. It emphasises the need to base design on the clearly understood needs of the target group of users.

Research has shown that usability is of key importance in retaining users and encouraging repeated visits to a website. The unit therefore explores the different elements of usability in detail. The elements include navigation, language, efficiency, speed, privacy and visual appeal. Learners will also consider the importance of building trust in the minds of users and the methods for doing this. The requirements for accessibility under the Disability Discrimination Act are also considered.

The unit goes on to explore the main issues that have to be considered when developing or updating a website. The unit explores the importance of basing web design on two particular cornerstones: strategic and marketing objectives, and an understanding of the attributes and technical environment of users. The unit considers a range of functions commonly found on websites including the functions required to personalise users' online experiences. Learners are taken through the range of decisions that need to be made relating to software, web hosting, page design, pre-launch evaluation and testing. Finally, planning for a range of important ongoing issues such as maintenance and updates, managing user or customer feedback, promotion of the website, security of ICT systems and planning for business continuity are considered.

## ● Learning outcomes

**On completion of this unit a learner should:**

- 1 Know the purposes of a range of websites
- 2 Understand the main elements in web design for usability and visual appeal
- 3 Be able to plan the development of a website for an organisation.

# Unit content

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## 1 Know the purposes of a range of websites

*Commercial relationships:* business to business (b2b); business to consumer (b2c)

*Purposes of commercial websites:* direct sales models, transactions and delivery via online communication (eg software, music), transactions with separate delivery (eg tesco.com); pre-sales models, brochure ware, email campaigns; post-sales support models, automated customer support services, technical information; sites not directly related to sales transactions, corporate communications, public relations; sites providing information or services and drawing revenue from advertising eg social networking, browsers

*Non-commercial business relationships:* central and local government providing information and services to both businesses and consumers, voluntary sector organisations, campaigning groups

*Purposes of non-commercial websites:* provide information; influence public opinion; collect data; operational eg licence applications; tax return submissions.

*Key marketing concepts:* segmentation of market; identification of target group; design of marketing mix to meet needs of target group; place of website in marketing mix; place of website in promotion mix

*Current and future developments:* eg increased penetration of broadband in homes; increased use of mobile internet connections; telephony developments, scalability in planning a website

## 2 Understand the main elements in web design for usability and visual appeal

*Usability:* importance to success of website; retention of users through to completion; trust in site and customer loyalty; methods of building trust at first visit and subsequent visits; main factors affecting usability (navigation, language, efficiency, accuracy, speed of response, respect for privacy)

*Navigation:* based on consumer needs; ability to complete transaction

*Language:* tone and style suitable for target group; legible text

*Efficiency:* value for consumer; limited number of clicks; valued information or transaction in return for time

*Accuracy:* of all information given and processed

*Speed of response:* importance to consumer; limits for feeling of instantaneous reaction; continuity of flow of thought and for maintaining user attention; reasons for slow reaction times eg server throughput, server connection to the internet, internet bottlenecks, user's connection to the internet, user's browser and computer, web design features that slow down speed of response (eg multi-media effects, complex graphics)

*Respect for privacy:* no irrelevant or intrusive requests for information; privacy statement displayed

*Design of web pages:* user paths through site; ranking of information; amount of information on page; operation of search engines (page titles, tags, legibility, typography, design for usability and visual appeal); conflicts between different aspects of usability, eg personalisation versus speed, visual appeal versus speed, visual appeal versus legibility

*Accessibility:* requirement under the Disability Discrimination Act for 'reasonable adjustments' to be made to provide the disabled with a service that is generally available; requirements; means of checking conformance with accessibility guidelines

*Visual appeal:* use of colours, fonts and graphics; advantages and disadvantages of using multi-media; page transitions; unified style; consistency; use of white space; appeal to target group; consistency with brand image

### **3 Be able to plan the development of a website for an organisation**

*Strategy:* business objectives; marketing objectives; consumer/customer profile and expectations; consumers' technical environment and user experience; analysis of competitor websites

*Functions of site:* required functions eg search facilities, links to further information; registration of users; help facility; transaction arrangements; payment options eg use of credit cards, paypal; background functions eg databases

*Personalisation of web experience:* benefits to users; greater efficiency of user experience; benefits to organisation; tools eg cookies; databases.

*Resources required:* domain name; hosting own website; ISP hosting of website; options for connecting to the internet; software options (use of online 'shop' package or development of own software); use of web authoring tools (advantages and disadvantages); security measures; typical costs of developing small website

*Evaluation:* user acceptance testing; use in a range of technical environments eg browsers, different levels of connectivity; accessibility testing

*Launch of website considerations:* maintenance and updates; customer feedback; promotion of website; security of ICT systems; business continuity plans; typical costs of ongoing maintenance of a small website

## Assessment and grading criteria

In order to pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria for a pass grade describe the level of achievement required to pass this unit.

Assessment and grading criteria		
To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to:	To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to:
<b>P1</b> describe how three contrasting organisations use their websites for business purposes [IE]	<b>M1</b> analyse how a selected website has been designed to meet the requirements of its target audience	<b>D1</b> evaluate the extent to which the design of a selected website helps the originating organisation to meet its objectives [IE]
<b>P2</b> explain the usability features of the websites of three contrasting organisations		
<b>P3</b> describe how the websites of three organisations have been designed to appeal visually to their users.		
<b>P4</b> design a website for a specified organisation to meet stated purposes for a defined target group [CT, SM]	<b>M2</b> assess how own website design contributes to fulfilling the organisation's purpose through meeting the requirements of the target audience [RL]	<b>D2</b> make justified recommendations for how a website design and launch plan could be improved. [RL]
<b>P5</b> draw up plans to assess the design of a website aimed at meeting a specified purpose [RL]	<b>M3</b> explain the appropriateness of the plan for the launch of a website for a specified organisation.	
<b>P6</b> draw up a plan for the launch of a website for a specified organisation. [RL]		

**PLTS:** This summary references where applicable, in the square brackets, the elements of the personal, learning and thinking skills which are embedded in the assessment of this unit. By achieving the criteria, learners will have demonstrated effective application of the referenced elements of the skills.

Key	IE – independent enquirers	RL – reflective learners	SM – self-managers
	CT – creative thinkers	TW – team workers	EP – effective participators

# Essential guidance for tutors

## Delivery

Learning outcome 1 draws on the learning from *Unit 3: Introduction to Marketing* and links the key marketing concepts to current developments in communications technology. Learners should have exposure to a range of websites, both commercial and not for profit and examine how different organisations are using the web in different ways. Visits to particularly innovative organisations, or to exhibitions featuring new developments could bring this part of the unit to life.

Learning outcome 2 focuses on the design of websites to meet the needs of users. The concept of 'usability, and all its various elements should be explored in detail using examples of both good and bad practice. It would be interesting for learners to consider website design from the viewpoints of different types of users, including those with particular access requirements. Learners could investigate how a range of people from different backgrounds and ages respond to different websites perhaps through links with their own communities or through inviting visitors into the session for joint evaluation of websites.

Learning outcome 3 is a practical outcome and learners should design a website for a specific purpose and develop a plan to launch the website. Methodology should mirror that used by professional website developers, where possible. Whilst developing web pages is not specifically required in the grading criteria it would be beneficial for learners to have experience of using web authoring tools such as Dreamweaver, FrontPage or the functions in MS Office, for example converting a Word document into a web document, and to experiment with multi-media tools such as Flash. The realisation of part of their designs will enable them to further refine and evaluate them. Learners should explore the range of evaluation methods, including user acceptance testing and testing use in different technological environments such as older or different operating systems or situations with poorer connectivity.

## Outline learning plan

The outline learning plan has been included in this unit as guidance and can be used in conjunction with the programme of suggested assignments.

The outline learning plan demonstrates one way in planning the delivery and assessment of this unit.

Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment
Introduction to unit and programme of learning.
Small group work – learners examine a range of commercial business to consumer websites and collect information on purpose, objectives of organisation, target group, functionality, and present findings to rest of group. Tutor fills in gaps as required.
Whole group session – tutor helps learners to explore a website for a business to business relationship and leads a discussion on the requirements for b2b websites.
Pair work – learners are tasked with evaluating a selection of websites from the not for profit sector, and reporting back to the group.
Pair work – each pair identifies one predicted future development and explores uses. Learners create display of uses and whole group discuss which one is likely to be most significant.
Pair work – learners use various features from mobile phones suggesting business uses eg conferencing facilities, payment by phone, text message advertising.
Whole group teaching – tutor explains new developments followed by learner research.

## Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment

### Assignment 1a: Website Design – Learners analyse websites of three contrasting organisations.

Individual work – learners work through structured worksheet on navigation issues, and how to arrange web pages for ease of navigation.

Whole group teaching – tutor leads exploration of the language used on various websites and its suitability for the intended audiences.

Pair work – investigation of efficiency and speed of response found in various websites – feedback to rest of group.

Whole group teaching – tutor explains the importance of accuracy and respect for privacy using case studies of imperfect practice.

Individual work – learners each investigate a website assuming a different type of special requirement, leading to a group discussion on accessibility requirements. Tutor explains how wider accessibility can be achieved.

Whole group teaching – tutor sums up design issues and brings in element of visual appeal using selected examples of websites.

Individual work – learners use worksheets to learn the fundamentals of producing a website.

### Assignment 1b: Website Design – Learners analyse the usability and visual appeal of selected websites.

Whole group teaching – tutor explains how websites are developed to support business and marketing objectives.

Pair work – learners analyse the business and marketing strategy and website functions of selected organisations.

Whole group work – tutor explains how individualisation of web experience is achieved.

Whole group session – visiting webmaster who explains how a specific website has been set up and maintained. Tutor explains other methods where applicable.

Pair work – learners undertake user acceptance testing for real launched website or proposed website leading to a group discussion on methodology.

### Assignment 2: My Own Website – Learners design a website and a plan to set up, launch and maintain website.

Supervised assignment time.

Non-supervised study time and completion of assignments.

## Assessment

P1, P2 and P3 are based on an examination of the websites of three contrasting organisations. The organisations can be contrasting in terms of size, sector and purpose of their website and should include organisations from both the profit and not for profit sectors.

To achieve P1 learners should describe how the websites help the organisations to achieve their purposes and apply the marketing principles included in the unit content.

For P2, the learners need to explain how each website has employed 'usability' features as listed in the content.

To achieve P3 the learners should describe what has been done to appeal visually to the targeted audience.

In order for learners to achieve M1 they need to build on P1, P2 and P3 and analyse how one website has been designed to meet the requirements of its target audience.

For D1, this is developed into an evaluation of the contribution made by the website of one organisation to the organisation's objectives. At this level learners should demonstrate higher level skills such as drawing on data from different sources and evaluating its reliability and relevance before coming to well argued conclusions.

For P4, learners are required to design a website for a specific organisation, for a specified purpose and defined target group. The design of the website should span several pages and include structured navigation, coherent style and information and functions suited to the needs of the customer and the organisation. Appropriate methods such as user profiling, site mapping, sketches and drawings should be used to produce a clear model of the intended design.

For P5, learners need to draw up plans for the evaluation of the website design. The plans should include consideration of all the methods listed in the content and selection of the most appropriate combination. If learners have produced their own websites then it would be useful for them to carry out the evaluations but this is not a requirement.

To achieve P6 learners need to produce a plan showing what actions they would take to launch a small website. The items listed under the unit content should be included in the plan. For the ongoing issues the learners' work need only cover key decisions rather than detailed business continuity plans or fully-worked ICT security policies. P5 and P6 are developed into M3.

For M2, learners need to develop a clear picture of the attributes of the target group, such as physical abilities, interests, colour and typography preferences, technical abilities and environment and an understanding of the organisational objectives. Consideration should be given to the availability of data on consumer groupings.

For D2, learners are required to make justified recommendations to improve the plans for the website and the launch plan. Alternatively, learners could evaluate and make recommendations for improvements of each other's designs and launch plans. In this case learners should agree to abide by rules for giving constructive feedback.

### Programme of suggested assignments

The table below shows a programme of suggested assignments that cover the pass, merit and distinction criteria in the grading grid. This is for guidance and it is recommended that centres either write their own assignments or adapt any Edexcel assignments to meet local needs and resources.

Criteria covered	Assignment title	Scenario	Assessment method
P1, P2, P3, M1, D1	Website Design	Learners are working for an organisation that gives awards for best websites in various categories and learners need to undertake research on different contenders for an award.	Each learner investigates a website from each of the following categories: Commercial organisation selling over the web. Government body communicating with public over the web. Pressure group using website to support its purpose. Each learner produces report on an example of each of the above categories.
P4, P5, P6, M2, D2, M3	My Own Website	Learners have been commissioned to produce websites.	Each learner produces a website for an organisation for a specified purpose and targeted to a defined audience, and a plan for the launch and maintenance of the website.

## Links to National Occupational Standards, other BTEC units, other BTEC qualifications and other relevant units and qualifications

This unit forms part of the BTEC Business sector suite. This unit has particular links with the following unit titles in the Business suite:

Level 2	Level 3
Business Online	The Business Environment
	Introduction to Marketing
	Internet Marketing
	The Impact of Communications Technology on Business
	Supply Chain and Stock Management
	Starting a Small Business

This unit can be delivered at the same time as the unit *Internet Marketing* and/or *Starting a Small Business*.

### Essential resources

It is essential that the learners have plenty of access to suitable computers with good web access.

### Employer engagement and vocational contexts

The unit will inevitably include examining a number of websites from the point of view of the owners and developers of the websites. The learning programme would be enriched if learners met with web developers or used real organisations' current requirements for the brief for designing their own website and launch plan.

### Indicative reading for learners

#### Textbooks

Clark D and Buckley P – *The Rough Guide to the Internet* (Rough Guides, 2005) ISBN 1843535505

Levine J, Young M and Baroudi C – *The Internet for Dummies* (Hungry Minds Inc, US, 2005) ISBN 0764589962

MacDonald M – *Creating Websites: The Missing Manual* (O'Reilly, 2005) ISBN 0596008422

The following publications may be useful as tutor resources:

Donoghue K – *Built for Use: Driving Profitability Through the User Experience* (Osborne McGraw-Hill, 2002) ISBN 0071383042

Neilsen J – *Designing Web Usability: The Practice of Simplicity* (New Riders, 2000) ISBN 156205810X

## Websites

<a href="http://www.bbc.co.uk/business">www.bbc.co.uk/business</a>	BBC Business News
<a href="http://www.becta.org.uk">www.becta.org.uk</a>	British Educational Communications and Technology Agency
<a href="http://www.bized.ac.uk">www.bized.ac.uk</a>	Business education website including learning materials and quizzes
<a href="http://www.businesslink.gov.uk">www.businesslink.gov.uk</a>	Business Link – practical advice for business
<a href="http://www.carol.co.uk">www.carol.co.uk</a>	Company annual reports online
<a href="http://www.davechaffey.com/E-business">www.davechaffey.com/E-business</a>	Website of E-Business author Dave Chaffey has useful links to materials such as glossary and statistics
<a href="http://www.w3.org">www.w3.org</a>	The World Wide Web Consortium

## Delivery of personal, learning and thinking skills

The table below identifies the opportunities for personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS) that have been included within the pass assessment criteria of this unit.

Skill	When learners are ...
<b>Independent enquirers</b>	evaluating the extent to which the design of a selected website helps the originating organisation to meet its objectives
<b>Creative thinkers</b>	designing a website for a specified organisation to meet stated purposes for a defined target group
<b>Reflective learners</b>	making justified recommendations for how own website could be improved
<b>Self-managers</b>	designing a website for a specified organisation to meet stated purposes for a defined target group.

Although PLTS are identified within this unit as an inherent part of the assessment criteria, there are further opportunities to develop a range of PLTS through various approaches to teaching and learning.

Skill	When learners are ...
<b>Independent enquirers</b>	exploring issues, events or problems from different perspectives arising from website research
<b>Creative thinkers</b>	trying out alternative methodologies and approaches to work and following the ideas through
<b>Reflective learners</b>	assessing themselves and others in group work discussions on planning to identify opportunities and achievements
<b>Team workers</b>	collaborating with others when working on project based case studies in groups provide constructive support and feedback to others on oral presentations on project plans
<b>Self-managers</b>	organising time and resources, prioritising actions when developing their skills in website design
<b>Effective participators</b>	taking part in group activities, working with others.

## ● Functional Skills – Level 2

Skill	When learners are ...
<b>ICT – Find and select information</b>	
Select and use a variety of sources of information independently for a complex task	evaluating websites
<b>ICT – Develop, present and communicate information</b>	
Bring together information to suit content and purpose	investigating websites and reporting on them
<b>English</b>	
Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts	discussing different websites and their attributes
Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively	reporting the results of their findings.