Website Planning Checklist

What to sort out before you contact a web designer

Business & goals

- [ ] The primary objective of the website is written down in one sentence.
- [ ] I know what visitors should do more of once the site succeeds.
- [ ] I know how success will actually be measured (enquiries, bookings, sales, calls).
- [ ] A single decision-maker is identified for approvals.

Audience & customers

- [ ] Primary and secondary customer groups are documented.
- [ ] The geography the business serves is documented.
- [ ] The questions customers repeatedly ask before buying are written down.
- [ ] The devices and context customers are likely to browse from are considered.

Pages & content

- [ ] A draft sitemap exists based on real customer needs, not a guessed page count.
- [ ] Someone is assigned to write or provide copy for each page.
- [ ] Testimonials, reviews or case studies are collected with permission.
- [ ] FAQs are based on real recurring customer questions.

Features & integrations

- [ ] Required features are separated into Must have, Should have and Later.
- [ ] Booking, payment, CRM or other integrations are listed with the platforms involved.
- [ ] Ecommerce requirements (if any) are documented: catalogue size, shipping, tax, inventory.

Brand & media

- [ ] A usable logo file (vector where possible) is available.
- [ ] Brand colours and typography are documented or exist in a style guide.
- [ ] A photo plan exists: what's original, what's supplied, what's licensed stock.

- [ ] Image licences and usage permissions are confirmed.

SEO foundations

- [ ] Page topics are based on real customer search intent, not keyword stuffing.
- [ ] If this is a redesign, a plan exists to preserve or redirect existing URLs.
- [ ] Search Console access will be under an account the business controls.

Accessibility & privacy

- [ ] Accessibility expectations for the project are discussed with the provider.
- [ ] Forms and tracking that will collect personal information are identified.
- [ ] Consent/notice requirements for those forms are considered.

Technical access

- [ ] Domain registrar access is known and controlled by the business.
- [ ] Current hosting, CMS and email-marketing accounts are identified.
- [ ] Google Business Profile, Analytics and Search Console access is documented.

Budget & timeline

- [ ] A total-cost-of-ownership view exists, not just a project price.
- [ ] A realistic timeline has been discussed based on content readiness.
- [ ] Review and feedback dates are booked in advance rather than left open-ended.

This checklist is educational, not legal advice. See vortio.com/resources/website-toolkit/planning-checklist for the interactive version and vortio.com/resources/website-toolkit/buyer-guide for the full guide.