

‘Be Prepared’ and Beat the Recession with Top Left Design

London design company Top Left Design has launched ‘Be Prepared’, a simple way to cut the cost of producing websites for UK companies by 10 to 20 percent.

Project management accounts for the majority of time and costs in website design. ‘Be Prepared’ rewards clients for being better organised by eliminating time wasted on lengthy project management.

Top Left Design managing director Keren Lerner said, “This new service is straightforward. We consult our clients to learn the purpose, content and look of their website to establish a complete brief. We agree on joint vital milestones and deliverables, such as content to be supplied and decision dates. Time for modifications and final editing is built in and we help clients to improve their presence online by focusing on getting the right messages to their audience, produced in the most efficient, cost effective and up-to-date way.

‘Be Prepared’ guidelines include guidance on search engine optimisation, (SEO) to direct internet searches to the client’s site, as well as domain name (URL) registration. Utilising key words within the copy is an essential ingredient for Google rankings and the guidelines explain the importance of this.

We provide a simple audit on existing websites to let clients know what is required to make their websites up-to-date.

By following the ‘Be Prepared’ guidelines, unnecessary time is eliminated in the process and clients’ websites are up and running so much sooner,

“‘Be Prepared’ enables us to cut dramatically the amount of time we spend chasing content or waiting for decisions and so condenses the production schedule. This also reduces the final website design invoice to our clients”, said Keren Lerner.

“Our strengths are attention to detail, creating bespoke designs to fulfill client’s business objectives, and advice on networking skills to connect clients to other businesses.”

Editor’s note:

Top Left Design is a website, e-newsletter, and design and usability specialist established in January 2002, to service the small and medium enterprise (SME) market). The company was founded by Keren Lerner and has an all female team of designers. Its clients cross all sectors of industry and its mission is to “clean up the internet”.

It is currently developing a special offer called FREE TLD TIME – where clients get one hour of time free for things like updating the copyright date on their website footer, adding a “favicon” or updating the text on their website.

BE PREPARED GUIDELINES

Check your competitors’ websites – It’s always useful to do research on websites - look at a variety of websites, both of your competitors, and other sectors. Make a list of the website addresses of those you like and dislike.

Include keywords in your headings and copy - See what keywords and phrases are used by your competitors in their websites. These are the words that people use on Google and other search engines when searching for an item or service they are interested in. The frequency of these words makes your website rise to the top of search engine results – but it's important to use them logically, and not overdo it. Top Left Design can advise further on this.

Image search Think about what images you would like; look at image library websites such as www.istockphoto.com. Prices can be as little as £5. You will only pay for those you end up using.

Photography, visual imager -If you need pictures of people or venues, arrange for the photographer to take them while the website design is taking place.

Select the words for your menus Most websites have a home and a contact link. What other navigation links would divide up the information you would like to have on your site? You can always use sub menus from main link pages if necessary – and we recommend no more than seven links in any group of main or sub links.

Thought Headlines Think about your current and potential markets – what can you say to persuade customers to buy you. Use the following five simple statements to decide what you want your website to say -

Who we are. What we do. Where we do it. When we do it. Why we do it.

Points to Remember

- **Be different and innovative** – people often are attracted to a book by its cover; apply this philosophy to your website.
- **Keep paragraphs as short as possible** – people don't read very much on websites and prefer to scan the page, so include headlines which make people want to read more.
- **Consider having downloadable PDFs** on your site which can go into more detail about your principal services – these can be printed by your website users.
- We strongly recommended you hire a **website copywriter**, experienced in creating website copy that is concise, meets your objectives, and if necessary, is search engine friendly.
- If your website has a lot of content then consider engaging **an architectural content information manager** – we can recommend one.
- **Under the Companies Act 1985**, you must include the company name, place of registration, registered office and registered number on your website. Also include your trading address, main telephone number and relevant staff names, contact numbers and email addresses.
- **Ask Top Left Design if your content is legally compliant.**
- Consider whether you need a **blog**. **Social media marketing** has changed the landscape of communications collaboration.
- **If you want to sell products online, make sure you talk to an expert to get the best advice on logistics, tax, delivery charges, and currency.**
- Consider working with an **e-pr company** to market your website to select targets online.

For more information and to arrange an interview with Keren Lerner, please contact-Kate Hawthorne Hatricks Public Relations Ltd www.hatricks.co.uk Tel. 0207 351 3352 Mobile 07903 655 331