MUDCRAFTS

Small business website brief and hiring checklist (UK)

What your site needs, the UK basics worth checking, and what to ask a web designer before you hire one.

START WITH YOUR CUSTOMERS' QUESTIONS

- [ ] I have written down the five questions people ask when they ring or message me.
- [ ] Each one is answered on the first screen or one tap away.

THE PAGES MOST SMALL BUSINESSES NEED

- [ ] Home: who we are, what we do, where, and one obvious next step.
- [ ] Services or products, in the words customers use.
- [ ] About: the people behind the business.
- [ ] Contact: phone, email, address, opening hours, a map if people visit, a simple form.
- [ ] Proof: reviews, before-and-afters or work I am proud of, with permission.
- [ ] FAQs: those five questions, answered briefly.

PHONE FIRST: TEST IT ON YOUR OWN PHONE, ON MOBILE DATA

- [ ] I can read the text without pinching and zooming.
- [ ] I can tap the phone number and call.
- [ ] The buttons work with a thumb.
- [ ] The page loads quickly enough that I do not give up.

MAKE IT FINDABLE

- [ ] Pages say what we do and where, in plain words.
- [ ] Name, address and phone number are the same on the site, social pages and Google Business Profile.
- [ ] Each service has its own clear heading.

UK BASICS TO CHECK (NOT LEGAL ADVICE)

- [ ] Limited company: the website shows the registered number, registered office address, where the company is registered, and that it is a limited company (usually the full name including "Limited" or "Ltd").
- [ ] Cookies: I know which cookies the site sets and why, and whether people must be told and asked first. The ICO has guidance on storage and access technologies.

WHO OWNS THE WEBSITE?

- [ ] The domain name is registered in my name, not the designer's.
- [ ] I have the login details for hosting and the site.
- [ ] I know whether I own the finished site and its content, or only have a licence.
- [ ] I know what happens if I want to move to another provider later.

QUESTIONS TO ASK A WEB DESIGNER

- [ ] Can I see two or three sites you have built for businesses like mine?
- [ ] Who will do the work, and who will I talk to?
- [ ] What is included: pages, copywriting, photography, mobile design, contact form, basic search setup?
- [ ] How do I edit the site myself afterwards?
- [ ] What happens after launch: updates, security, backups, hosting? Who does what?
- [ ] Who owns the domain, the design and the content?
- [ ] How long will it take, and what do you need from me to keep it on time?

We are web people, not solicitors: treat the legal items as a prompt to check.

WHERE THE FACTS COME FROM

GOV.UK, signs, stationery and promotional material (limited companies): gov.uk/running-a-limited-company/signs-stationery-and-promotional-material
ICO, guidance on the use of storage and access technologies: ico.org.uk
GOV.UK, ownership of copyright works: gov.uk/guidance/ownership-of-copyright-works

Want a second pair of eyes?

Tell us about your business at mudcrafts.uk/contact/ or ask Muddy in the chat on the site.
We are MudCrafts. We build your brand... with love.