

How to create a website

About: This guide outlines the key steps you need to take when designing and creating an effective website.

Who is this guide intended for: Sports Development Teams, County Sports Partnerships and sports clubs

Why have a website: Websites in recent years have become a lot more than just a method to electronically display information about your organisation or club. An interactive website will allow the public to register for courses or pay their membership fees online, thus saving you time and money with administration. This also allows you to capture valuable information about the people who are visiting your site.

Websites are at the heart of most successful marketing campaigns. By promoting website addresses on marketing material, you are able to direct people to find out more information, while encouraging them to register for events or courses.

1. Select a web address

An address should relate to your organisation, club or the service you're offering. Don't try and be too clever and pick a catchy address. People are more likely going to remember an address which includes the name of your organisation.

If possible try and register addresses with the **.co.uk** and **.org.uk** extensions and addresses which contain common spelling mistakes e.g. mistakes such as Westsport instead of Wesport. Visitors who type in these incorrect addresses can then automatically be redirected to correct web address.

2. Registering your address

You now need to check whether your chosen website address or domain name is available. A simple Google search will return a number of sites which will allow you to search and register your chosen address or domain name.

Also check whether the site offers web hosting. This service shouldn't cost you too much. Often web hosting companies include a content management system, which will assist you in building and updating the site.

Check out these sites as examples of the costs and services which are available:

www.names.co.uk

www.ukreg.com

3. Purpose of site

What do you want your website to do. Is it to outline and display information about your organisation or club. This is called a brochureware site, and as the name suggests, it's a site which allows you to display information electronically.

You may wish to have registration functionality which would allow users to visit a secured part of the site, or register for particular courses or events. As well as cutting down the time spent on administration, this allows you to capture valuable information on the people visiting your site.

4. Determine your budget

Building a website doesn't have to be an expensive exercise. Work out how much you have to spend on the project. This will help you decide whether you can afford to hire a professional designer or if you have to do-it-yourself.

If you are going to do-it-yourself there are plenty of tools available that will assist you in building a site. Your web hosting company should be able to assist you with a user friendly content management system and various site templates which you can use as a starting point for building your site.

If you choose to hire a professional web designer, check out the ***How to work with a design agency*** section of this toolkit for assistance in writing a design brief.

5. Design Tips

Websites are fast becoming the *shop window* and the first point of contact the public have with an organisation or club. Therefore a website needs to reflect the image of the organisation in terms of branding, images, content and the style of language used.

5. Design tips

- The sports sector is renowned for its acronyms, but these could prove confusing for members of the public.
- Don't crowd your site with text. Include a summary of a subject area with a hyper link to a page which displays more detail on the subject.
- Most Internet users don't like scrolling down a page. It's better to have a deep site in terms of pages, instead of trying to jam all your content on a few pages.
- Action images are more likely to inspire people and create a more dynamic look for your website. Check out the photo library in this toolkit for a comprehensive library of images which are free to download.
- Check with your web hosting company if they offer any site design templates.

6. Ongoing maintenance

Keep the content on your site up-to-date. At least once a month update the content and give the public a reason to revisit your site.

7. Get your site noticed on search engines

To increase the number of visitors to your site, you need to get it noticed within search engines such as Google and Yahoo. The best way of achieving this is through **tagging** the relevant words which best describe the content of your site. For example because the words **promoting** and **sport** are both tagged within the Promoting Sport Toolkit, a Google search of these two words will return this site.

Most importantly you need a header block. This is a sentence which describes your site. By tagging this sentence, search engines can read and display when someone does a relevant word search.

Throughout the site you can also attach **meta tags** to individual words which also describe what your organisation or club offers.

Check List

1	Is your web address memorable and relevant to your organisation or club?	
2	Have you also registered addresses with common spelling mistakes and with the .co.uk and .org.uk extensions?	
3	Do you want your site to be interactive, or is it to solely to display information electronically?	
4	What is your budget for creating a website?	
5	Is your site written in plain English and free of confusing acronyms?	
6	Is your site a good combination of text and images?	
7	Have you used action images to help inspire the user?	
8	Does each webpage display within the diameters of the screen without the need to scroll down?	
9	Have you created a header block and tagged relevant words which best describe the content of your site?	