HIRING A CHURCH WEBSITE DESIGNER

20 questions to ask before you sign

Ask every designer the same questions and compare the answers side by side. ★ = never skip.

Designer / company

Date of call

OWNERSHIP

1. Who will own the domain name, and whose account will it be in? ★

2. Who owns the design and the code when the site is done?

3. If we part ways, what do we take with us, and how? ★

4. Who has the login to the hosting, and can the church have one too?

COST

5. What's the total for year one, and what's the total for year two? ★

6. What's included in the monthly fee, specifically?

7. What costs extra? Pages, photos, forms, changes, a new section?

8. Is there a contract, how long is it, and what does cancelling cost?

CHANGES AFTER LAUNCH

9. When we need a change, how do we ask, who does it, and how fast? ★

10. Can we make simple changes ourselves (times, events, a photo) without breaking anything?

11. What happens if you're sick, on vacation, or out of business?

THE WORK

12. Can we see a concept of our homepage before we commit? ★

13. Can we see ten live church sites you built and still maintain?

14. Will you write the words, or do we? Will you edit what we send?

15. Will you use our real photos, and help us get better ones?

16. How will it look and load on a phone over cellular data?

17. How will people give, and what are the fees?

18. Where will sermons live, and how will they get posted each week?

GETTING FOUND

19. **Will you set up or clean up our Google Business Profile and redirect our old pages?**

20. **What will you do so a nearby family searching for a church on a Sunday morning can find us?**

Six red flags

- [ ] **They'll register the domain "for you"**, in their name, on their account.
- [ ] **They guarantee Google rankings.** Nobody can.
- [ ] **They can't show you live sites**, only screenshots.
- [ ] **There's no plan for changes.** "Just email us" is not a plan.
- [ ] **Every photo in their samples is stock.**
- [ ] **They can't explain what you'll own if you leave.**

Bring to the first meeting

- [ ] Service times and full street address, exactly as you want them shown
- [ ] Ten to twenty recent phone photos of real people on a Sunday
- [ ] One paragraph about what it's like to walk into your church
- [ ] Staff names, roles, and photos
- [ ] Ministries, each with a contact person
- [ ] Where sermons live now, and how people give now
- [ ] The domain login, or who registered it

Full guide: elijahdesent.com/articles/how-to-hire-a-church-website-designer

How a church website gets made

1 **Conversation**
Who you are and who you are trying to reach

2 **Gather**
Photos, service times, ministries, sermons

3 **Concept**
See your homepage before you commit

4 **Build**
Every page, designed for the phone first

5 **Launch**
Domain, Google listing, old links redirected

6 **Keep it true**
Changes made in days, not months

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