



SELECTING A VENDOR

YOUR PROJECT

A project worth doing right is worth putting time into it. In order to ensure that you not only receive an accurate quote for your project but also create a product which will grow your business, business owners are responsible for communicating their business case and vision to the developer. The BEAM Worksheet will help developers understand your project better.

The objective of the BEAM “Selecting a Vendor” document is to provide supplementary information on what you as a business owner should consider, while searching for quotes and more importantly to help in selecting the right developer for your unique project.

NARROW DOWN THE SEARCH

Creating a shortlist of potential developers for your project will give you a variety of solutions and cost estimates. Narrowing down a list of potential developers before you request a quote can be a difficult task; however, here are some tips to consider which will assist you in your search:

- **Visit the Vendor/Developer website.**
Take the time to visit the websites of the developers you’re interested in. Most of these sites will provide you with information regarding the company’s previous work, staff, and services. Do they list their portfolio? Does the website provide information regarding their services and whether they can satisfy your project requirements?
- **Review the Vendor/Developer’s portfolio.**
Most developers will provide a portfolio of their previous work on their website. Getting a feel for the developer’s body of work will provide insight as to how they will likely approach your project. Visit the websites listed on the developer’s portfolio to see if the look and feel are similar to the vision you have for your site.
- **Check the Vendor/Developer’s references.**
Contacting the vendor/developer’s previous clients can help you understand what it would be like to work with them. Ask these other businesses what it was like to work with the vendor. What did they like or dislike about them?

PREPARE FOR YOUR MEETING

Now that you've been able to narrow down your list of potential vendors, it's time to meet with them. Being prepared for your meeting with a vendor/developer will assist you in getting the information you need about the provider. A successful meeting with a potential provider will answer the question of whether you'd be comfortable with their ability to complete your project and additionally whether you'd be comfortable in a working relationship with this provider.

There are two overarching preparations recommended before meeting your shortlist of providers:

Your BEAM Project Worksheet, previously completed, will provide you with much of the information which you should bring along with you when speaking to your potential provider. Additional information which you should consider preparing for your potential vendor includes:

- **Main and Secondary Goals:** Highlight the goals and vision of what you hope to achieve.

- **Site Map:** A "Site Map" is a term used in web design to describe how you want your website pages to be structured. Example:

HOME
ABOUT US
○ COMPANY VISION
○ OUR TEAM
SERVICES
CONTACT US

- **What you like and don't like:** Provide examples of websites that you like and don't like. Whether it's the look and feel, the functions on the site, providing a frame of reference for your provider will assist them in creating an accurate assessment of your project.
- **Your Competitors:** Compile a list of your competitors for your providers; let them see what your competitors do well and how to stand out among them.

MEETING AND SELECTING A VENDOR/DEVELOPER

- This project is a natural extension of your business and your potential provider is responsible for executing that vision. Ensure that the provider takes the time and care to understand both you and your business. They should understand what your goals are for this project and how they relate and impact your business.

- Get to know their work plan. What's their project workflow? How would they approach your project?
- Did they use technical industry language which was difficult to understand? Did they clarify any questions you had which made you feel confident in their answers?
- Establish how billing works with the provider. Is it monthly? By project milestone? What is their deposit requirement?
- Ensure that during the meeting that you establish that you retain all copyright for your project and content. In addition, if your project is a website, ensure that you own the domain.