DESIGN OF UMGENI WATER SERVICES (UWS) WEBSITE

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Blackspot Designs want to thank you for showing interest in our offerings and sharing the RFP with us.

Blackspot Designs is one of the prime companies in the market, and we have been serving over many happy clients since our establishment in 2008.

We are notable for our high-quality services that offer promising performance, efficiency, and delivery hand in hand.

At Blackspot Designs, it's always about how we can make things smoother for our clients because their expectations are what holds our priority.

With this web design proposal, we intend to present our web design services and all significantly remarkable plans associated with it for Umgeni Water Services to choose from based upon their requirements and needs.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Design Elements

"We are committed to creating your website within a user-friendly environment to ensure a seamless experience for both you and your visitors. Our chosen platform for this endeavor is WordPress CMS, paired with the Elementor Website Builder. WordPress CMS is renowned worldwide for its excellence and ease of use, making it an ideal solution for managing your website's content effectively.

With WordPress, you'll have access to a plethora of extension plugins, offering endless possibilities for customization and functionality enhancements. This extensive library of plugins empowers you to tailor your website precisely to your needs, ensuring it meets your unique requirements.

By leveraging WordPress, we aim to streamline the process of website management, reducing training time and increasing efficiency. Its intuitive interface and familiar tools make it easy for your team to update and maintain the website, allowing for swift and hassle-free information dissemination on a day-to-day basis.

In choosing WordPress and Elementor, we prioritize not only the creation of a visually appealing and functional website but also the long-term ease of use and manageability, ensuring that your online presence remains dynamic and responsive to your evolving needs.

Data Consumption

We will create a stack design that allows for easy update, with very minimal graphic elements to reduce data consumption by users. This will also improve load time of the website. The 4th industrial revolution has speed and minimisation of data usage as one of the core of application development and coding in the change and new data era. We will be considering this in our development process.

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Marketability
We will design a sitemap that can be accessible by search engines as well as a base track search engine optimisation to make the site accessible to crawlers and pixels implementation.

Security
We will include a number of immunify codes to ensure the website is hack proof. Included would be the added 2A security to make sure the site is only accessible to authorised personnel. We will also make sure there is a downtime update as well as IP log for all usage.
Data Security-Secure storage of user data and encryption of sensitive information.
User Privacy-Compliance with data privacy regulations (e.g., GDPR).

Performance
Response Time-The website should load within 3 seconds for all pages.
Scalability-The website should handle increased traffic and data as the user base grows.
Availability-The website should be available 24/7 with minimal downtime for maintenance.

Usability
User-Friendly Interface-Intuitive and responsive design accessible on various devices (desktop, mobile, tablet).
Navigation-Easy navigation with clear menus and search functionality.
Accessibility-Compliance with accessibility standards (e.g., WCAG) to ensure usability for all users.

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PROJECT REFERENCES

There are several projects references but we are only listing projects that are related and relevant to the project requested by uMngeni-uThukela Water. All these projects were developned and some currently managed by our company, through direct and sub-contracted vendors:

Project Name	Classification	Industry	Collaborators	Contact
Umgeni Water www.umgeni.co.za	Company Campaign Website	Web Design Web Development Web Hosting	Blackspot Designs	Nokuthula Ntaka +27 (33) 341 111 Nokuthula.Ntaka@umgeni.co.za
Msinsi Resort www.msinsi.co.za	Company Campaign Website	Web Design Web Development	Blackspot Designs	Mr Qiniso Mthembu +27 (31) 765 7724 info@msinsi.co.za
Coastal College	Company Campaign Website	Internet Website Development	Blackspot Designs	Thubelihle Kunene info.coastal@kzntvet.edu.za +27 31 905 7000
CEDZA Security https://www.cedzatechnologies.co.za/	Company Campaign Website	Web Development Intranet Extranet	Blackspot Designs & Maphorisa Initiative	Mr Collen Khoza info@cedzatechnologies.co.za +27 (12) 770 6642
M2 Engineerig Academy www.m2engineering.co.za	Company Campaign Website	Web Development Web Hosting Student Portal Int.	Blackspot Designs MillionsworthPR	Mr Bongane Makwakwa 27 87 088 1087 bmakwakwa@ m2engineering.co.za

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PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND TIMELINE

Based on the scope and functions listed in the RFP, we would be able to complete the project in 12-16 weeks. Additional functions and elements might increase the projected project time. Below is the different phases and project timeline
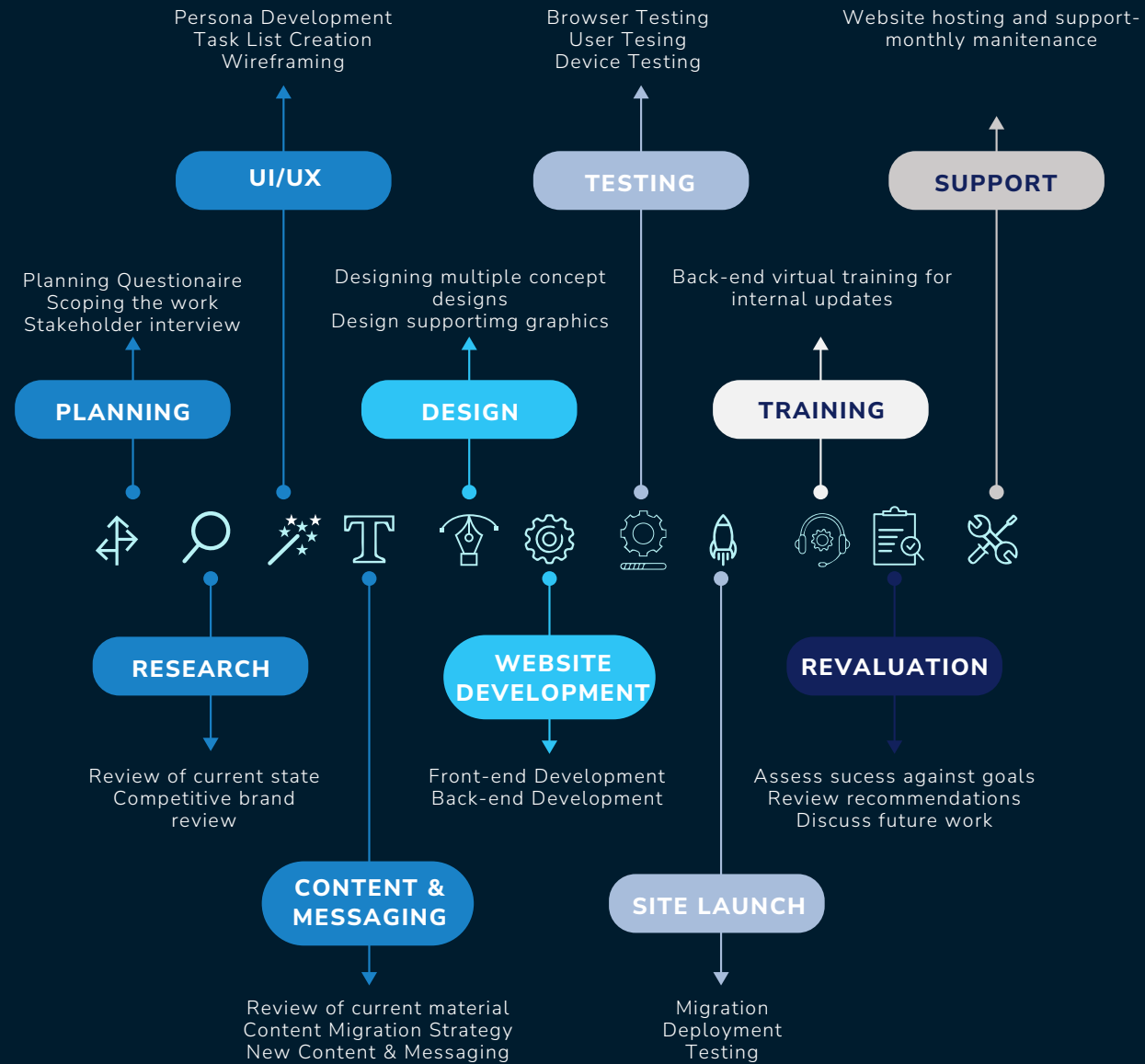
Project Initiation

TASK	DESCRIPTION	DURATION	UNIT REPOSNIBLE
Phase 1: Planning and Preparation	**Define Objectives**: Clearly outline the purpose and goals of the website, such as its target audience, desired features, and expected outcomes. (Workshops – 5 working days)	1 to 2 weeks	Blackspot Designs UWS
	Select Hosting Provider: Choose a reliable hosting provider that meets the website's requirements in terms of performance, security, scalability, and budget		Blackspot Designs UWS
	Register Domain: Purchase and register a domain name that reflects the identity and branding of the website.		Blackspot Designs UWS
Phase 2: Installation and Setup	**Install WordPress**: Use the hosting provider's control panel or one-click installer to install WordPress on your hosting server.	1 week	Blackspot Designs
	Configure Basic Settings: Set up fundamental configurations such as site title, tagline, time zone, and permalinks structure in the WordPress dashboard.		Blackspot Designs
	Install Theme: Choose and install a WordPress theme that aligns with the website's design preferences and functionality requirements.		Blackspot Designs
	Customize Theme: Customize the theme's appearance and layout using built-in customization options or additional customization tools/plugins.		Blackspot Designs

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TASK	DESCRIPTION	DURATION	UNIT REPOSNIBLE
Phase 3: Content Creation and Management	**Create Pages and Posts**: Create essential pages such as Home, About Us, Services, Contact, etc., and start adding content to them. Additionally, publish blog posts if applicable.	8 weeks	Blackspot Designs
	Optimize Content: Optimize content for search engines (SEO) by incorporating relevant keywords, meta descriptions, and optimizing images for fast loading.		Blackspot Designs
	Set Up Navigation Menus: Create and customize navigation menus to facilitate easy navigation for visitors.		Blackspot Designs
Phase 4: Enhancements and Functionality	**Browser Testing**: Test the website's compatibility and functionality across various web browsers (Chrome, Firefox, Safari, etc.) to ensure consistent performance.	1 week	Blackspot Designs
	Responsive Testing: Verify that the website displays correctly and functions optimally on different devices and screen sizes (desktops, tablets, smartphones).		Blackspot Designs
	Functionality Testing: Conduct thorough testing of all website features, forms, links, and interactive elements to identify and fix any issues.		Blackspot Designs
Phase 5: Deployment and Launch	**Browser Testing**: Test the website's compatibility and functionality across various web browsers (Chrome, Firefox, Safari, etc.) to ensure consistent performance.	1 week	Blackspot Designs
	Responsive Testing: Verify that the website displays correctly and functions optimally on different devices and screen sizes (desktops, tablets, smartphones).		
	Functionality Testing: Conduct thorough testing of all website features, forms, links, and interactive elements to identify and fix any issues.		

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TASK	DESCRIPTION	DURATION	UNIT REPOSNIBLE
Phase 6: Deployment and Launch	**Backup Website**: Create a backup of the entire website files and database to ensure data safety and easy restoration if needed.	1 week	Blackspot Designs
	Final Review: Conduct a final review of the website to ensure everything is in place, and there are no errors or broken links.		
	Go Live: Change the website's status from staging to live by updating the domain's DNS settings or making the website publicly accessible.		
	Monitor Performance: Monitor the website's performance and user feedback after the launch to address any issues promptly.		
Phase 7: Maintenance and Optimization	**Regular Updates**: Keep WordPress core, themes, and plugins updated to ensure optimal performance, security, and compatibility.	8 weeks	Blackspot Designs
	Security Measures: Implement security measures such as SSL certificates, firewalls, and regular security audits to protect the website from security threats.		
	Performance Optimization: Continuously optimize website performance by minifying CSS/JS files, optimizing images, and utilizing caching techniques.		
	Content Updates: Regularly update website content, add new features, and respond to user feedback to keep the website relevant and engaging.	1 week	Blackspot Designs

Following this methodology will help ensure a smooth and successful deployment of your WordPress website, from initial planning to ongoing maintenance and optimization.

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Persona Development
Task List Creation
Wireframing

Browser Testing
User Tesing
Device Testing

Website hosting and support-
monthly maniten ance

UI/UX

TESTING

SUPPORT

Planning Questionaire
Scoping the work
Stakeholder interview

Designing multiple concept
designs
Design supportimg graphics

Back-end virtual training for
internal updates

PLANNING

DESIGN

TRAINING

RESEARCH

**WEBSITE
DEVELOPMENT**

REVALUATION

Review of current state
Competitive brand
review

Front-end Development
Back-end Development

Assess sucess against goals
Review recommendations
Discuss future work

**CONTENT &
MESSAGING**

SITE LAUNCH

Review of current material
Content Migration Strategy
New Content & Messaging

Migration
Deployment
Testing

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WEBSITE UI AND UX FEATURES DEVELOPMENT TOOLS

The upcoming software licenses will be employed on UWS to actualize both the user interface and functional elements of the website in alignment with the proposed User Requirements Specifications.

1. **Google Drive plugin**: This plugin allows you to integrate Google Drive with your website, enabling easy access and management of documents, images, and other media directly from your Google Drive account.

2. **Google Drive premium account**: With a premium account, you'll have expanded document storage capabilities, allowing you to store more files and larger file sizes on your Google Drive.

3. **ACF (Advanced Custom Fields) Pro**: ACF Pro provides advanced classification of posts by allowing you to add custom fields to posts, pages, and other custom post types. For example, you can add custom fields like tender closing date to posts, providing more structured and detailed content.

4. **Mailpoet **: This plugin enables you to send newsletters and notifications to your subscribers. You can manage and send updates to your audience, including latest post notifications and newsletters.

5. **PublishPress**: PublishPress allows you to schedule posts for future publication and set automatic unpublish dates. This helps you plan and organize your content publishing schedule more effi-ciently.

6. **WP Data Tables**: WP Data Tables lets you create interactive charts and tables on your website using data from various sources, making your data presentation more visually appealing and easier to understand.

7. **Sucuri**: Sucuri provides security features such as anti-spam, firewall protection, malware scanning, and prevention of brute force attacks, helping to keep your website safe and secure.

8. **Ninja Tables**: This plugin enhances the display of posts, Google Sheets, tenders, and charts on your website, making them more attractive and intuitive for visitors to navigate and understand.

9. **Elementor**: Elementor is a powerful website builder plugin that allows you to create custom layouts and designs for your WordPress site using a drag-and-drop interface, without needing to write any code.

10. **Envato**: Envato provides access to premium themes and CSS templates, giving you a wide range of design options to customize the look and feel of your website.

11. **Essential Add-ons**: Essential Add-ons offers extra widgets and building blocks to enhance the functionality of your website, allowing you to add additional features and elements to your

pages and posts.

12. **Updraft Plus**: Updraft Plus automates website backups and simplifies migration processes, ensuring that you always have a recent backup of your website's data. It also allows you to store backups in your Google Drive account for added security.

13. **Membership Pro**: Membership Pro enables you to create membership portals and define access levels for different types of content, as well as send notifications to members about updates and new content.

14. **TranslatePress**: TranslatePress is a multilingual plugin that allows you to easily translate your website into different languages, making it accessible to a wider audience.

15. **GDPR Cookie Compliance**: This plugin helps you comply with user privacy and data protection regulations, such as the POPIA Act, by providing tools for managing and displaying cookie consent notices to visitors.

16. **Yoast: Yoast is a comprehensive SEO (Search Engine Optimization) plugin that helps optimize your website's content for search engines. It provides real-time feedback and suggestions to improve the readability and SEO of your posts and pages. Yoast analyzes your content, suggests keyword optimization, provides metadata customization options, and helps improve your website's overall search engine ranking. Additionally, it offers features such

as XML sitemap generation, breadcrumb navigation support, and social media integration, all aimed at enhancing your website's visibility and discoverability online.

17.**Jetpack: Jetpack is a multifunctional plugin that enhances website performance, security, and analytics. It offers a suite of tools and features designed to optimize your website's speed, including image and static file caching, lazy loading of images, and content delivery network (CDN) integration. Jetpack also provides security features such as brute force attack protection, malware scanning, and downtime monitoring to help keep your website secure.

Additionally, it offers analytics tools to track website traffic, visitor interactions, and content performance, giving you valuable insights to improve your website's effectiveness and user experience.

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PLANNING

This phase will enable Blackspot Designs to meet with Umgeni Water Services team to present a detailed understanding of the project and set a completion date envisaged that the overall project will take 12-16 weeks. The details of the project scope will be confirmed and key stakeholders will be identified internally at Umgeni Water Services.

We will take strategic directives and and esnure that goals are measurable. Before we implement this project we will at this phase define our critical success factors (KPIs) and how to achieve success and measure it.

We will be having meetings with the Umgeni Water Services key stakeholders to unpack the detailed deployement of the entire project and at this stage will go through the spec again and ensure everything is covered for client satisfaction.

Proposed design planning:
- Create a less clustered design
- Use and balance of all the Umgeni Water Services corporate col ours from the supplied brand manual style guide
- Designing within a grid for design flow as well as legibility with enough clear all round space
- Reducing header image size to create enough space for content
- Using a corporate web supported font wich comes in different strokes

- By making sure that all the important information needed by website visitors is available on the landing and all other inner pages
  Balancing of images and text so that none dominate

These are some of the significance goals to communicating on the internet:
To inform, to educate, to promote (indirect sales) and to collaborate (two-way, synchronous communications).

Our objectives are smart, measurable, accessible, reachable and timely and intend to respond to all the specifications set by Umgeni Water Services.

We have considered the Umgeni Water Services website to have weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual goals that need to be reached with more advance features of the latest technology.

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RESEARCH AND ASSESMENT

The nature of this project calls for and all-inclusive approach, whereby key stakeholders who are frequently consulted are part of the project. The objective of this phase is to meet all stakeholders and engage with them formally to gather the relevant information that will be used. Data will be collected in forms of images and wrritten content electronically.

We will be getting all relevant information through reasearch and consultation with clients. The creative design solutions will be then presented and agreed upon.

Since we are building a new website, we will ensure to perform an assessment of all relevant material, employee research, corporate directives, communications plans, etc. These should be completed prior to research activities in the Assessment Phase.

We will also, compile a list or matrix of new content, including static and dynamic content, structured and unstructured, and digital assets (graphics, images, documents) that may require treatment. User research will reveal what information Umgeni Water Services wants and need to access, the frequency they need to access content, and also the importance of specific content. This knowledge will provide the shape of our information architecture and layout of information.

Our assessment serves two important functions:

It documents the needs and requirements of the user population, and those of the business and its stakeholders, while aligning project goals with corporate goals and objectives.

This phase usually includes:
- Strategic and heuristic website evaluation (gap analysis)
- Susiness requirements analysis (and stakeholder interviews)
- User research (reviews, survey(s), focus group(s), usability testing, log analysis)
- Technical infrastructure analysis
- Benchmarking and best practices

Our main aim is to ensure the design of the Umgeni Water Services website is a marriage of business requirements (executive needs) and user requirements (employee needs).

Understanding users

The design of Umgeni Water Services website is aimed to reflect the needs of employees, customers and suppliers.

Demographic information like age, role, department, and geographic region, will provide us with some basic guidelines, and the more detail we can get the better for addressing employees needs. In order to understand users, we will collect data using qualitative interviews and focus groups and quantitative surveys and log analysis research.

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RESEARCH AND ASSESMENT

Our conducted research questions will relate to corporate objectives, and personal needs and preferences. Understanding corporate goals and getting a clear picture of current issues that will enable us to develop questions that bridge the gap between where Umgeni Water Services website is and where we want to be. Personal needs and preferences provide insight into the individual user.

Once we've collected sufficient information from our users, and have analyzed the results, we will confirm our goals and develop tactical plans.

Our tactics in fulfilling Umgeni Water Services website strategy will also include an assessment of our resources-content and digital assets, staff, as well as technology and functional requirements.

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IDEATION & BRAINSTORMING

Every organisation needs a steady supply of fresh creative ideas to stay relevant and ahead of their competitors successfully. A good ideation session is hard work. We will need a well-facilitated process, carefully-designed exercises, and proper tools (especially when a remote team is involved) to generate innovative, and viable ideas.

Blackspot Designs will now develop the idea that will work best for the Umgeni Water Services website. The idea/concept will be discussed among the Blackspot team then after the design concept has been drafted it will be presented to the Umgeni Water Services.

This is the phase where we will then take our research findings and use it to design the Umgeni Water Services website. We will ensure the design speaks to the technical specification request made by Umgeni Water Services and by following and responding the the research findings, the overall project will be a sucess.

These are some of the significance goals to communicating on the internet website:

This ideation is the process we will be generating new ideas or solutions, using techniques such as mind mapping, prototyping, brainwriting, reverse brainstorming, etc to inspire the innovation of new solutions.

The ideation process

- We dentify the need for ideating. Our main project objective is to solve the organizational problem, come up with new product or service ideas, expand our market reach.

- We will select a team from Blackspot Designs for the ideation session. To generate more diversified ideas, involve a variety of people with different experiences and backgrounds.

- Single out the best idea/s to implementand present them to Umgeni Water Services stakeholders. For us to do this we will need to have a set of defined criteria that the generated ideas will be evaluated against which will be ready prior to the session. Along with the evaluation criteria, we will also determine the internal teams we will be handing over the prioritized ideas for further evaluation and implementation.

- Next comes the implementation of the prioritized ideas, which involves allocating resources, assigning responsibilities, mapping workflows, defining timelines, and tracking progress.

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DESIGN / DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

This phase will involve a platform by which the draft concepts will be presented. Changes that arise will be taken to consideration and the website changes and additions will be edited accordingly. That will include but not limited to graphics, web code/language, typography layout, image retouching etc.

This is the process for arriving at the stage where a our Graphic Designer applies color and images to the design and layout concept is one that we take seriously, and is the underlying foundation of a successful website design.

Our sound internet website design follows a process that incorporates the aforementioned stages during the Assessment and Planning Phases.

Once the Assessment and high-level Planning (strategy) is completed, our UI/UX Developer Consultant will begin developing the finer points and functions of the Umgeni Water Services website plan including:

• Persona Development
• Information Architecture
• Card Sorting
• Wireframe Development
• Usability Testing
• Design Concepts
• Design Guidelines
• Brand Manual Style Guide
• User friendly Design Style

• Resoinsive and Interactive design that will accomodate all mobile devices

Website information architecture, one of the key elements of effective design, should be driven by key findings and strategic plans, with the help of employee card sorting exercises, usability testing, and best practices in information management and usability.

DESIGN PLAN OVERVIEW

Measure Analytics:
Noting our core metrics, like traffic, conversions, and bounce rate to understand what we need to improve and give ourselves a baseline to measure against.

Set Goals:
Working from our analytics and input from our stakeholder team, we decide what the purpose of the design is. This will help us assign it a value to assess return on investment (ROI), and keeps expectations in reality.

Assess Risks:
Tie risks to potential timeline interruptions affecting our project team, budgetary concerns, and most importantly, the site's functionality. During development and transition, core functions might not work.

Build Strategy:
Everything on the site should serve the goals of the business in

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some way-by planning out an acquisition and conversion strategy up front.

Gather Content:
The copy, the images, and videos that populate a site are important to the overall experience and effectiveness of the site. Content not being ready in time is also responsible for the majority of website redesign projects getting delayed. We will assign someone specifically to this task now while the design is underway.

Design & Visual Assets:
Vision in mind for the overall look and feel of the new website, including what elements from the existing brand will be pulled forward, and what need rebranding. Our design will follow the corporate brand manual for UWS and the design and layout will not be far off the current uMngeni-uThukela Water as both the websites will be interlinked.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO):
SEO is both a technical and creative practice, it will help the website draw in organic traffic from Google and other search engines.

WEBSITE KEY METRICS TO ANALYZE

Traffic Over Time: Spend some time assessing overall traffic, and the overall trends. Try to identify spikes, especially if they coincided with big changes in the website.

Traffic Sources: It's important to know where traffic is coming from in order to set goals. If there's little from Organic Search, maybe SEO is a good thing to focus on the design.

User Behavior: We will monitor the "Behavior Flow" of aggregated users as they go from page to page of the website, which will help us craft a strategy for which pages we need to keep and which connections we need to make stronger.

Bounce Rate: This measures when visitors leave the site without clicking through to any other page-identify the drop off points and see if we can figure out why, so we can strengthen those weak points during the redesign.

Time on Page: There's no "right" amount of time a user should spend on every page, it's all contextual.

With these key metrics in place, we will brainstorm about what we want to improve and prioritize in a website design project plan.

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CONTENT MIGRATION AND LAUNCH

Now that we have completed the design process, migration of data will take place. We will migrate data from our working space that we have created onto Umgeni Water Services Azure space where all the contents will be stored and hosted by the client.

This will help with full access and control of the data.

USER & USABILITY TESTING

At this stage all pages are ready, therefore it is important to validate strategy with some amount of testing. We will do usability testing, where we give users a task and see if they're able to navigate the site and complete the task.

After pages are designed, you can do both usability testing and general user testing to get validation of design choices, understand how people feel about certain messaging, and more.

WEBSITE BACK-END TRAINING

We will be training the person from Umgeni Water Services who will be responsible for basic internal website updates. Training timelines will be discussed at this stage when everything has been finalised.

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BUDGET

Website

DESCRIPTION	DURATION	TOTAL
Design of UWS website, which will serve as a digital platform to provide information, facilitate business interactions, and promote the services offered by uMngeni-uThukela Water and UWS Website Plugins	3-4 months	R259, 725.00 R37, 978.00
Total Exclusive: **Total VAT:** **Sub Total:** **Total:**		R297, 703.00 R44, 655.45 R342, 358.45 **R342, 358.45**

Intranet

DESCRIPTION	DURATION	TOTAL
DEVELO-001 - Intranet Development, *Intranet Configuration & Site Development UX001 - Intranet UX/UI PROJEC-001 - Intranet Project Management TRAINI-001 - Intranet Training MAIN001 -	3-4 months	R273, 125.00 R167, 210.00 R57, 960.00
Total Exclusive: **Total VAT:** **Sub Total:** **Total:**		R498, 295.00 R74, 744.25 R573, 039.25 **R573, 039.25**
TOTAL COST		**R915, 397.70**

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