



How to get an accurate website quote

A Guide for SMEs

2021 EDITION



Did you know that 68% of Irish consumers spent more online in 2020 than they did in 2019?¹

This makes it vital for your business to be in the same online space as your customers.

Stand out online

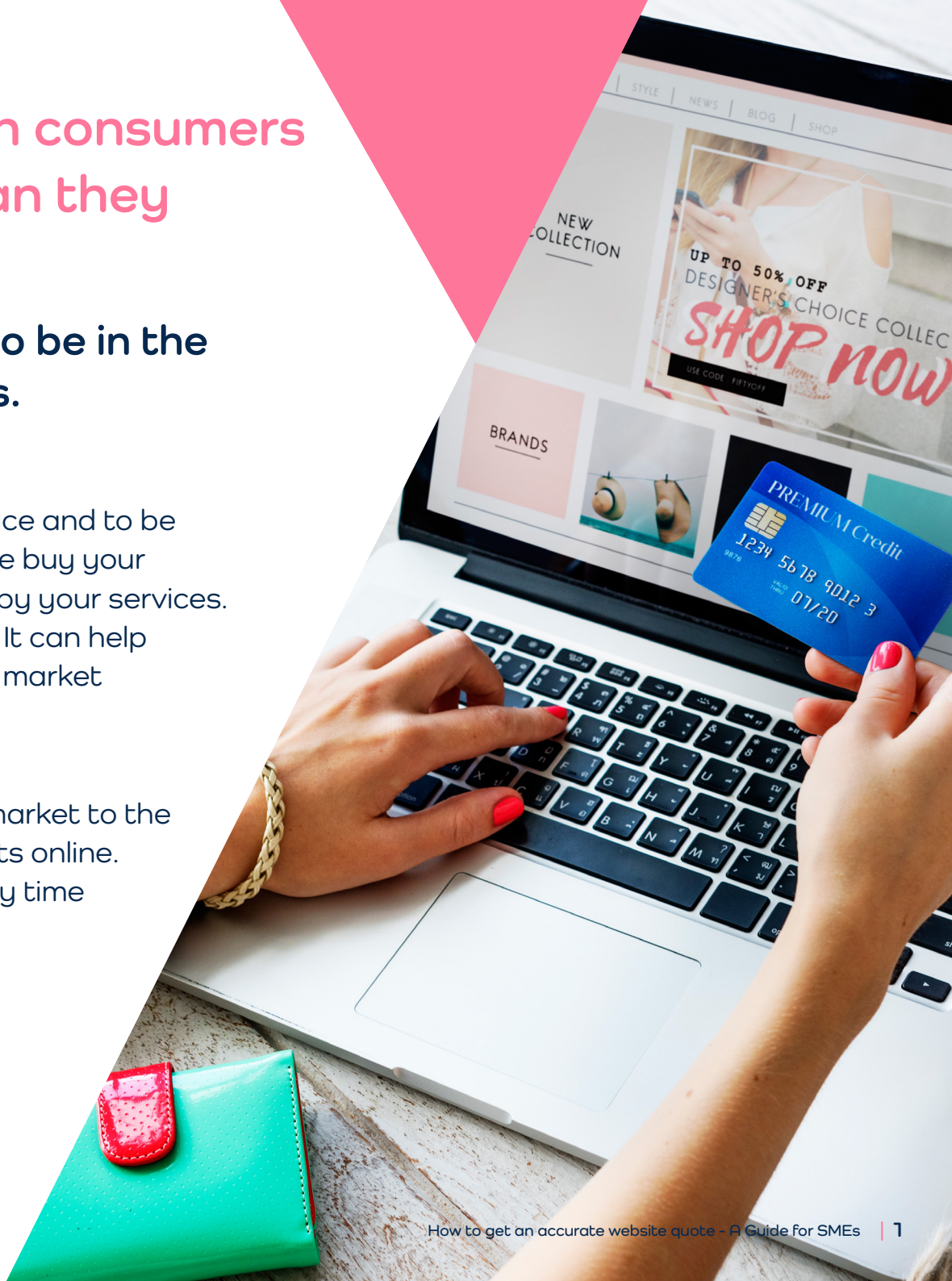
You want your business to stand out in the online space and to be noticed by potential customers. People should be able buy your products easily, and you want them to be impressed by your services. For this to happen, a well-designed website is crucial. It can help to increase your revenue, attract new customers and market your business.

Increase your sales

Introducing an e-commerce facility will expand your market to the world and enable your customers to buy your products online. Anybody, anywhere can buy from your website at any time of the day or night.



¹. IE Tipping Point Report 2021



Get the best website developer

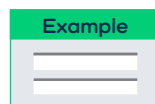
How do you get yourself a website that delivers these benefits to your business?

SMEs tell us that they have difficulty comparing quotes from website developers. For this reason, we have created a **website development tender** template as a handy tool to help get comparable quotes.

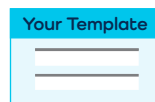
Our e-book guides you through the questions you need to ask to get the best website for your business.

It outlines, step-by-step, the information that you need the developer to know about your business. This will ensure that their website proposal is specifically geared towards your customers and your desired goals.

Finally, it contains a template timeline and cost outline for the developer to fill in. That way, when you receive quotes, you will be able to compare the information and decide which one best meets your needs.



We know it can be daunting to fill in a tender. We have provided an **EXAMPLE** of a completed form outlining hints and tips on what a web developer needs to know about a business, to build a suitable website.



This example is followed by **YOUR TEMPLATE**, which can be filled out on this [editable pdf](#).

Good websites get good results

In today's fast-paced world, a modern, well-designed website must be an essential part of your sales and marketing approach.

Why?



72%

of SMEs with a website say it is important in generating sales growth.



78%

of SMEs that have invested in their online services say they are busier than or as busy as before the Covid crisis, up from 46% in 2020.



61%

of SMEs said online services will be more important to their business in 2021 than they were in 2020.

Example Website Development Tender Document


YOUR BUSINESS NAME **Cashel Ceramics**

DATE **14 July 2021**

1. Introduction – who we are

Describe your business to give the web developer an overview of what product or service your business provides: what problem/issue do you solve for your customers.

1. How long have you been in business? **2 years.**
2. How many staff work in your business? **5.**
3. What percentage of your business is local, national, international?
65% local, 25% national and 10% international.
4. What makes you different from your competitors?
Niche business where we personalise handmade ceramics.
5. What problem do you solve for your customers?
We make it easy and convenient to shop for gifts.

NOTE  These are important topics for you and your staff to be clear about. This clarity will boost your marketing efforts, including on your website. The central goal of marketing is to drive profitable growth by creating value for your customer.

2. Current website


If you already have a website, please provide your website address.

www.cashelceramics.ie

3. Our mission

If you have a mission statement, include it here. This will allow the website developer to have a sense of the values that drive your business, which you will want reflected on your website.

To create great looking ceramics without harming the environment.

NOTE  If you are interested in developing a mission statement, you may find this [link](#) useful.

4. Our customers

Describe your existing customer base – be as specific as possible in terms of the types of people or organisations your business serves. Are you a B2B (business-to-business) or B2C (business-to-consumer) company?

- ▶ **Write down the age, gender, income levels, interests, and geographic location of your customers.**

For instance, knowing where your customers are located will influence how you handle shipping or click and collect options.

Age:	18 - 75.
Gender:	Approx 60% female and 40% male.
Income levels:	Mid to high level incomes.
Locations:	Tipperary, Kilkenny, Laois, Offaly.

- ▶ **Next, note down whether your customers are one-off buyers, occasional buyers, regular buyers, monthly or weekly buyers.**

This information will help your website developer to maximise the design of your website for your target customer. It will help to make your site relevant to your customer and, through search engine optimisation (SEO), help your website to be found by your target customer.

Local customers are repeat buyers.
New customers are especially interested in ceramics as gifts.
New customers come to us via word of mouth recommendations.

- ▶ **Finally, jot down the role your product or service plays in your customers' lives. This will help you to decide what they will want from your website.**

EXAMPLE 1 If you are a clothes shop, your customers will want to see images of your range and be able to buy online.

EXAMPLE 2 An architect's potential customer will want to see images of previous designs, from residential, commercial or industrial projects.

EXAMPLE 3 A training provider's clients will want to see details of courses, testimonials from students, and also be able to book courses online or arrange a call back.

NOTE



Did you know that 20% of customers represent 80% of an SME's revenue? You need to know which customers make up that 20%. Google Analytics will tell you which customers spend most time on your website and which pages they are visiting.

5. Outcomes – what we want from the website

List in detail your expectations from the new/redeveloped site:

- An increase in visitors by 50%.
- An e-commerce function that will increase turnover by 10%.
- Make it easier for visitors to find our products.
- Make it quicker for shoppers to get to the shopping cart and complete their transaction.
- Promote click and collect, where our customers can order online and collect from our premises.

NOTE



Did you know that 72% of SMEs with a website say it is important in generating sales growth?

6. Specifically – what we want on the website

Make a bullet-point list of what your business wants and needs on your website. Provide information on what works on your existing site and what doesn't. For instance, you could include some of these below:

- Mobile first development is required, given the numbers of our customers using mobile phones to search online.
- Design that fits with our existing branding and colour schemes.
- WordPress site, unless there is a strong argument for another platform.
- Promote a professional image of our company by using email addresses that match our website name.
- Allow staff to edit content easily – our staff are trained on WordPress currently. Content will be supplied by us.

► Pages to include:

- Home
- About Us
- Blog
- Shop
- Services with sub-pages to include category headings, OR Products with sub-pages to include product category headings
- FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)
- Testimonials (nice things your customers/ clients have said about your business)
- Privacy policy – in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Terms and Conditions (including delivery times, returns policy, etc)
- Contact Us

6. Specifically – what we want on the website [continued]

- ▶ Events calendar with - or without - a booking facility and an advance payment option
- ▶ Payment options such as PayPal or Stripe
- ▶ Gallery of images showcasing products/services/facility (these will be provided – or – you will ask the website developer to supply generic images)
- ▶ Copyright of all content and images to be solely owned by Cashel Ceramics
- ▶ Integration with social media (list most relevant platforms to your business)
- ▶ SEO to include keyword-focused page titles, editable metadata per page, metadata and header tags per page, plugin to assist with ensuring text is keyword-rich
- ▶ SSL certificate
- ▶ Cookie banner
- ▶ Google Analytics
- ▶ Site map

NOTE



The list of requirements outlined above is known as the Information Architecture Design – in other words, what goes where on your website to make it easy for your customers to find information and products.

Your developer will also use this information to develop a wireframe of your site. This is a skeleton outline of your website, without the distraction of colours, images or content. It shows the menu headings and main information blocks.

7. Maintenance, training, support, hosting

If you think you or your staff need training in managing the content on your new website, ask the developer for associated costs with a half-day's training at your premises.

The same applies if you think your staff will need training on the e-commerce or SEO side of the website. Ask the developer to include this in the price for training and to supply user manuals for the content management system.

It is likely that you will need ongoing maintenance support, so make sure you ask for this in the quote.

If you want to change the provider that hosts your website, ask for details of who your site will be hosted by, where the host's servers are located, and the costs associated with hosting and renewing. This is important to know because privacy regulation is different inside the EU and outside. It is easier to resolve any issues you may have within Ireland rather than in very different legal jurisdictions, and you may find it easier to get support during the same business hours as yourself.

Website maintenance is important – you may think the job is done when your website goes live, but... you're not quite finished. Your website contains many elements (including plugins) that need to be checked to ensure they are running correctly. It is also vital to factor in updates to software and to secure your site against hackers. Staying up to date with regular maintenance checks is far less expensive than fixing issues that threaten the speed or security of your site.

NOTE



It is usually best to request open source software to build your website (also called Content Management System). This gives you greater control, with access to coded files meaning you are free to move to another web developer or hosting provider.

8. References

In this section, ask for examples of other sites that the developer has worked on. Ideally, these sites should be broadly similar to your area of business or contain elements of what you want in your own website.

This will enable you to assess the style of websites the developer has produced, including page templates, shopping cart and blog pages. This is important as it will bring the website developer's response to life for you. And it will enable you to visualise your own new site.

9. Budget

Set out your budget for the website development. This will rule out quotations that are outside your budget. It will also give the website developer a framework within which they can quote.

Budget for this project is €5,000.

NOTE



Ideally, businesses should spend 5% of their turnover on marketing if they want to stand still. If they are trying to grow, they should spend 10% of their turnover. So, based on your turnover and the percentage of your business to be generated by your website, decide how much you wish to spend. Make sure your developer gives you their rate including VAT, so you can compare the full price with others.

10. Timetable

Outline when you want the new website to be completed.

For instance, 'From the date we agree the project, we are allowing a period of six to eight weeks to complete the site for [your business name].'

8 weeks.

NOTE



Our e-book, 'Website costs - how much should you pay?', gives a helpful list for your website development timetable, and tips for choosing your developer.

11. If you have queries

List the contact details of the person in your business who can answer questions about the website development project.

NAME

TEL

EMAIL

12. Administration

Tender Return Date: give a specific date and time of day

TENDER RETURN DATE **INSERT DATE 3 WEEKS FROM WHEN FILLING OUT TENDER.**

Return tender to: name of contact to receive tender document and their email address

RETURN TENDER TO **[YOUR NAME]**

EMAIL **[YOUR EMAIL]**

Please read the specific requirements of our website tender before responding and address any queries by email as soon as possible to [same name as quoted in point 11].

The tender will be awarded on [specific date] and each tendering company will receive a communication from us.

The project deadline is envisaged as [say, 12 weeks from now, for instance, end-May, end-September and so on].

NOTE



Create a list of potential website developers and contact them by phone to gauge their interest before sending out the Website Development Tender.

Website Development Tender

YOUR BUSINESS NAME

DATE

1. Introduction – who we are

Here is a description of our business and the products and services we provide to give you, the developer, an understanding of what problems we solve for our customers.

[Blank area for business description]

Here is a blank Website Development Tender Template for you to use.

2. Current website

Our current website address.

[Blank area for website address]

To view and fill in form, please open with Adobe Acrobat Reader, downloadable from: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>

3. Our mission

Our mission statement is outlined below.

[Blank area for mission statement]

4. Our customers

Below we provide information on our current customers. Target customers for the new website are also identified.

.....

5. Outcomes - what we want from the website

Our expectations of the new/redeveloped website are:

.....

6. Specifically - what we want on the website

In the box below, we outline what works well on our current website and also what doesn't work.

7. Maintenance, training, support, hosting

Here are our training requirements. Please quote the daily/half day rates for each of the training elements.

8. References

Please include examples of similar websites you have worked on.

9. Budget

Our budget for the website development is set out below. We have a separate budget for marketing, promotion and SEO.

10. Timetable

Outline timetable for website development.

11. If you have queries

Our contact details.

12. Administration

Tender response and cost outline

Please provide a detailed tender response using the table below – give a brief description of work to be completed under each heading.

DESCRIPTION	NOTES	TIME ALLOCATED (DAYS)	COST €
Project kick-off			
Information architecture design			
Initial wireframe design			
Draft 1 of page/content layout templates			
Build content management system			
Transfer all content from current site*			
SEO			
Test new site and make it live			
Team training/handover			
Annual maintenance			
Annual hosting			
Total			
Total including VAT			

*If this is your first website, you will not have content to transfer.

Unlock the power of the internet with a trusted Irish .ie online identity

It's uniquely Irish

The official Internet country code for Ireland is **.ie** and is the only online address that is Irish. A **.ie** tells the global community that you are Irish and tells the Irish community that you are local. You can even register an Irish language name if required, fadas and all.

It's more likely to be available

There is a wider choice of available **.ie** domain names compared to **.com**, as significantly more of those names are already registered.

It lets your customers find you online

.ie addresses rank higher than **.com** addresses on Irish based search engines like Google.ie. Irish consumers are more likely to click on local website addresses.

It's trusted

Every **.ie** applicant's identity is checked and validated at the point of registration. Consumers will have confidence in your business as **.ie** is a well-established and trusted domain. 77% of Irish consumers prefer a **.ie** website when buying online, instead of a **.com**.²

It's the preferred online address for business in Ireland

91% of Irish consumers associate **.ie** websites with Irish businesses over other websites like **.com**.² The **.ie** domain accounts for the majority of hosted domains in Ireland.³

It protects your brand

Securing your **.ie** online address strengthens your brand and protects your online identity. All **.ie** domains are registered on a first-come, first-served basis.

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² .IE Consumer Trust 2020

³ .IE Domain Profile Report