



Building a Home... on the Internet

POSTED BY JEN CLARKE ON JUL 12, 2017 IN INSIGHTS | 0 COMMENTS



There's a reason it's called "building" a website. In a lot of ways, the process is similar to constructing a home. First, a client decides their current arrangements are no longer adequate. We research the neighborhood and look at comparables. We evaluate the client's priorities and draw up a blueprint based on what they can afford. Then comes framing (ours is the wire kind), construction, installation of all the bits that make it run. We undergo inspections along the way. After adding some curb appeal, tidying up and making the new home presentable, we take a final walk-through. Then we hand the keys over to the happy homeowner.

Sometimes setbacks arise. The marble countertops you had your heart set on might be on backorder. Or the weather delayed the pouring of your foundation, adding weeks to the schedule. Sometimes the wrong part arrives and the color doesn't look at all like the swatch you picked out.

The amount of time a construction project takes depends on how big and how nice you want your new home to be. You can select one of three floorplans in a neighborhood where the only difference between each house is a slight variation in brick color. You'll get the basics and that place will appear to have sprouted out of the ground overnight. Or, you can opt to spend a little more and fully customize your space. This will take a little longer, too.

When building a home – whether it's a physical structure or a website – your approach determines whether you end up with a fabulous space that suits you perfectly, or a money pit. We recently completed our second project with The Orpheum Theatre Group: the construction of a new online home. And while we always strive to create work that we're proud to share, their approach made this especially enjoyable. Here are a few reasons that stand out:

A Client That Knows Exactly What It Needs

The Orpheum had a very good idea of what was and wasn't working with their current solution. They knew what they needed from a new website. They had consulted with industry peers and identified best practices they hoped to adopt. They came to us with a prioritized list of needs, wants and "nice-to-haves." They had done their homework, and therefore had reasonable expectations for what could be accomplished within their budget and timeline. Unlike those couples on House Hunters who appear to be hunting for two different houses, the team had a cohesive vision.

Giving Stakeholders Ownership of the Process

Parents help their kids acclimate to a big move by showing them where their new rooms will be, building a sweet playset in the backyard, and accepting their input (within reason, of course). Likewise, such a drastic change as a completely revamped website can be a huge adjustment for those whose day-to-day workflows are affected. We included the stakeholders most directly impacted by the website – members of the development, education, event and ticket departments – early on. We conducted thorough interviews about what they liked and didn't like about the current website, what features they use, what new features would benefit them. Though these individuals weren't the primary decision makers, their input helped us ensure the changes we were making would benefit them. Our client did an incredible job managing this part of the process, which helped us anticipate and eliminate potential conflicts down the road.

Face Time: Not Just an iPhone App

Our clients are spread out all over the world, so we don't always have the luxury of face time. While we spent plenty of time on calls and GoToMeeting, we took advantage of the fact that our offices are within walking distance of each other and met in person whenever possible – in all phases. That means our client got to meet every single person who worked on the project. Strong communication helps take the client/agency relationship to the next level. It's essential to building trust, which comes in handy in the event of what I call "little externalities." On Fixer Upper, when Joanna calls to deliver bad news – a DIY plumbing nightmare in the attic, an unforeseen wiring issue – do you know why no one freaks out? Trust. And some editing, probably. But mostly trust.

If you've got a new (online) home construction on the horizon, consider these tips as you begin. And if you're curious, check out the finished product: orpheum-memphis.com. We're pretty happy with the way it turned out.

To see more of Sullivan branding's work and learn more about the agency, [click here](#)

Submit a Comment

Your email address will not be published.



Submit Comment

Sullivan Branding

175 Toyota Plaza, Suite 100
Memphis, TN 38103
901.526.6220



Integrated

- Strategy & Planning · Creative Development
- Account Management · Brand Identity
- Advertising · Digital · Social · Experiential
- Sponsorships · Promotions · Public Relations
- Media Planning & Buying · Marketing Analytics

Experienced

- Arts & Culture · Hospitality · CPG · Logistics · Education · Retail
- Financial Services · Sports · Food & Beverage · Telecom
- Healthcare · Tourism