



Small business advice on choosing a web designer - what you need know

We get a lot of clients in the Bega Valley and Canberra regions who require web design assistance. From new websites built from scratch to updating an ageing website or transitioning an old website onto a modern Content Management System (CMS).

By far the most common issue facing many businesses large and small is choosing a designer or agency that is capable of an end-to-end web design and development project.

The difference between design and development

Web **design** involves the *visual presentation* of a website. How a website looks is where an experienced designer or design team can be an asset to the website project. Most web designers however don't have much experience in the *development* side of a website project.

A web **developer** will typically be a coder who has experience in HTML, CSS, Javascript and PHP. These coding skills allow a developer to make the website actually work. They are crucial to any website project.

It is often a safe assumption that a good web designer will not be good developer and a good developer will not be a good designer - after all we are talking about both sides of the brain here. There are exceptions to the rule but that is rare.

This is why our approach at 2pi Software is to leverage teams strong in both skill sets. Collaboration between our design team and our development team helps us deliver great looking websites that perform exceptionally well. When clients require additional customisations, we can perform these with ease because we have coded a custom theme specific to their approved design.

Web designer or assembler?

Thanks to the development of Content Management Systems such as WordPress and Drupal, website designers no longer need an experienced web developer as much as they used to (if they need one at all). Off-the-shelf themes such as those available at [theme forest](#) make it easy for a designer to install and add their client's content. Within a matter of hours, a designer can have a website up and running without ever having to write a line of code.

However, even with a CMS there are times where a design does not work properly on a browser or mobile platform. In some cases a special website feature will need to be coded specific to the client and this is where a web designer can get into trouble.

Because a web designer can run an entire web design business without ever writing any code, they often struggle to meet the needs of clients with basic requests. This is the difference between a web *designer* and a web *assembler*.

A true web *designer* will have the necessary skills - at the very least, a basic understanding of core HTML, CSS and Javascript - to perform customisations and fixes for a client. A web *assembler* is someone who uses strictly off-the-shelf themes.

There is nothing wrong with being a web assembler. However, if you as the client are not aware of these limitations, your project will be fraught with pain. You'll struggle to understand why basic requests go ignored or take an exceptionally long time to complete.

Unfortunately, we have many clients who have had less than stellar experiences with "web designers" who in reality are really just assemblers. What most people equate with a web *design* is the visual presentation. If that design was not actually created by the designer, then this creates a misleading environment where frustration thrives - not a good climate for either the client or the assembler.

Faster alone, further together

At 2pi Software, we value strong skills in all kinds of fields and we have expanded our teams over the years to reflect a wide range of complimentary skill sets.

We have in-house designers, coders, developers, systems engineers and cloud hosting specialists who work together to bring a project to life. The team approach is often best as this allows us to utilise the best of each team member.

If you are looking to migrate your [infrastructure to the cloud](#), develop a [WordPress or Drupal](#) based website or are looking for [custom app development](#), give us a call and see the benefits of employing a strong, local and dedicated team for your next project.