How to write a great website brief
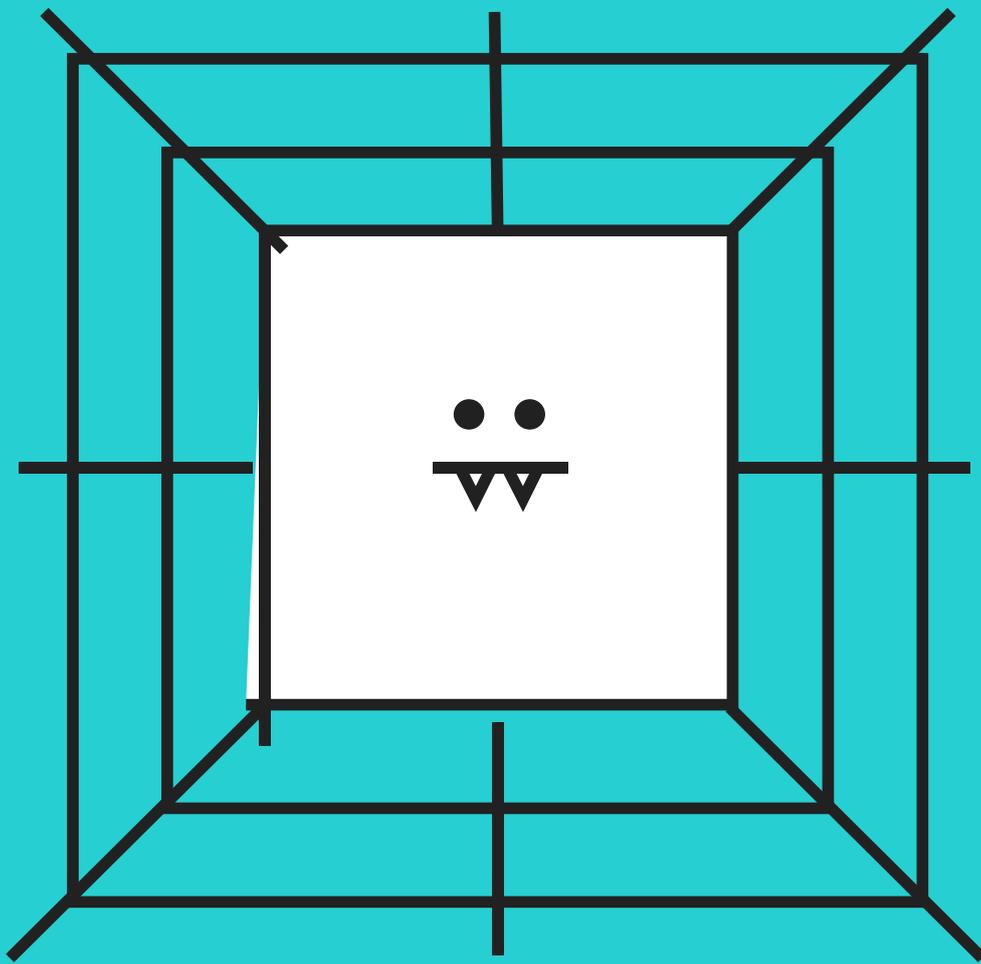
When it comes to web design and development projects, the quality of the outcome can often be traced back to the quality of the brief. They can fall short in terms of detail, scope and rationale, making it hard for the agency to decipher the key objectives and execute a suitable solution. In short, the better the brief, the better the outcome.

Here are some handy hints to help you put together a water-tight directive that will get your web project off to the best possible start!

Purpose

What is the objective for the website?

Is it to generate leads? Or perhaps to sell products and services? It may be that you just want it to serve as a brochure site and be a source of information for your prospective customers. What role do you see your website playing in your business? In any case, there needs to be a clear objective and purpose for your website. This will directly influence the creative ideas that your agency brings to the table in terms of design style and functionality.
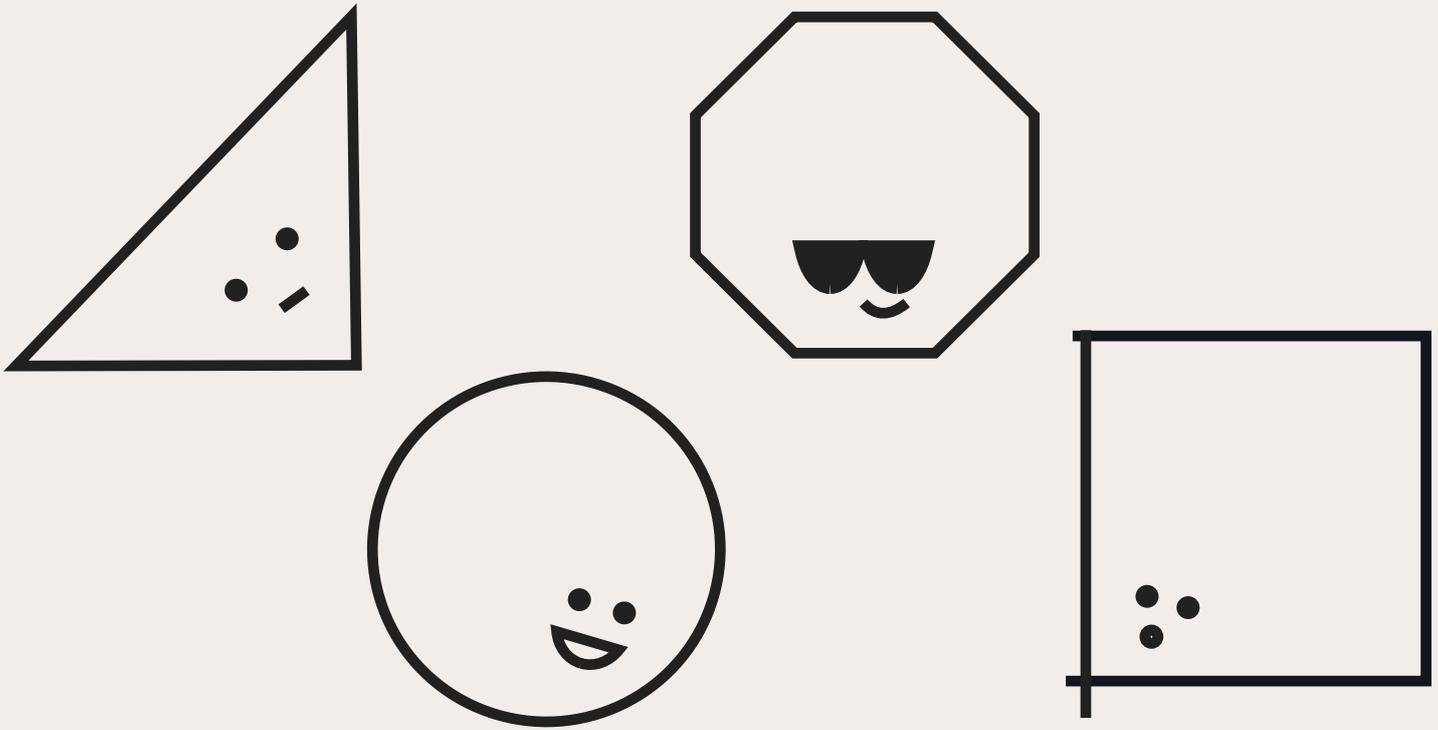
Target audience

Who is going to be using your site?

The more we as an agency know about them, the better. What sort of demographic do you service? What is their personality? What influences their buying decisions? How do you want them to use the site? These are all key questions that help create a website that is tailored to their requirements. And the more intuitive a member of your target audience finds a site, the more likely they are to use it on a regular basis and refer others to it.

Do you have an effective brand in place?

Brand Assets?

Do you have any guidelines in place?

Brand

Think about your brand and how you want it to translate online.

Consider your tone of voice and the way you communicate with your target audience. Do you have an effective brand in place? Do you have any guidelines in place that the agency will need to follow? Or assets such as logos, fonts and colour palettes? If not, then perhaps you should address any improvements that need to be made before rolling out a new website? Think about your competition and how you want to differentiate yourselves from them. Your brand values and personality can set you apart from your competitors, so make sure your chosen agency is well-educated in the ways of your brand and have the best possible understanding of your mission as a business.
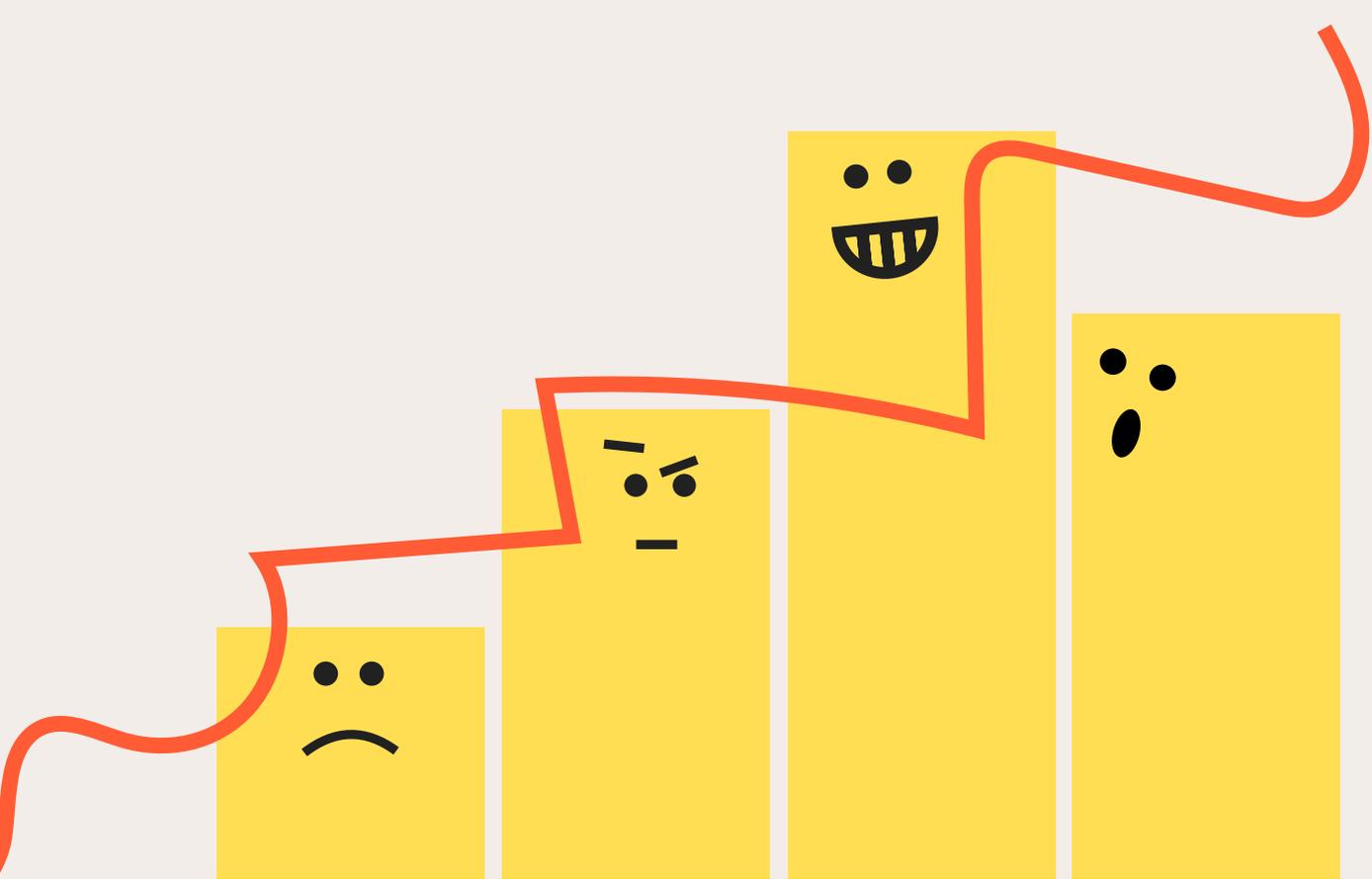
Analytics

## Are you currently running an Adwords or SEO campaign?

Do you have Google Analytics installed on your existing site? You may have content that needs to be preserved because it has optimisation value and your chosen agency will want to learn as much as they can from the performance data available.
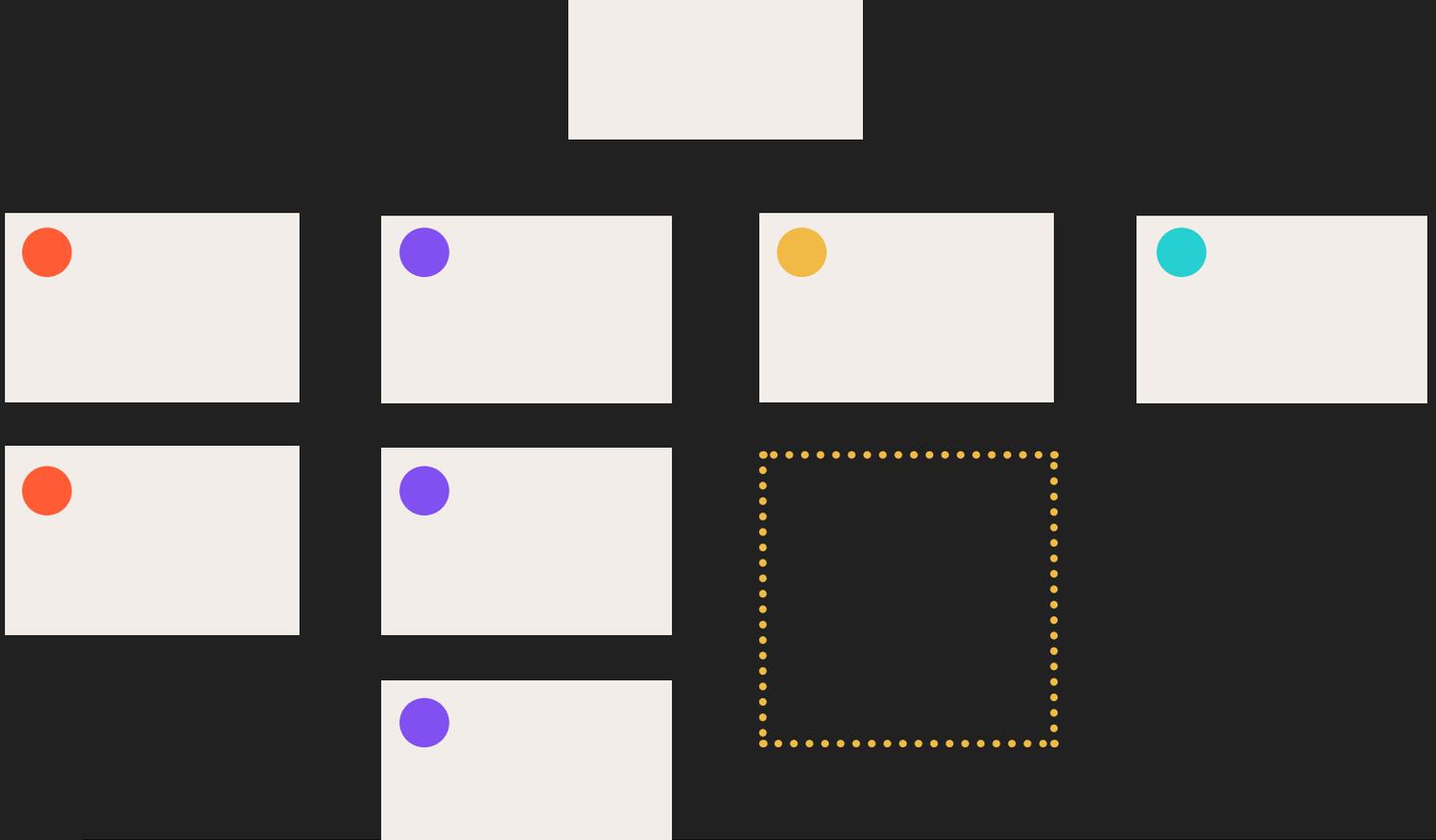
Structure

## How many pages will the site have?

Can you create a basic sitemap of the different sections and the number of pages within them? What are the pages that you need? For example, you may want Home, About, Services, Contact and Blog pages. This helps to determine the number of layout designs required and assists the agency in putting together an accurate quote.
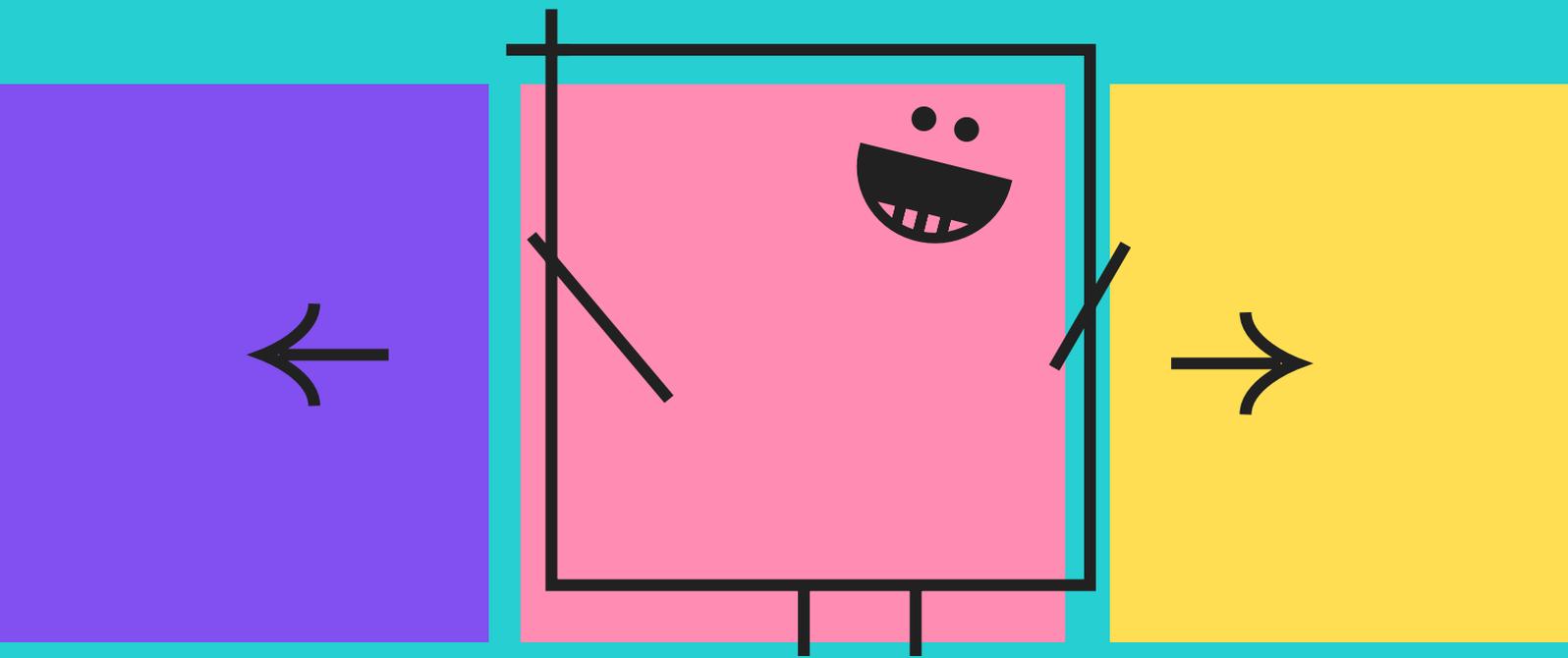
Features

## Will your site have any special features or tools?

Do you want an image gallery? A social media feed? Or perhaps an interactive map? Provide details of any features and how you would like them to work. Have you seen some inspiring new technology that you would like to harness? Give examples where you can.
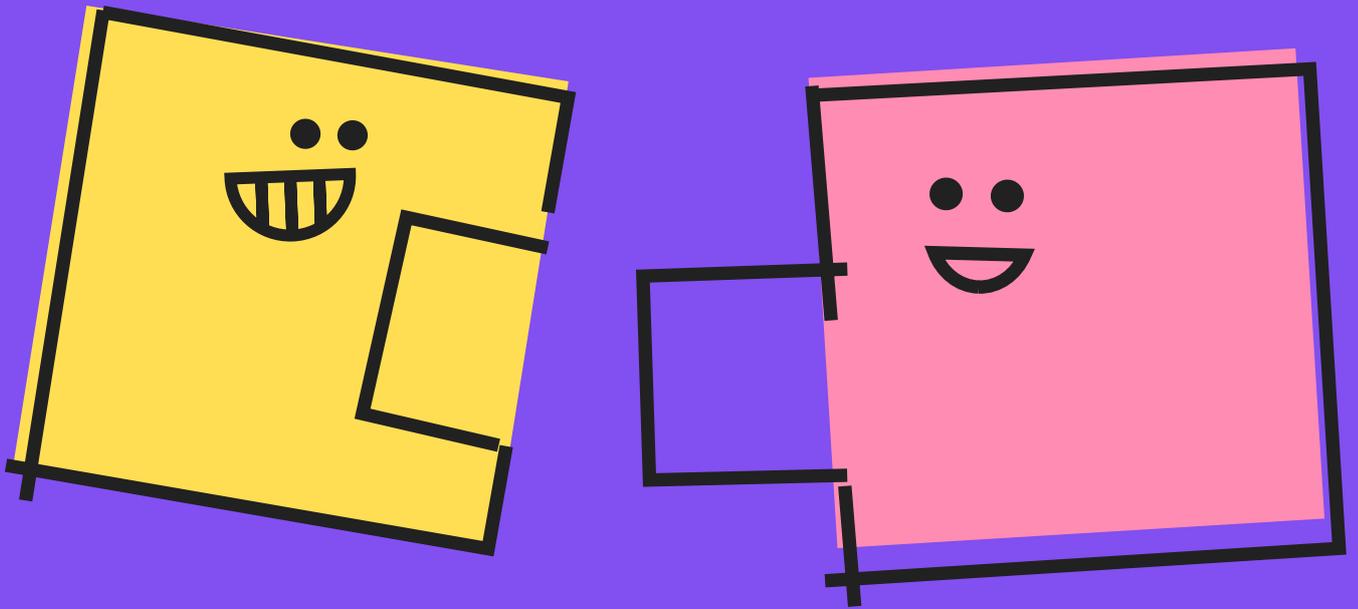
Technology

## What does your website need to work in conjunction with?

Does your website need to work in conjunction with a database, CRM system or any other third-party software? You might be a recruitment agency using Broadbean to post jobs or a hotel with a booking system that needs to update in real time. This kind of integration represents an important factor in the development of a new site and developers will need to explore how these different systems can work seamlessly together. You might need to grant them temporary access so make sure you have your login details available.

COPY

IMAGES

VIDEOS
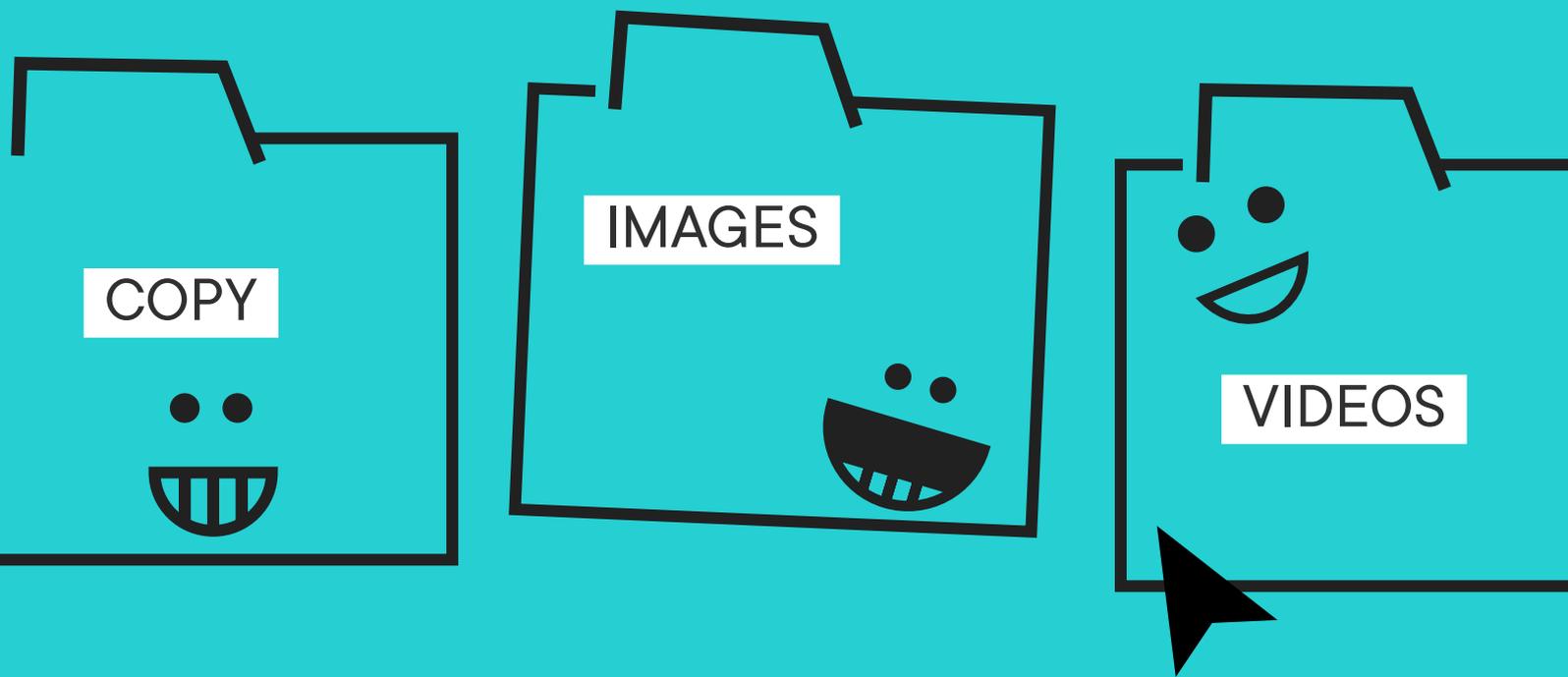
Content

How much content do you have?

Do you need copywriting services? What about imagery, is there a photographer on board or do you need stock imagery sourced? Do you want the ability to add content to the site yourselves via a content management system or would you prefer the agency to make updates on an ad-hoc basis?

Launch Day!
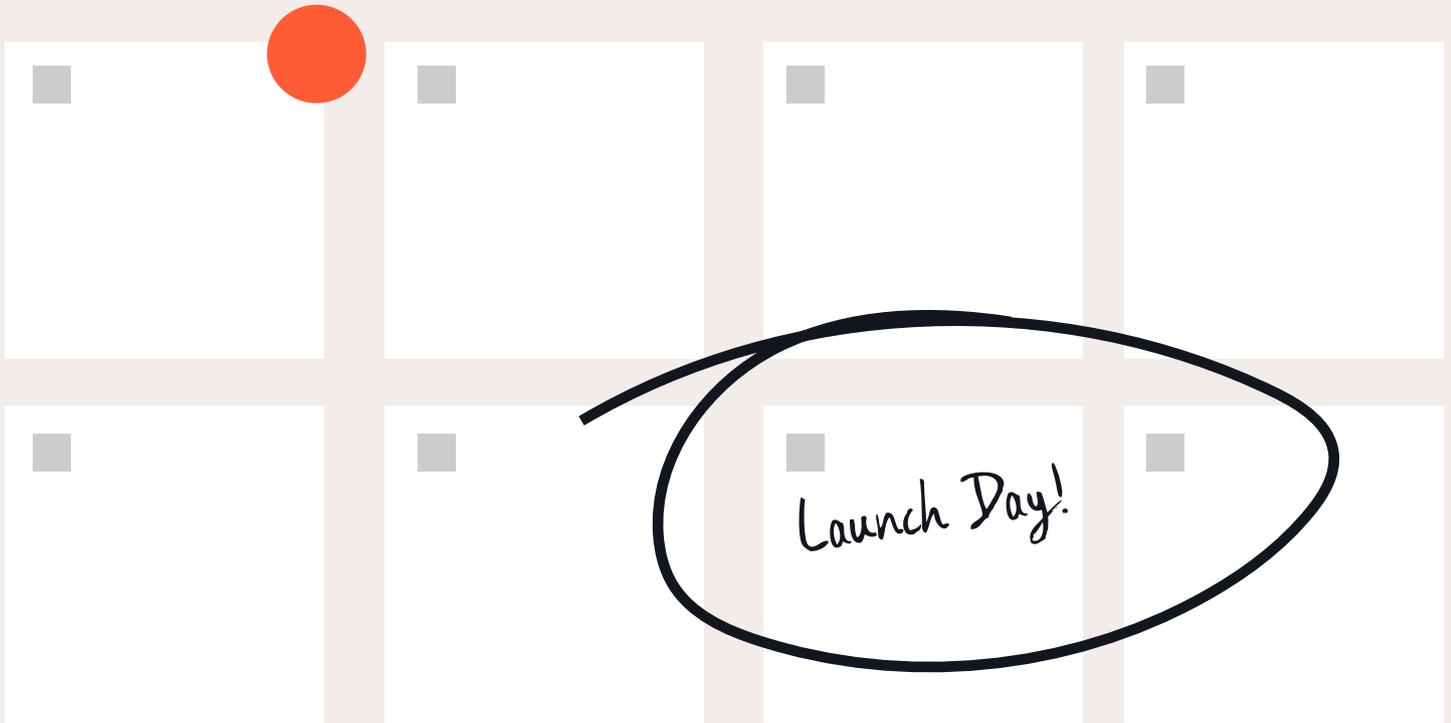
Timescales

What is a realistic timeframe for the project?

"ASAP" doesn't really cut it. Do you need to align the launch of the site with an event, promotion or location change? Be as accurate as you can.
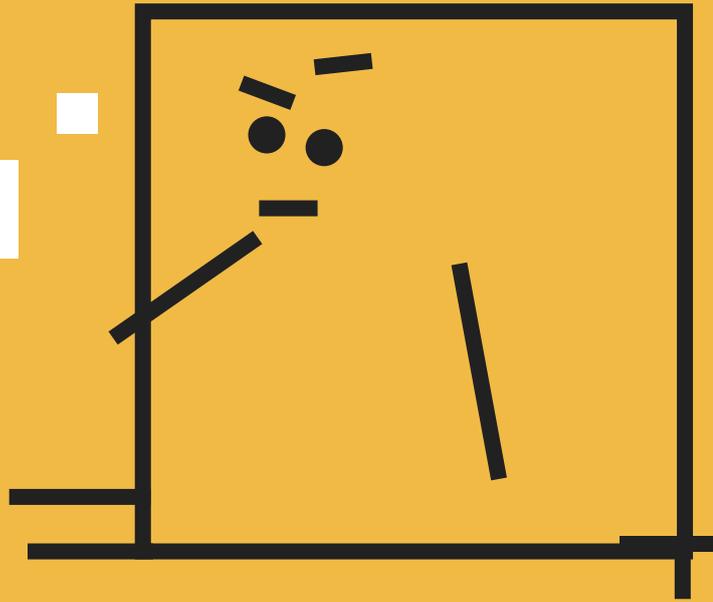
Budget

Save your time and energy by disclosing your budget.

We understand that some people want to play their cards close to their chests but if you have a set budget in mind and can share it then it allows an agency to tailor a solution to meet that budget.

Struggling to put that perfect brief together?

Get in touch.

We'll be happy to help.

Next steps?

Why not check out our
How to ensure a smooth & successful branding project

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