Project Estimate Worksheet

Scope a website project properly before you brief an agency, and set a budget you can defend.

Use this before you brief anyone, including us. A project that is scoped properly costs less than one that is discovered on the way. Fill in section 1 in your own words, no jargon.

1. Define the outcome

Question	Your answer
What must be true when this project is finished?	
What does it replace, and what happens to that today?	
Who inside the business owns the result?	
What is the deadline, and what drives it?	
What happens if nothing is done this quarter?	

2. Scope by surface

Surface	In scope?	Notes and unknowns
Public website pages		
Content and copywriting		
Design system or brand work		
Booking or ecommerce		
Accounts, login, permissions		
Integrations (payments, CRM, email, stock)		
Data migration from an existing system		
Reporting and analytics		
Ongoing maintenance and hosting		

3. Effort drivers that move the price

- Number of unique page templates. Ten pages of one template is cheap, five pages of five templates is not.
- Number of integrations. Each connection has an owner, a failure mode and an error path.
- Data quality. Migration is priced by mess, not by row count.
- Decision speed. Slow sign-off, not slow coding, is what moves most projects past their estimate.
- Accessibility and compliance requirements that are audited rather than assumed.

4. Build the estimate

Line	Assumption	Low	High
Discovery and definition	Days, rate		
Design	Templates x days		

Line	Assumption	Low	High
Build	Templates x days		
Integrations	Count x days		
Content and migration	Volume		
Testing and launch	Percentage of build		
Contingency	Ten to twenty percent		
Total			

5. The conversation to have before signing

- Agree what a change looks like once build starts, and what it costs.
- Agree who signs off, and how long sign-off takes. Put it in the schedule.
- Agree what 'done' means in measurable terms, not in adjectives.
- Agree access: domains, hosting, analytics and third-party accounts should be in your name, not the agency's.
- Agree the exit. You should always own the code, the content and the accounts.

Worksheet from BrightClick. We scope projects in writing before quoting, and we tell you when the cheapest answer is not to build it yet.