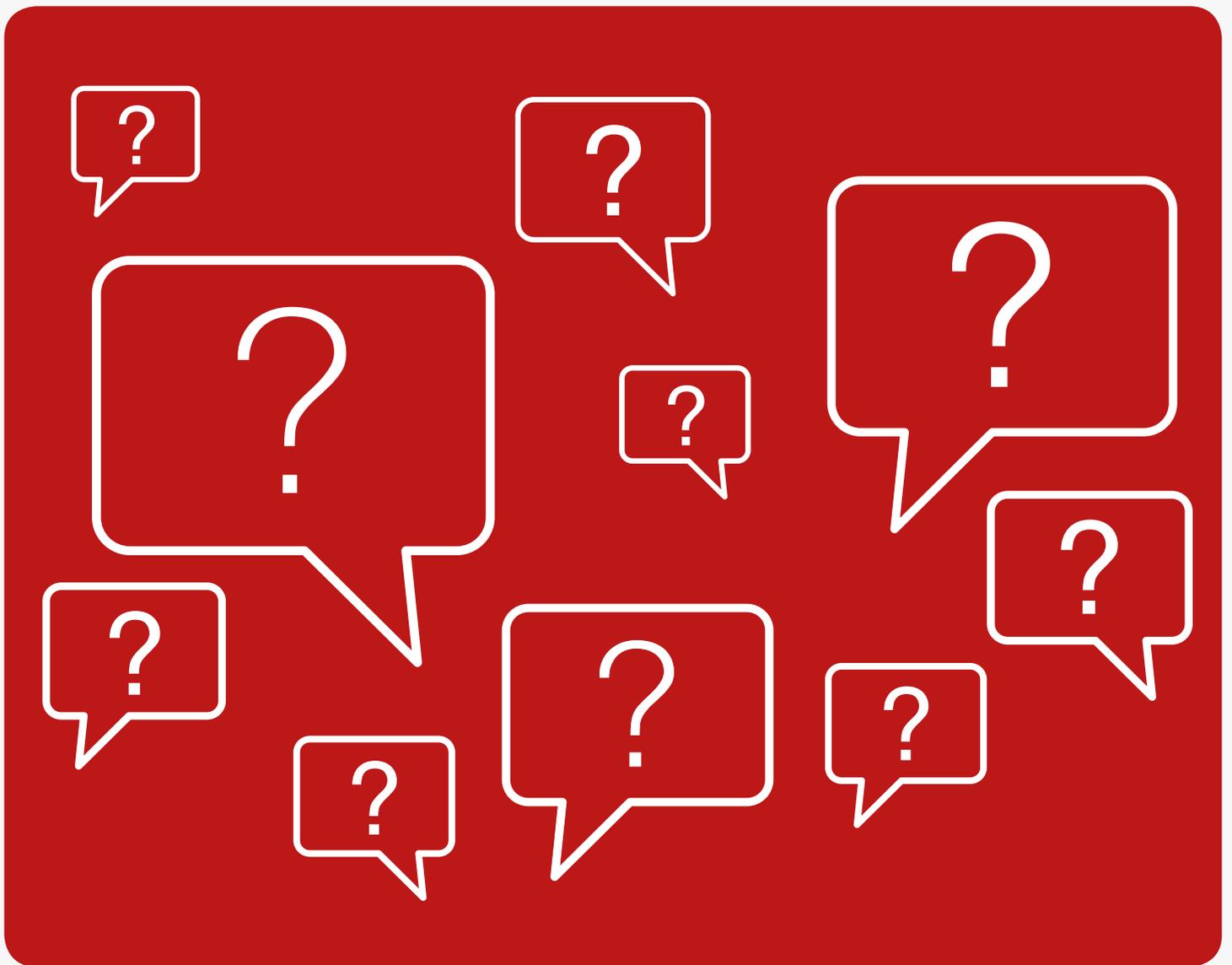# 10 QUESTIONS
to ask your website developer

art zero

1.

We have an outline of our project requirements specification, but are you able to carry out a full business analysis of our needs, understanding all the information flows and our users' requirements?

Very often, building a website turns out to be more complicated than you first expected. Even if you think you have developed a full outline of all your requirement specifications, you should still ask your web developer to carry out a full business analysis. This is because there will be many fine technical issues to be included in the solution which may not be obvious if you are not a web developer yourself.

The development of a website is a pretty complicated project and there is probably more to be done than you realise, so you need a website developer who is able to make sense of all your requirements both stated and implied, and who understands the way that everything should fit together. That way you both know what is really going to be involved in making your website from the very start. It's better not to have any nasty surprises when you are halfway through the project.

2.

Can you offer a fully customised solution, built from the ground up to satisfy our individual business requirements, or do you normally use a standard "off the peg" content management system?

If you don't think your website is going to be too complicated it can be easy to fall into the trap of thinking that an "off the peg" solution will work for you. While it may cover 80% of your needs, getting that final 20% to match your requirements will be much harder if you choose a general package such as Wordpress, as any updates and fine tunings you need to make later will be far more complicated. You may end up having to compromise your needs to make them fit a "one size fits all" solution.

To get a website that completely fulfills your individual requirements as an organisation, you should choose a website developer who can deliver a fully customised solution.

3.

Are you specialists in designing and building bespoke website solutions?

This one sounds obvious and that's why it is an important one to ask. You need to ensure that your website developers are specialists in their field: people you can trust to deliver a solution that really works for you and to work with you closely on all the details. In many cases agencies outsource the critical technical work, which can lead to problems in the longer term.

Ask your agency about their background in the industry, and for recent examples of successful projects for organisations that are like your own. And of course, check out their work for yourself: are their websites the kind of thing you want for your company?

4.

Will you be using an affordable Open Source framework to build your site?

You probably know that you want your website to be affordable, but whether it's open source really matters as well.

The licensing fees for proprietary systems can eat up a significant part of your budget, and these must be paid every year, whereas open source software is by and large free from software licence fees.

Open source software is continually changing and developing, allowing your website to develop naturally in line with industry trends in the coming years, and it can be fully modified and adapted to your requirements.

5.

Can you offer integration with the full range of our company's different IT systems?

Integration is vital for your website to be fully functional at the front end, but also for your own ease of use in the back end. Having all your data and IT systems integrated will save time and enable efficient working, but many agencies do not have the skills to fully integrate all your different systems.

6.

Can I speak to two or three of your current clients who have had custom sites built?

It is all very well for your website developers to tell you that they are experts, but a whole other thing for that to be properly delivered. That is why talking to previous clients is so important; it will give you an insight and a trust in your website developer that talking to them directly never can.

And while this is partly about just ensuring that they can actually do what they promise, it's also about ensuring that they will work for you. They may be fantastic at what they do, but that doesn't necessarily mean they will gel with your organisation.

Talking to their current clients is a great way to get a better sense of what working with them is actually like, and whether they are likely to be a good fit for your organisation.

7.

How will you ensure the security of our website, our users, and their data?

Too often we just assume that our online data is secure, that the Internet Service Provider (ISP) will just take of it. But the internet is not always the safest place, and unless your website developer hosts their servers in the right place, and follows the correct procedures, they cannot ensure the security of your data.

So, if you value your data, and your users' data, make sure you ask this question now, and not after a potentially serious data security problem.

8.

How likely is it that I may have to compromise my needs at some point in the development?

Let's be realistic: not everything is going to go perfectly, and the chances are that at some point during the process of developing your website you will have to make compromises.

The important thing is to know that you are working with a developer who will be honest and upfront with you from the start, so that you know that throughout the process both of you will be on the same page.

9.

Does your current software package meet my exact specification or will new code need to be written?

There will almost certainly be new code to be written, and that's not a problem. The importance of this question is knowing that you and your developer will be on the same page right from the start, and they know from the outset what technical solution will work for you so that you will not need to make any changes to your business procedures to use your software solution.

10.

Can I have the email address and direct line of the in-house lead developer who worked on the project, or will I need to contact a remote call centre or help desk for support once the website is live?

Too often you'll find yourself in a situation where you have no clear direct contact, and end up going via a call centre when you need anything. Make sure you have a direct line to the team who are developing your site for when the time comes that you need support.

Do you need to improve services to your customers or members?

Does your website no longer fit your needs, or is it even turning off your prospects?

Has using your website become a challenge?

Are you finding it a headache to keep up to date with your users' online expectations?

In short, do you find yourself asking the question "How can we improve our website's functionality to stay competitive in attracting and retaining clients, at an affordable price?"

For more than ten years, **Artonezero** has been providing affordable, customised solutions that precisely fit organisations' and their end users' unique needs. Artonezero creates online web platforms that integrate with your company's processes and systems and the needs of your end user. Our exclusive, highly flexible framework, Cadenza, built on open source standards, significantly reduces the cost of customisation and eliminates expensive, ongoing licensing fees. Our world class technical team, based in Shoreditch, London, has the technical knowhow to create bespoke affordable solutions which your users will love. And unlike an impersonal tech support centre halfway around the world, Artonezero provides local personal support from the same people who designed and understand your unique system once it goes live.

We offer a free **2 hour website assessment** with one of our expert consultants.

To take advantage of this offer please visit our website.

Artonezero Ltd

Unit 1, 33 Waterson Street
London E2 8HT
United Kingdom

⌨ www.artonezero.com

📞 +44 20 301 103 90

@ hello@artonezero.com