CT Studios

FREE GUIDE

Brief a developer in ten lines

A one-page brief to fill in before you talk to any developer, and five questions to ask them.

Use it: Before your first call about a website, shop or app. Print it, or copy the text version into an email.

Ten short answers make any first conversation with a developer shorter and better. Write them down before you talk to anyone, us included. Short answers are fine. "I don't know yet" is an answer too.

Your brief

1 **What does your business do?**

One or two sentences, as you'd tell a new customer.

2 **Who will use this, and what do they do today?**

Customers, staff, suppliers? How do they do the job now?

3 **What is the one thing it must do?**

If it did only one thing well, what would that be?

4 **What do you use now?**

Spreadsheets, WhatsApp, paper, another app, nothing?

5 **What's your deadline, and why?**

A launch, a season, an event? The reason matters as much as the date.

6 **What's your budget range?**

Say it. A range saves everyone's time and shapes what is possible.

7 **Who decides, and who approves?**

Name the person who signs off, and anyone who must be asked.

8 **What have you seen that you like?**

Websites or apps, and what you like about each.

9 **What must never happen?**

Lost orders, wrong prices, customer data leaking: your red lines.

10 **How will you know it worked?**

One thing you could count: bookings, hours saved, orders, fewer calls.

Five questions to ask any developer, us included

If the answers are vague, keep looking.

1 Who tests the work?

Something nobody else has checked will reach your customers with mistakes in it.

> **GOOD LOOKS LIKE**
> A named step where someone other than the person who built it checks it, before you see it.

2 What will I see, and when?

Weeks of silence are where projects go wrong.

> **GOOD LOOKS LIKE**
> Dates for milestones, and a working preview you can open and try along the way.

3 What exactly is in the quote?

A one-line quote is how a project's price grows later.

> **GOOD LOOKS LIKE**
> A written list of what is included, how many rounds of changes, and how extra work is priced.

4 Who owns the code and the domain?

If you don't, you can't move or change your own website without them.

> **GOOD LOOKS LIKE**
> You do. The domain is registered in your name and you get the code.

5 What happens after launch?

Every system needs fixes and updates once real people use it.

> **GOOD LOOKS LIKE**
> A clear support period, what it covers, and what ongoing help costs after it.

Keep this brief whoever you hire. If you'd like a second pair of eyes on your answers, send them to us. We'll tell you honestly what we'd build first, even if it isn't with us.

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