



german cooperation

DEUTSCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT

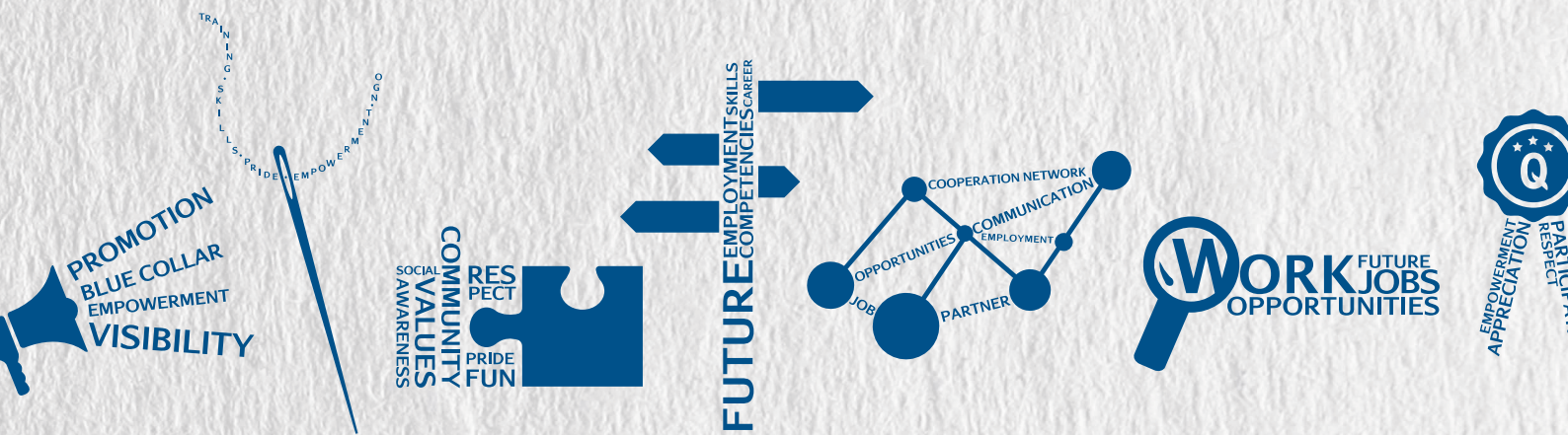
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# 8.6

## HOW TO CREATE A PROJECT WEBSITE



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## What Is It Useful For

Nowadays a website is as important as a phone number. It is vital for promoting any project.

A website can include as much information as you want – as opposed to other media where you have to be short and concise.

Details about the project should be found on the website, for example the specialisations you offer, where to register, where to get training.



## When To Use

A website should always be there and should be fed on a regular basis.



## How Long Does It Take

A few months should be allocated for a website to be fully finalised. The update thereof is an ongoing activity.



## What Is Needed

Financially, a website creation needs its own budget (in Lebanon it can vary from 5000 USD to more than 20 000 USD).

A website license needs to be renewed on a yearly basis (depending on the provider, there are offers for several years).

You need to look for a good trustworthy provider, because once you decide on one, you cannot go back, unless you create a new website.

Finally, you need content to feed the website, and thus a person within the project should be assigned to regularly feed it and update it.



## Target audience

Although the main internet user is the youth, a website is addressed to the public in general.

Similarly to a newspaper or a magazine, it offers the possibility to have sections, where the target audience can be narrowed down.

For example, students can check which schools offer which specialisations and where to find them, parents can find information about the project that could attract them, the companies can also check the specialisations and where to find students to train, the teachers can find information about teachers' further trainings etc.



## Examples

The DSME project has developed a website that you can visit on [www.dsme-lb.com](http://www.dsme-lb.com).

The TVET & LM programme in PSE has developed a website:

[www.tvet-pal.org](http://www.tvet-pal.org)

“Owners” of the website are the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education. The assigned colleagues in the ministries were provided with website training in order to create and upload content and get familiar with the proper usage and benefits of a website.



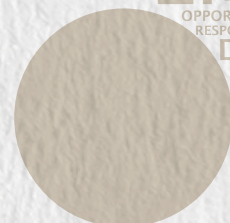
## WHAT TO DO

In order to achieve the above mentioned objectives, the following steps should be undertaken:



- Find a trustworthy provider.
- Several meetings should be held with the chosen website provider so that they can know your product just as much as you do, and thus translate the idea into a website structure.
- If your project's name is already taken for another website, decide on an alternative that would still look professional and that is not too complicated.
- Decide on the language (of course it could be in several languages).
- Make sure that technically, the website can be viewed from a mobile phone.
- The website should be adapted to the branding of your product, meaning that the design should have the same colours as the ad, the same pictures that are used in general for articles in newspapers and magazines etc.
- A website should include all the information that you have. The content should be agreed upon and sent to the provider for upload.
- The contact person within the project should regularly update it. Note that the website is the image of your project, so it is better to have all the content checked before it goes online.
- Ask the provider for a "google analytics" username and password.
- Use Google analytics to monitor various statistics (visits to your website, peaks following campaigns, sections that are mostly visited etc.).
- For GIZ projects / programmes: Make sure all the necessary logos are there, and check with the GIZ Headquarter for any specific rules (such as Cooperation logo on top for example).

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## WHAT TO OBSERVE

The following lessons learnt should be observed:



### Pros



- Unlike social media, you don't need to be "social", thus avoiding answering to negative feedback from audience. It is the space where you have the complete freedom to write as much as you want, with all the details without expecting comments.
- Google analytics provide detailed information about your audience.
- A good website "answers the telephone calls" for you.
- A website is available to both your regular and potential customers.

- A website needs regular maintenance and content/news should be uploaded regularly (at least weekly). This is time consuming. If this does not happen a website is out-dated, which is more embarrassing rather than of any benefit for the project.

- Indeed, you should place the links to your other social media on your website and push the visitors to click on them by, for example, saying "Click here for pictures" to take the viewer to the Facebook page, because:
  - Firstly, this increases the visits to all your social media presence. Secondly because the more you upload heavy files on the website, the slower it gets to load. So it is better for example not to put many pictures and refer the visitor to your Facebook page to see the album.
  - Link the website with the websites of your partners.
  - Project partners are often very enthusiastic when it comes to setting up a website for the/their project and full of ideas what should be presented. But the effort (time wise, creating content, assigning personnel etc.) that needs to be undertaken to have an always up-to-date website with regular news on it is often underestimated.
  - Consider website training for public relation staff in ministries that is assigned to be content managers and admins
  - The more people/partners are involved in the planning and implementing process, the more difficult it is to steer and manage the website.
  - Once a website has too many features/sections that need to be filled with content the more difficult it is to reduce content.

### Recommendations



- The DSME project had a bad experience with the first website provider it chose. The website was not at all adapted to the content the project team wanted, was not flexible and the project had to pay extra for Google analytics – which is a free service with every website.
- Once the team decided on changing the provider, no one accepted to "correct" the job because apparently it is a highly complicated technical procedure.
- The project used a pop-up "Like our page" when you first enter the website to boost our Facebook page.

### Cons



- In a country with slow internet connection, it is tricky to upload "heavy material" to your website.
- Due to the high costs (server), the handover to the partners at a later stage might not be feasible.