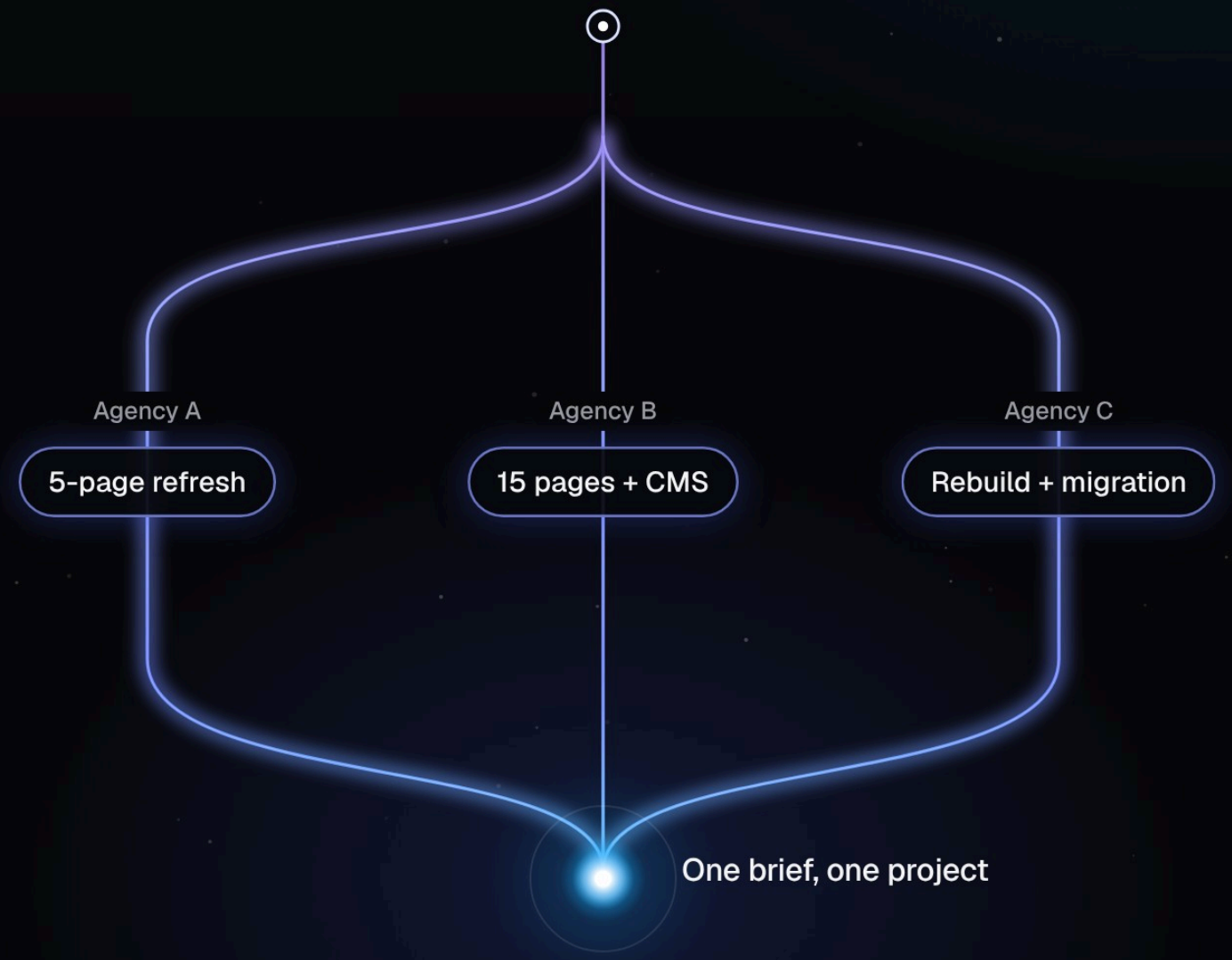
One email to three agencies.

Three guesses at three different projects.



Free guide · Brief + RFP template

The SaaS **website brief**

A one-page brief, a full RFP and a scorecard,
so every agency quotes the same project.

Ignat
Founder of DIXI · November 2026

Why the brief decides the quote

When we checked the published prices of 20 SaaS web design agencies this month, starting prices for a full site ran from $5,000 to $50,000. Some of that spread is the agencies. A lot of it is the brief. Send three agencies a two-line email and you get three guesses at three different projects, and no way to tell which one is cheap and which one is complete.

I've read a lot of briefs in more than ten years of design work, from a few lines in a chat to long documents that described every page and never said what the site was for. The best ones were short and specific about the things only the client knows: who the buyers are, what the site has to change, how success will be measured, what the budget and deadline are, and who decides. Agencies can fill in the rest, and the good ones will push back on it.

This guide gives you everything to run that process in about three weeks:

- **A one-page brief** you can fill in in an hour and send to anyone.
- **A full RFP template** for when several stakeholders or procurement are involved.
- **The 2027 requirements most RFPs forget**: AI search and agents, SEO migration, accessibility, analytics and how your team will edit the site.
- **Realistic budgets and timelines** from two sets of published agency prices we collected in November (13 and 20 agencies), and our own.
- **Twelve questions every agency should answer**, a weighted scorecard to compare proposals, and the red flags.
- **A filled example** for a fictional Series A company, so you can see the level of detail that works.

It's written for founders and marketing leads at B2B SaaS, AI and fintech companies from seed to Series B, redesigning or replacing a marketing site. Most of it works for product design briefs too.

THE SHORT VERSION

Write one page that covers the goal and the metric, your buyers, the scope as page types (not page count), who will edit the site, your SEO and migration needs, the budget range, the deadline and who decides. Send it to three agencies, ask every one the same twelve questions, and score the answers before you look at price.

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01 · Choose the document

Brief, RFP or SOW: which one do you need?

Most seed to Series B companies need a one-page brief, not an RFP. Use a full RFP when procurement requires one, when more than two people sign off, or when you're inviting more than three agencies. The statement of work (SOW) comes last: the agency writes it after you've chosen them, and it turns their proposal into a contract.

Document	Who writes it	When you need it	Length
One-page brief	You	Almost always: a site redesign, a new site, a Conversion Sprint, a migration	1–2 pages
RFP (request for proposal)	You	Procurement asks for it, several stakeholders, a budget over about $50,000, more than three agencies	5–10 pages
Proposal	The agency	In reply to your brief or RFP	Varies
SOW (statement of work)	The agency, with you	After you choose, as part of the contract	Scope, deliverables, timeline, payment, acceptance

A long RFP is not a better RFP. Every extra page costs the agencies time, and the best ones decide whether to reply based on how clear the first page is. If you're unsure, write the one-page brief first. You can turn it into an RFP later by adding sections from Template 2, and you'll need its answers anyway.

02 · Decide first

Six decisions to make before you write a word

A brief goes wrong when the company hasn't decided something and hopes the agency will. Settle these six internally first, in a 45-minute meeting with whoever will sign off. If you can't agree on one of them, say so in the brief, and ask agencies how they'd handle it.

01 **The one outcome.** What should the new site change, in a number? "Demo requests from the website up from 40 to 60 a month" is a goal. "A modern site that reflects our brand" is a wish. Pick one primary metric and up to two secondary ones, and write down today's baseline.

02 **The budget range.** Agencies propose very different projects for $15,000 and $60,000. Giving a range doesn't mean you'll be charged the top of it; it means you'll get proposals you can compare. If you truly don't know, use the ranges in the budget section below.

03 **The deadline and why.** A fundraise, a launch, a conference or a board meeting. A real reason helps agencies plan backwards; an invented one makes them pad the price.

04 **Who decides.** Name the person who signs off, and the people who review. A common way projects slip is someone senior seeing the work for the first time at the final review and starting over.

05 **Who will edit the site after launch.** Marketing in a visual CMS, developers in code, or both. This decides the platform (Webflow, Framer, Astro with a CMS, or something else) more than any design preference. We compared the options in Webflow vs Framer vs Astro.

06 **What's in and what's out.** Copywriting, brand work, illustrations, product screenshots, video, migration of old content, integrations. Each one can move a quote a long way if one agency includes it and another doesn't.

Template 1: the one-page brief

Copy this, fill in the brackets and delete the hints. It should fit on one or two pages. If a line doesn't apply, write "not needed" rather than deleting it, so agencies know you thought about it.

Website brief: [Company], [month year]

01 Company and product

- One line: We sell [what] to [who] so they can [outcome].
- Stage and size: [seed / Series A / B], [team size], [ARR band if you share it].
- Website today: [URL], built on [platform], launched [year].

02 Buyers

- Who buys: [roles, company size, industry, countries].
- Who else is in the decision: [IT, finance, security, end users].
- Main alternatives they compare us with: [competitors or "spreadsheets"].

03 The goal

- Primary metric: [e.g. demo requests from the website per month].
- Today: [baseline, last 90 days]. Target: [number] by [date].
- Secondary: [e.g. self-serve sign-ups, pricing page to booked call].

04 Scope

- Page types (templates), not page count: [home, product, pricing, solution/industry, customers, case study, blog, about, careers, legal].
- Content: we write it / you write it / together. Copy needed: yes / no.
- Brand: keep as is / refresh / new identity.
- Existing pages to migrate: [number], blog posts: [number].

05 Platform and editing

- After launch, the site is edited by: [marketing / developers / both].
- Platform: [no preference / must stay on X / open to a move].
- Integrations: [CRM, analytics, scheduler, product sign-up, chat].

06 Search and AI

- Organic traffic today: [sessions/month], top pages: [list].
- URLs and rankings must be kept: yes. Redirect map owner: [you / us].
- AI search: we want to be named by ChatGPT, Perplexity and Google AI Mode for [2-3 questions buyers ask].

07 Budget, timeline, decision

- Budget range: [low] - [high], [USD/EUR], [incl. or excl. build].
- Live by: [date], because [reason].
- Decision by: [name, role]. Reviewers: [names].
- We're talking to [number] agencies and will decide by [date].

08 What we'd like back

- Your approach, timeline, team (who actually does the work), price with what's included and excluded, 2 relevant case studies with results, and answers to the questions attached.
- Send by [date] to [email]. A 30-minute call is welcome before then.

Attach three things if you have them: your current analytics baseline (a screenshot is fine), two or three sites you admire and why, and anything your sales team says buyers ask on calls. That last one is the most useful page you can send a designer.

04 · Template

Template 2: the full RFP

Use this when procurement, several stakeholders or a larger budget are involved. It's the one-page brief with the sections procurement and IT will ask about added, and a clear set of rules for how agencies reply. Keep it to 5 to 10 pages: agencies decide whether to answer from the first page.

Request for proposal: [Company] website [redesign / rebuild]

Issued [date] · Proposals due [date] · Contact [name, email]

01 Summary (half a page)

What we need, why now, the primary metric, the budget range, the live date. If an agency reads only this, they can decide whether to reply.

02 About us

Product, customers, stage, team, brand status, links to the product, pitch deck or one-pager if you can share them.

03 Buyers and the buying group

Roles, company size, industries, regions. Who else joins the decision. What buyers ask sales most often. Top 3 competitors.

04 Goals and measurement

Primary and secondary metrics with 90-day baselines. How you measure today (GA4, HubSpot, Salesforce, product analytics). What a good result looks like 90 days after launch.

05 Scope

5.1 Page types (templates) and estimated count of each.

5.2 Content: who writes copy, who supplies product screenshots, video, illustrations. Languages and locales.

5.3 Brand: keep, refresh or new. Design system: none, partial, full.

5.4 Migration: pages, blog posts, case studies, resources, redirects.

5.5 Out of scope: say it explicitly.

06 Platform, CMS and integrations

Who edits the site after launch and how often. Platform preference or constraints. Integrations: CRM, marketing automation, scheduler, analytics, consent, product sign-up, search, chat. Hosting and who owns the accounts.

07 Search, AI and performance requirements

Keep URLs and rankings: redirect map, Search Console baseline, post-launch monitoring. AI search and agents: price, security and integrations readable as text. Core Web Vitals targets. Analytics: GA4 events and the AI Assistant channel.

08 Accessibility, security and legal

WCAG 2.2 AA as the target. European Accessibility Act if you sell to EU consumers. Cookie consent. Security review of the vendor if required. Data processing agreement if forms collect personal data.

09 Timeline

Key dates: kickoff, design approval, content freeze, launch. The reason for the launch date. Dates when your team is away.

10 Budget

Range, currency, what it includes (design, copy, build, migration, first months of support). Payment terms you prefer.

11 What to include in your proposal

a) Approach and phases
b) Team, by name and seniority
c) Timeline with milestones
d) Price, itemised, with exclusions
e) Two or three relevant case studies with measured results
f) Answers to the 12 questions in the appendix
g) References we can call
h) Sample contract or SOW

12 How we'll choose

Criteria and weights (see scorecard). Shortlist calls on [dates]. Decision by [date]. We'll tell every agency the outcome.

13 Rules

Proposals by [date, time zone] to [email], PDF or link. Questions by [date]; answers shared with all invited agencies. No spec work expected. Your proposal remains your property.

Appendix

A. Analytics baseline
B. Current sitemap or URL list
C. Brand assets
D. The 12 questions

Two lines in that template deserve a word. "We'll tell every agency the outcome" costs you ten minutes and keeps good agencies willing to reply next time. And "no spec work expected" matters: free design concepts in a pitch tell you how an agency pitches, not how it works with your buyers, and the best studios often won't do them.

What a 2027 brief should ask for that most still forget

Most templates you'll find online were written before buyers started their research in AI assistants and before AI agents started reading vendor sites. Add these eight requirements, in plain words, and every agency will price the same project. Leave them out and one agency will include them while another quietly doesn't, which is a big part of why quotes for the same site differ so much.

Requirement	What to write in the brief	Why it matters now
Readable by AI assistants and agents	Price, security attestation and integrations appear as text in the HTML, on pages linked from the navigation	In our test, only 1 in 7 startup sites gave a buyer's AI agent all three (the test)
Rankings kept through the move	Full URL inventory, a redirect map, a Search Console baseline, staging blocked from indexing, launch-day checks, 90 days of monitoring	A redesign is one of the easiest ways to lose organic traffic overnight (our checklist)
Speed	Core Web Vitals at "good" on mobile: LCP 2.5 s or less, INP 200 ms or less, CLS 0.1 or less, at the 75th percentile of visits	In HTTP Archive's September 2026 data, about 71% of Webflow, Framer and Astro sites passed on mobile, against 36% of Next.js sites
Analytics that see AI and humans	GA4 events for the steps that matter (pricing view, scheduler opened, booking), the AI Assistant channel, bot filtering, a free-text "How did you hear about us?"	Part of your traffic is bots and part of your buyers arrive from AI answers (The Conversion Gap)
Accessibility	WCAG 2.2 AA as the target and an accessibility check in QA; the European Accessibility Act if you sell certain products or services to EU consumers	Good for every buyer, and a legal requirement for some since 28 June 2025
Editing after launch	Which roles edit what, in which tool, and a short training at handover	Decides the platform and how much the site costs you every month afterwards
Handoff for AI coding tools	Design tokens and a written design file your team's AI tools can follow, next to the Figma file	Without it, every page built later drifts back to the tool's defaults (why AI sites look the same)
Ownership	Domain, hosting, CMS, analytics and design files are in your accounts from day one	Moving agencies later is much cheaper when you already own everything

One more requirement belongs in every brief, and it isn't technical. Name the pages buyers read before they talk to you: pricing, security or trust, integrations, customer stories with numbers, and comparisons. Those are the pages that decide whether you make a shortlist, and they're often the ones a redesign treats as an afterthought. Our 2027 guide to SaaS websites covers what each one should say.

What budget and timeline are realistic in 2027?

For a B2B SaaS marketing site, published starting prices run from about $5,000 to $50,000, and the 15 of the 20 agencies we checked in November that quote in dollars have a middle starting price of $12,000. Half of the 20 publish timelines: 3 to 12 weeks at the cheaper agencies, 8 to 24 weeks for builds over $25,000. A site of about 15 pages with a CMS reaches $15,000 to $80,000 in agencies' own estimates, with copy and migration on top. US agencies that price projects start at about $25,000, and Ramotion lists $50,000 to over $150,000.

Project	Published prices	Typical timeline
Redesign of one key page (homepage or pricing)	from $8,000 (DIXI Conversion Sprint)	3–4 weeks
5-page SaaS site, designed and built	Starting prices $5,000–$50,000, middle $12,000 (15 agencies that quote in dollars); $12,000–$16,000 with us	3–12 weeks
About 15 pages with a CMS (copy and migration extra)	$15,000–$80,000 (agencies' own estimates for larger builds)	8–16 weeks
A US agency that prices projects	From about $25,000; Ramotion lists $50,000–$150,000+	8–24 weeks
Moving platforms with the same design	from $6,000 (DIXI migration to Astro)	3–5 weeks
Design and development every month after launch	$595–$6,000 a month, median about $3,500 (12 published plans)	Ongoing

Sources: our checks of 20 SaaS web design agencies (16–17 Nov 2026) and 13 agencies and studios (3–5 Nov 2026), and DIXI's pricing.

Put a range in the brief.

It feels like giving away your negotiating position, but it does the opposite. Without a range, one agency proposes a $15,000 site and another a $90,000 programme, and you can't compare either. With one, every proposal shows what that money buys, and the good agencies tell you what they'd cut or add.

Count your own team's time.

Someone on your side writes or approves copy, gathers screenshots and customer quotes, joins weekly reviews and signs off. Plan a few hours a week from marketing and an hour a week from the decision-maker for the length of the project. When that time isn't there, the agency waits and the launch date moves.

Work back from the date.

Choosing an agency takes 2 to 3 weeks if you move quickly. Add the project timeline, then two weeks of slack for content and approvals. If your launch is tied to a fundraise or an event, you probably need to send the brief this month.

Twelve questions every agency should answer

Send the same twelve questions to every agency, ask for short written answers, and read them before you look at the price. The answers tell you who will do the work, how they think about your buyers and what happens to your rankings, which a portfolio can't.

01	Who exactly will work on our project, how senior are they, and how many hours a week will each spend on it?
02	Which of your past projects is closest to ours, and what changed in the numbers after launch?
03	What would you change first on our current site, and why?
04	How will you learn about our buyers before you design anything?
05	What's included in your price, and what's excluded (copy, build, migration, QA, analytics, training, support)?
06	Which platform would you build on, given who edits our site, and why?
07	How do you keep URLs and rankings through the launch, and who owns the redirect map?
08	How will you make our price, security and integrations readable for AI assistants and agents?
09	How do you hand over the design, so our team or our AI coding tools can build new pages without drifting?
10	What does your timeline assume from our side, and what happens if we're late with feedback?
11	How do you measure the result, and when?
12	What happens after launch: support, fixes, and how we end the engagement if we need to?

How to send them

Paste the twelve questions into the email with your brief, ask for short written answers, and read them before you open the price page. They’re also in the scorecard file, on the “12 questions” tab.

How to compare proposals: a weighted scorecard

Score each proposal from 0 to 2 on each line, multiply by the weight, and add it up. Do it before the price conversation, and ideally with two people scoring separately. The weights below are what we'd use for a B2B SaaS site whose job is pipeline; change them if your goal is different.

Criterion	Weight	0	1	2
Relevant results (similar buyers, measured outcomes)	3	Portfolio shots only	Similar work, no numbers	Similar work with before-and-after numbers
Understanding of our buyers and goal	3	Generic proposal	Repeats our brief	Adds something we hadn't seen
Team and seniority	2	Unnamed team	Named, mostly junior	Named senior people doing the work
Scope clarity (inclusions, exclusions)	2	Vague	Mostly clear	Itemised, with exclusions
SEO, migration and AI readiness	2	Not mentioned	Mentioned	A concrete plan with an owner
Platform and editing fit	1	One-size-fits-all	Reasonable choice	Choice explained by who edits
Handoff and ownership	1	Unclear	Files handed over	Your accounts, tokens and a design file
Timeline realism	1	Too good to be true	Plausible	Plausible, with dependencies named

The maximum is 30. In practice, a proposal under 18 has a gap you'll pay for later, whatever its price. Between two proposals within a few points of each other, the price and the people you'd rather work with every week can decide.

The scorecard file

The spreadsheet that comes with this guide has these eight lines and weights, columns for three agencies and two scorers, and adds up the totals for you.

09 · Red flags

Red flags in a website proposal

Most bad projects were visible in the proposal. Watch for a price with no exclusions, a team with no names, free design concepts, a timeline that ignores your side of the work, and no plan for rankings or measurement. Any one of these is worth a question on the call; three or more is usually a reason to move on.

- **No exclusions listed.**
  Everything sounds included until the first change request.
- **No names on the team.**
  The senior people pitch, and someone else does the work.
- **Free mockups in the pitch.**
  They show how the agency sells, made before anyone has spoken to your buyers.
- **A timeline with no dependencies.**
  It assumes you deliver copy, screenshots and approvals instantly.
- **No word about SEO or redirects.**
  Your organic traffic is now nobody's job.
- **"Unlimited revisions".**
  Without a review process, that usually means design by committee.
- **Case studies without numbers.**
  Nice screens tell you about taste, and nothing about whether the site sold more.
- **Lock-in.**
  Hosting, CMS or domain in the agency's account, or a custom platform only they can edit.

10 · Process

From brief to signed contract in three weeks

A focused process takes about three weeks and five to six hours of your time a week. Faster than that, you skip the questions that catch problems; slower, and good agencies fill their calendar with someone else.

Days 1-2	settle the six decisions and write the one-page brief (or the RFP).
Days 3-5	shortlist four or five agencies from work you've seen, referrals, directories and AI assistants. Send the brief and the twelve questions to three of them.
Days 6-10	a 25 to 30 minute call with each. Answer their questions; the quality of their questions is a good early signal.
Days 11-14	proposals arrive. Two people score them separately with the scorecard, then compare notes.
Days 15-17	a second call with the top one or two. Meet the people who'll do the work, and call one reference each.
Days 18-21	agree the SOW: scope, deliverables, timeline, payment, acceptance, ownership. Tell the other agencies, with a line on why.

Example: a filled one-page brief

Here's Template 1 filled in for a made-up company, so you can see the level of detail that gets you comparable quotes. The company, people and numbers are invented for this guide.

Website brief: Tidewell (fictional), January 2027

Example · fictional company

01 Company and product

- We sell spend analytics to finance teams at 200-2,000 person companies so they can close the month 3 days faster.
- Series A (raised in October), 38 people.
- Site: tidewell.example, built on Webflow in 2023.

02 Buyers

- Buyer: VP Finance or Controller, US and UK, SaaS and services.
- Also involved: IT (SSO, security review), CFO signs.
- They compare us with spreadsheets and two larger platforms.

03 The goal

- Primary: demo requests from the site, 34/month today (last 90 days, bots filtered). Target 55/month by end of Q2.
- Secondary: pricing page to booked call, 6% today.

04 Scope

- Page types: home, product (3), pricing, security, integrations, 2 industry pages, customers, case study template, blog, about.
- Copy: you write, we review. Brand: refresh (keep logo, new type and color). 64 blog posts and 9 case studies to migrate.

05 Platform and editing

- Marketing (2 people) edits weekly, no developer on the team.
- Open to leaving Webflow if you can explain why.
- Integrations: HubSpot, Chili Piper, GA4, cookie consent.

06 Search and AI

- 9,000 organic sessions/month; top pages: 3 blog posts, pricing.
- Keep URLs and rankings; you own the redirect map, we approve.
- We want to be named for "spend analytics for mid-market finance teams" and "month-end close software" in AI answers.

07 Budget, timeline, decision

- Budget: 35,000-55,000 USD including build and migration.
- Live by 15 April 2027 (Series B process starts in May).
- Decision: CEO. Reviewers: Head of Marketing, VP Sales.
- Talking to 3 agencies, deciding by 2 February.

08 What we'd like back

- Approach, named team, timeline, itemised price with exclusions, 2 case studies with numbers, answers to the 12 questions.
- By 26 January to marketing@tidewell.example.

Notice what it doesn't say. There's no list of animations, no "modern and clean", no 40-row feature matrix. Every line is something only Tidewell knows, and every agency can price the same project from it.

Questions people ask about briefs

What should a website RFP include?

A one-paragraph summary, your company and buyers, the goal with a baseline metric, the scope as page types, content and brand status, platform and integrations, SEO and AI-search requirements, accessibility, timeline, budget range, what to include in a proposal, how you'll choose, and the rules for replying. Template 2 above has all of it.

How long should a website brief be?

One to two pages for most companies; five to ten for a formal RFP. Agencies decide whether to reply from the first page, so lead with the goal, budget and deadline.

Should I share my budget in a website RFP?

Yes, as a range. Without one, proposals describe different projects and you can't compare them. A range doesn't commit you to the top of it.

How many agencies should I send a brief to?

Three is usually enough to compare, and five at most. More than that costs you a week of calls and doesn't improve the choice.

How much does a B2B SaaS website cost in 2027?

Published starting prices for a full site run from about $5,000 to $50,000, with a middle of $12,000 among the 15 of 20 agencies we checked that quote in dollars. A site of about 15 pages with a CMS reaches $15,000 to $80,000 before copy and migration, and US agencies that price projects start at about $25,000.

Can I use this brief for a product design project?

Mostly, yes. Swap page types for the flows and user roles in scope, add the platforms (web, iOS, Android), and ask about the handoff to your engineers. For product design prices, see How much does SaaS product design cost in 2027?

The files that come with this guide

- The one-page brief (Google Docs and Word)
- The full RFP template (Google Docs and Word)
- The proposal scorecard (Google Sheets and Excel), with the weights and the twelve questions

Get them at dixi.agency/guides/saas-website-brief. Open the Word files in Google Docs, and the Excel file in Google Sheets, if that's where your team works.

25-minute call

Go through your brief with us before you send it to agencies.

Fill it in and book a call. We'll go through it with you: what's missing, what agencies will read differently, and where the budget and scope don't match.

Book a 25-minute call | Get the templates

About DIXI

DIXI is a founder-led design and development studio for B2B SaaS, AI and fintech teams. We design and build websites, product UI, design systems and brands, and we publish our prices on dixi.agency/pricing. Clients include Koyfin (500K+ users) and ComboCurve (650% growth over 3.5 years of work together). Book a 25-minute call or get a free homepage teardown.

Sources

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