



Lifestyle Entrepreneurs Academy

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How to Build a Website in Ten Hours for \$1,000 or Less

Transcripts

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Building Your Website

So yesterday we got super technical in some ways. Now, I want to talk about okay if you've got the ideas from the Discover Your Identity diagram. And then we did the whole passions to products and we brainstormed like 15 or so ideas around playing with puppies that Brad liked and basically looked at the economy of products and services that grows up around dog care or dogs in general.

And then we took dog collars as one potential product and then looked at the market that was on line, added search terms that had purchasing intent like 'buy dog collars online' and ultimately looked at how we could sew up our little section of that space by getting a domain such as BuyDogCollarsOnline.com, which actually we discovered was available.

Then we looked at how you could put the suppliers in place looking at things like Alibaba, Hong Kong Trade and Development Corp. and Global Sources. But we stopped sort of talking about how you'd actually build the main part of your business, which is your website. So that's what I want to talk about today?

So, how many people here are familiar with [Elance](#)? How many people have done a project on Elance or used it for anything material?

Male: Yeah.

Jesse: What was your experience? Was it good?

Male: Yeah, for the most part it was good, you know.

Jesse: Yeah. So, [Elance](#) is one online talent platform. And then there's others like [Guru.com](#), [Freelancer.com](#) and there's probably some more that I'm not even aware of. But for me since 2008 I've don't just under a hundred projects on Elance totaling over \$41,000. And as you see what we're talking about here in terms of the actual price you pay to build components of your of your business using a platform like Elance that \$41,000 is super high leverage because, well, we'll get to that in a second. But that's a development expense that then supports a business asset or a team that ideally is allowing you to make much more from the operations of your business.

Three Step Process

So, here's sort of my—I call it a one, two, three process to building a website. This is something I do consistently for my own businesses and for clients. And it starts with the tree parts of it really are; doing a logo, so actually establishing or developing your brand, then doing homepage and inner page design templates, and then finally technical integration.

So if you look at it these are basically three separate jobs that you'd post on Elance. For anybody who's not familiar with Elance, it's free to post a job. So when we talk about how to do a logo you actually go and write a description of what you're looking for, post it and that's free. Then there's a whole network

of hundreds of thousands of contractors and teams that are distributed all around the world that bid on your job.

So, once you post your job you have a work room that's created. Then you'll get bids as soon as minutes after the job's posted and in 24 hours for graphic design work or homepage, landing page designs, within 24 hours it's not uncommon to have 20 or more very competitive bids from teams that want to start working on your project right away.

So the trick is to break the website development out into these three components. So the old way or the old mindset of building a website, at least four or five years ago, what I saw a lot of was even using online talent platforms people would say I need a website developed and it's going to be about 20 pages and we need some really good design work. There's got to be a store on there because we want to do ecommerce.

Then you get these bids that are thousands of dollars because you've got teams that are basically comprised of designers, developers, and coders and programmers that are doing a combined bid to do the entire website development. But what I've found, the way to save an immense amount of money is to break it down into this three step process.

Logo

You start with the logo. The logo, encapsulated in that is actually determining your brand itself. So if we go back to yesterday where we stopped was let's just play this example forward and say we use BuyDogCollarsOnline.com. So that is your domain. But the actual brand for your company could be something totally separate and distinct. So if you go to BuyDogCollarsOnline.com the actual logo that you see on the page doesn't need to be the exact same words, right?

It could be something along the lines of Dog Collar Specialists, Dog Collar Superstore right? Along the lines of the two examples I gave from one of my own businesses, which was USB Superstore and a client business which was Tactical Flashlight Specialist. Both housed on a domain that was capturing search traffic that had purchase intent build in. Everybody with me?

So when you go to design the logo you put up a job post. You actually post a job and you'd say something along the lines of this, "We're looking for a talented design team to do a logo for our business that's in the dog care and dog product space." You keep it general. You don't tell them the name. You don't give any specifics in the job post. "We're looking for three to four rounds of revisions and here's a couple examples of styles of logos that we'd like."

Then your job becomes to do a little bit of research online and find some logos and some websites that exemplify the look and feel that you want for your business. Then in your job post you simply site, "I like these three or four websites or logos stylistically, color scheme wise, look and feel." And you're starting

to give these contractors an idea of what you're looking for before they even do a bid so they can start to get in their mind what they're going to produce for you.

So, the actual job post can be as short as five or six sentences. You say, "We're looking for a talented design team to do logo development for a business in the dog care industry. We focus mainly on accessories for dogs and here's a couple examples of logos and styles that we like. We'd like three or four rounds of revisions and we're ready to get started on this right away. Look forward to working with you." It can literally be as short as that.

So, the point here and going with the whole title of this talk of How to Build a Website in Ten Hours for \$1,000 or Less, that's ten hours of your time. What you do with these online talent platforms is you're able to leverage yourself to such a degree because say it takes 15 minutes to post the job. Now you've got the job posted. And let's say in 24 hours you've got anywhere from 10 to 30 bids.

The thing you should know is that at this point, I've watched Elance grow up so much. Now there's literally hundreds of thousands of teams that are on the contractors side of the equation. So in Elance terminology you are a client and then everybody that bids on your job post is a contractor. Now I think they want to call them E-lancers or Freelancers but same idea.

So say you've spent 15 minutes writing the job and posting it. You can go take a walk or do something else. You come back a few hours later or the next day, you go into your workroom and you've this flow of all the different bids. Similar to how many other consumer focused sites work now a day the contractors profiles are such that they have a star rating. They have total number of jobs worked, cumulative earnings and a link to their portfolio.

So a quick glance at the bids and of course they have text that they'll submit saying, "Hello, sir we'd love to work on your project. Please see these examples of our previous work, etc." Then they'll have the price that they're bidding on your project. The quick way to scan through is I look at the star rating and the total number of jobs done. If it's anywhere from 4.5-4.7 stars up, over 15 jobs plus then it's pretty reasonable to assume that you're going to get, or at least that they're a high quality team.

Then what you do is you do like a right click on the portfolio. I open it up in a separate window. I quickly scan through some of the previous work that they've done and see if it's in line with the look and feel that you want for your logo. Now I give them a little bit of leeway because of course they're working for other clients and other clients may not be looking for the same thing you want. But your intuition should tell you pretty quick if you're seeing logos that look like they belong in a video game but you want something that's more classy and elegant and looks upscale. So if they haven't done anything like what you're looking for, or even if you don't really know what you're looking for but it strikes you as off then I just move on and qualify the next ones.

Now, how much do you think it costs to get a logo developed now a day?

Male: Couple hundred.

Jesse: Couple hundred?

Male: Less.

Male: Depends.

Jesse: I routinely pay \$50 to get logos developed. And it's not just that. Let's say what we're working with here is for \$50 dollars you can get eight initial logo designs, and usually at least three to four rounds of revisions. And for you guys I'm happy if you start going down this path now Elance has a way where you can invite in other team members. And so we can actually use my five year old Elance account with a lot of work history to post a job, invite in a team or two that I work with consistently. And then I can set you guys as the hiring manager so you can work in parallel and you get your feet wet and start doing this stuff.

So, it's pretty neat because for \$50 you can get a team that's going to do eight initial designs. They submit them to you. Then you basically look through those and say, "Okay, I like logo number one but why don't you change the colors to be more like this? And why don't you adjust the tag line to look like that."

Then usually in a day or less they'll submit six or so redesigns based on your input. Then you go back and forth. In my experience I've found that in three to four rounds of revisions you can get the entire thing put together. Then you get...

Male: How long does it usually take?

Jesse: A total—in terms of if you're really on the ball and you have a team that turns around stuff in 24 hours or less then that's under a week. But in terms of like fitting project development and business development into your lifestyle it's not a huge deal if you let things go for a few days then check back in.

Male: Yeah.

Jesse: One of the beautiful things about Elance is that once you get the project set up and posted you can actually manage it from your inbox. So, you can reply to an e-mail and it will publish into the chronological feed of messages. So it will have a record on Elance and it will also ping to the contractor. So, Elance actually becomes this intermediary between you and the contractor.

Male: Do they resolve disputes or if there's any kind of problem with the completion?

Jesse: Yeah. Yeah. Let's zoom out a little here. Now, you've got all these bids. Say you find a team you like and the price looks right. They've got a decent work history. Their portfolio shows that they're

doing work that's about what you're looking for. Now you want to engage them so you click award contract.

When you click award it takes you to a screen where you're finalizing the terms. Here's a pro tip. If their bid is say, \$55, if you click award it will show finalize awarding this project for \$55. And it sort of looks like you should just click yes. But the other button is edit terms. You're always going to want to edit terms. Even on these low dollar projects.

So, what I'll do is I'll click edit terms and I'll set like \$15 or \$20 initial deposit and then the remaining amount, \$35 or \$40 for final delivery. And on the award page you have a place where you can upload an NDA and Elance give you a stock NDA. Really, you're protected through Elance. Their terms of service is such that if anybody—if the thoughts going through your mind, "What if they take my idea?" or something like that, it doesn't happen. It never happens.

These teams are specialized in doing graphic design. They're specialized in doing web development. My feeling is they wouldn't be Elance contractors is they had the entrepreneurial mindset of building businesses. So, you really don't need to worry about them "taking your idea and doing something else with it". But you're still protected none the less. And you can put up an NDA.

For other types of work the NDA may be more important like for example on my book I found an editor for less than \$200 that did line by line editing on nearly 200 pages of the book with multiple rounds of revisions. Since that was something that had a publishing relationship in place I did need to have an NDA contract. You don't even have to do back and forth sign, scan and upload.

If you put the NDA up there and they accept the project terms then it's considered in effect, which is another plus. And you also have protection as the client if there is a dispute there is a resolution process. I may have only used it once across these hundred projects. It's gotten pretty streamlined at this point.

So, now let's talk about what do you actually tell them for your logo design? Of course as you're doing this logo design project you're making a decision on what the brand name is going to be for your business. From my experience a good logo is comprised of the name of the brand, a tag line and some suggestive imagery.

As an example for like Tactical Flashlight Specialists we had the name of the business, we obviously need that name in the logo. Then we have the tag line. We had a few variations like 'lighting the night done right' or something that's catchy that you turn a phrase and it's also in line with the focus of the business. Or for USB Superstore, 'innovation in a flash'. Right? It's a cute, catchy little tag line because when you go to a website, what's the first thing you look at?

If you're like me I glance at the logo and read the little tag line. I glance at the home page and see what it's telling me. In five or eight seconds I should have an idea if this is a company that's going to give me

what I'm looking for. Then some suggestive imagery. Right? So, for the flashlight one you can have an outline of a flashlight maybe with a beam that's lighting up the logo. For the usb one it was an outline of a flash drive with the word USB Superstore coming out from it and across and the tagline underneath.

So whereas when you post the job you're giving it in general terms saying we're in the dog care industry. We have accessories for dogs. One other thing you can put on the job post is, "Specific information and reference sites will be provided to all qualified bidders." So, you basically telling them when people bid on the project either before you hire them you can message back and forth or after you hire them that's when you give them the full design spec for what you're looking for.

That's the time when you tell them the name of the business is this. And we're looking for a couple illustrations along the lines of maybe a dog collar, right? If you're a dog collar specialist. Then maybe the word dog collar specialist has a little leash or collar around it. Then whatever the tag line would be for that business written underneath. So, that's the actual first round of logos that they're going to submit back to you. It's like six or eight variations on that theme.

With me so far everybody?

Group: Yeah.

Jesse: Okay, so now we've spent maybe a total of thirty to forty-five minutes posting the job, doing a quick review of the providers, awarding the job. And then when you set the milestones, you've got say, a \$15-\$20 initial deposit, and \$35-\$40 final delivery. Then you click award.

The next thing you're going to see is fund escrow. One of the other benefits of Elance is they have a built in escrow platform. One of the hazards of doing business online previously was having to coordinate payment with a bunch of different contractors in different countries with different currencies. Now, Elance is the total clearinghouse for all of that. So if you agree on \$55 you upload or your fund escrow for this initial \$15-\$20 payment. You can either release that right away once the contractor accepts your project or however you have it defined based on initial escrow will be released upon first round of logo design submitted.

So, now you're matching your financial investment with the work that they're carrying out for you. And this is a huge benefit and it's also a protection from risk in case something does go wrong. In this case, you're out of pocket \$15-\$20 bucks. And that's even setting aside the resolution process. So, it's a very low investment way to get, in my opinion, pretty high quality work done in a safe and protected manner without the hassle of doing currency exchange and all of this.

Yeah, what's up, Brad? Okay great.

So now, let's say that you've gone back and forth. They say, "Okay, here's our revisions. What do you think?" You give them some feedback, "Okay, why don't you change the color scheme here and make an

adjustment like this. Capitalize the words on the tag line." Send. They come back, "Hello, sir. Please see these six new design submissions." Okay, now you've got the one you want. Great.

So when you finally get the logo you want then the final delivery is in what's called a layered PhotoShop format. Sometimes it's Adobe Illustrator. What this is for anybody that's unfamiliar is like when you're actually doing design, you'll get a .jpeg file as the logo that you'll actually use on an e-mail signature or on letterhead. But you'll also get the actual design file, the layered PhotoShop file.

So now we just sort of accomplished number one.

Male: Just real quick.

Jesse: Yeah, go ahead.

Male: When contractors get on Elance is there a criteria that Elance, you know, any sort of screening process or is that just all based on the reviews?

Jesse: Actually there is. That's a good question. There's actually a ton of criteria. So, if you're putting yourself out there as a copywriter then they have a couple examinations. So, you can get like an English proficiency, grammar proficiency. And I think those things are useful to see but I don't really put too much weight on them. I think they even have programming language certifications. Some of it is self selecting from the contractors.

But the reality is that, from my experience, the star rating and you can even read feedback that other clients, people on our side of the equation have left. If you have a client that's saying "She took a little longer than expected but the work ended up being good." And they still gave them five stars you just say, am I really in a rush? Is this going to be a priority? You just start to get a feel through these different credibility metrics. But yeah, that's a good question.

Male: Jesse, what are your thoughts on doing it yourself like if you're decently savvy with PhotoShop versus getting a super professional one on Elance?

Jesse: If you're super savvy in PhotoShop and you want to take the time, then go for it. What I'll tend to do since I'm not super savvy in those, I have a basic working knowledge and that seems to be most people's experience. There's going to be some places in the business development process where you are weaker. So maybe you're great on PhotoShop but you're not a programmer. Right?

Male: Right.

Jesse: Or maybe you're great at programming but you need to leverage your skills and have a team to do some heavy lifting on the code. What I've done historically is I'll just sketch, literally, on a piece of paper the initial idea I have then either take a picture with my iPhone and upload it or scan and post it into the workroom. And say, "Here's my idea." Then I'll always also say, "This is my idea. This is what I'm

looking for but please also submit two to three designs based on your own creativity and use your imagination."

Think about if you're on their side, right? You're doing this almost commoditized design work. Somebody that says use your own creativity and have two or three designs based on your own creative input. That's something that's empowering and it tends to get people to come up with good ideas instead of just seeing do exactly like I say here in this ten step process. I try to give them a long leash because you never know. You may be surprised with what they come up with.

Homepage and Inner Page

We good on logo? I'll move on to the next step of the process here. This really is a one two three in the sense that once you get that layered design file back from the logo designer you have two options. You can either reengage that same firm for homepage and inner page design or you can post a new job. In either case the logo is basically—so in this \$50 project you're outlining the overall look and feel for your online business and your brand.

So, then homepage and inner page design. Let's talk for a second about what that means. Instead of the old school way, which is, "We need a website developed. Please give us a comprehensive bid for the time it's going to take and so forth." What I've gotten in the habit of doing is posting a job that says, "We need homepage design and inner page template design."

What that means is you know the homepage has a unique look and feel. And majority of the inner pages of a site when you click on 'About' or 'Services' or any other link from the homepage they generally fall into the same look and feel. So that's your inner page template. Instead of saying we need a 20 page website built you say we need a homepage and an inner page template. Now it's a two design job that you're looking for. Does that make sense?

You do the same thing. You post the job saying, "We're looking for a homepage and inner page design template." In the job posting now you say, "We've got a logo designed. We've got the name and we'll convey this to all qualified bidders. We're a business that's in the dog care space. We do accessories for dogs. And we need our homepage and inner page design." Right?

Then essentially you post that and people will do the exact same process; they bid, you qualify. In terms of logo and homepage designs it's going to be a lot of the same teams. Or there are a lot of big shops on Elance that do tens or hundreds of thousands of dollars of work. So you can either say to the team that did you logo design, "Hey, we really like the work you did. Do you want to get first preview on doing our homepage and inner page design?" That's one way to ingratiate yourself with them and get a good deal. Because now they feel they've earned some of your trust and they don't want to mess it up by doing a subsequent project. Or you can put it out to competitive bid and get a whole new round of bid submissions.

Now how much do you think it costs to do homepage and inner page designs?

Male: Couple of hundred bucks.

Jesse: That's pretty accurate. I'd say on the lower end, you know, 100-150. If you're willing to spend it, 250-300 or 400 will get you a pretty good quality designer. Then what you do, you award the job. You do the same thing. Now, let's say it's a \$200 job. Now I'll say, "Okay, I'll do a \$50 initial deposit and \$150 for final delivery."

At this point we're out of pocket a total of about \$100. We've got a logo design and the basis for a website, which is the homepage and inner page template. Then you upload that layered design file that your logo designer gave you. And you say, "Based on the look and feel, the graphic sensibilities and the overall color scheme of this logo I want you to develop the homepage and inner page concept."

This saves you a lot of time of describing colors and elements on the page and so forth. But what I will do is here's sort of a I'll call this the standard homepage layout for a product focused site. You've got your logo in your upper left. You've got a few menu items like 'About', 'Services', 'Store', 'Contact' and 'Blog' let's say.

Then what's common, what I see a lot of, is having what's called the technical name is a jquery slider. But you've probably seen these when you go to a homepage and every three or four seconds there's a banner that rotates and slides around. Does that make sense? You guys are familiar with this? And then having like three boxes or so underneath and maybe some more information here that's text. And then your footer at the bottom.

So, what you want to do is either reference a site that has a layout similar to this or if you're looking for something particular you can reference three or four sites and that will get you going in the right direction. Then in terms of the actual sliders here the end goal is to have a site where if somebody goes to your webpage and they just sit for ten seconds it's sliding across and explaining 80% of what you guys do.

So what do you do here is you have—I'll come back to that in a second. But on the first one, for the homepage design they'll do one of these designs mocked up for you. Now maybe that's going to be your top selling product, right? Your featured product with a benefit statement. The number one, top selling dog collar that makes all the ladies turn their heads. Or something like that. Some little play on words or a statement with a nice looking image. And they'll source these from stock photos and other places and basically present back to you a homepage layout.

Either at the same time or just after you get the homepage look and feel you'll get the inner page, which generally looks like a 2/3 column width and then a 1/3 width that has sidebar widgets. And those can link to the store, your blog, maybe a Twitter stream or a Facebook like box or some other elements of social proof. Then these are, this could be a featured product. This could be 'Become a distributor' or

some other opportunity and this could be maybe 'See our blog' if your blog is active and you continually post. Of course you can hire someone from Elance to do that for you as well.

Ultimately you want to give them a couple references of how you want the homepage and inner page to look. Then they're going to do the design submissions. And you go through this sort of three or four rounds of revisions process until you've got the look and feel.

So what do you think the final deliverable is from your second job of homepage and inner page designs? Nobody?

Jesse: Yeah, what's the final deliverable that they're going to give to you? If the final deliverable in the logo is what?

Male: .PSD's and .JPEG files.

Jesse: Yep. Yep.

Male: Would it be HTML?

Jesse: Oh, good. Good answer. So, it's going to be both. You're going to want the layered design file for the homepage and inner page and the HTML CSS. HTML CSS is basically saying the design coded such that it is essentially a website. Although it's not live yet you'll get a folder with HTML and CSS documents, any images that are used on the site and it's pretty standard that they just deliver all this to you as the final deliverable.

So now we're what? Let's say, \$50 in. Let's just be generous here and say \$250. And now we have the basis for a website at this point. If you're a technical person or if you're tech savvy you can put this into like Dreamweaver or some other development program, get your hosting and your domain, and upload these and fill in your content. And for all intents and purposes you've got a live site.

Technical Integration

But really to continue on this whole Website in Ten Hours for a Thousand Dollars or Less idea the third job that you do and this is now a different group of people that you're talking to on Elance. You say, "We need a technical integration specialist for our online e-commerce business. You basically are saying, "We have a homepage and an inner page template in layered .psd format as well as HTML CSS and we need a technical specialist to integrate our store."

If you've got some offer to capture their name and e-mail then on the back end you'd have some service like AWeber or Mail Chimp that's building an e-mail data base. And if you have any other dynamic functionality you want like having a Facebook like box visible here or showing ability for people to click and Tweet about your site or whatever. You can package all that in to your technical integration job.

And so what do you think it costs to hire a technical integration specialist to piece everything together and get your site totally live and functioning?

Male: \$700.

Jesse: How much?

Male: Seven hundred.

Male: Or less.

Jesse: Or less? Yeah. I'd say it's actually less. Yes, a thousand dollars or less. So, \$50 is about as cheap as I'd find. A very good educated guess. \$50 is about the cheapest I've found for quality logos. Of course you can pay more. A hundred fifty to two hundred fifty is sort of baseline for homepage/inner page designs. If you want to be a little more generous and get an even higher quality designer you can do that. I've found that around three hundred fifty to four hundred fifty depending on the scope.

So if you have your shopping cart solution, you have your e-mail provider, any other technical integration that needs to be done, this is the person that sews it all together. And the end, the final delivery, for this project is to publish your site live on your domain. So you literally want to chunk it such that the final delivery from your logo is you've established your brand and you've got the basis to do your homepage and inner page designs. The final delivery here is layered design files and HTML CSS. So it's website ready.

Then you get a technical specialist to build out. So they take the inner page design and they make the 'About Us' page. They make the 'Services' page. They make the 'Blog' page and attach WordPress if you want to use a blog. And then you want the final delivery from this job to be a fully functional website published live on your domain.

Yes?

Male: Do you typically continue using the same vendor to maintain the website?

Jesse: Here is where I sort of draw the line. So the logo and the homepage/inner page is essentially the same scale, designer. But you get a better price by first calling it a logo project and then either doing a continuation. You can rehire easily from within Elance or post a private job and just invite them in. But that's essentially the same skill.

Technical specialist is sort of in a league in their own. So going back to the old school if you say, "I need a website developed." Well, then you're just pushing that responsibility on to a team that's a project manager that's going to coordinate all these different pieces. But it's very, very rare in my experience to find someone that's a good designer and a good developer.

Does that answer your question?

Male: I was actually more asking like six months from now.

Jesse: Oh, got it.

Male: Something broke. Do you use the same team one to do the new design, team two to do the tech integration? Or do you use other people or how do you do it?

Jesse: That's a great question. So after your website's live and we'll talk about the one or two other pieces that make it a fully function website in a second. But you can always—it's all about incentives. So, as you're talking to these designers you can say, "If you do a good job I do a lot of projects. There's the potential for future work." So then you can sort of keep them in your periphery. At this point I have three or so teams that I just basically use every time because it's quicker and easier and I know that they provide quality.

For the technical specialist you can say, "Hey, we need you to integrate all the technology and the final delivery is publishing a fully functioning website live on our domain. And we're also needing auxiliary technical support from time to time. So, if you do a good job we'd love to look at doing what's called a service level agreement." Which can either be like a flat fee per month, maybe \$150 a month to have them on call within 24 hours to fix stuff or it can piece meal where you say, "Hey, now we want to add this new feature. Can you design a pricing calculator if you're doing like a mortgage site or something." If you have technology pieces that require some programming you can go out to the same people.

It's interesting now how programming has become almost a commodity. Java Script, HTML CSS programming, even heavier lifting stuff like Ruby on Rails and things like that. There's so much to learn in that field but so many other people, and admittedly a lot of them are in India or Russia, are just so into code that I find it much easier to just source them.

I guess as a general tip; I took one or two day class on HTML CSS, a three day class on Java Script so that I can understand and speak to them in that language. That's one thing that can help you get really good prices consistently is being able to kind of speak in their language but not actually go into the code.

Ultimately that's the process for building a website with about ten hours of your own time and a thousand dollars or less.

Let's open up for some questions on that...