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With so many photographers in the marketplace, **Mark Raffan** turned to Amazing Internet to make his bespoke website stand out from the crowd



With so many photographers in the marketplace, how do you make yourself stand out from the crowd? This was the question I put to my business consultant at the beginning of the year. In this economic climate, every client matters; getting traffic through your website is one thing, but turning that into bookings is a very different matter.

I was advised to view my website as my shop. If it is not appealing, the customer won't enter. If it is too cluttered, they will be put off; if it takes too long to get into, they will go elsewhere. When you consider these points, you start to appreciate how important a high quality website is, and the value it can bring to your company.

There are lots of companies on the market that provide websites, but having made the decision that I wanted a bespoke one to match the high quality of my photographs, there was only one company to turn to - Amazing Internet.

The quality of Amazing Internet's own website is exceptional, with the images at much higher resolution than those on other website providers' sites. It was this level of attention to detail that I wanted for my own shop window.

The process of getting a bespoke site can be quite involved, but a supplied checklist focused and guided me on critical design points. The Amazing Internet team asked me

for about 20 pictures which I felt clearly represented my style. They worked with me to review my corporate logo, and this gave a fresh look to the whole of the business.

From conception to completion, Amazing Internet's customer service was exceptional. The design team incorporated all my requirements, delivering a 'less is more' style website, with simple and clear navigation.



The final build was done very quickly. With regular updates on progress, you can watch your site evolve, from the design stage to being ready to go live.

Also incorporated within the build was full search engine optimisation. I have been approached by web optimising companies, demanding the kind of fees which could pay for a bespoke website, so to have that as part of the package was a real bonus.

When the site initially went live, Amazing Internet had put my chosen photographs onto the site. To add additional images, a very simple administration page allows me to take full control. As I work all around the world, having the capability to update my website from wherever I am is very important.

The website incorporates a page which shows how your site is performing. It links in





with Google Analytics, and shows where your web traffic is coming from and what areas of your site are most visited. Again, this is a very valuable tool.

Having a website that has the same seamless look across all of its pages can only be achieved with a bespoke website build. Amazing Internet bolted on extra products, such as an external blog and a photostore for online sales.

Amazing Internet's Photostore is the simplest online photography sales tool I have used. It takes payments and manages the order, taking the stress away for you and your client.

To have these features built into the site, with the same corporate look across all the products, is very important. Going back to the analogy of the website being your shop, you want all your products under one roof, to keep visitors interested and make it easy for them to purchase your product.

Since my website went live, I have seen a significant increase in wedding and portrait bookings. It has given me an edge over the competition, and made my work stand out from the crowd.

I am now the nominated wedding photographer at many prestigious wedding venues across the UK. I was also invited to meet an Italian wedding coordinator, who had viewed my website and invited me to work with him. This has led to 25 wedding bookings for 2010.

My work continues to grow, and in a couple of months, I fly to Australia to shoot my first wedding there.

I met with my business consultant for a coffee last week. He asked me if I ever regretted investing in the website. "I wish I'd done it sooner", I replied!.

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