

Scrutiny & Empowerment Partners Limited

REQUEST FOR QUOTATION

New Website, Branding & Marketing and related Support

Background

YD Consultants is the new trading name of Scrutiny and Empowerment Partners Limited. We have been trading as Tenant Advisor for almost 10 years.

Whilst we retain a strong focus on the services offered under Tenant Advisor and marketed through www.tenantadvisor.net, the range of the services we offer now extends far beyond our current:

- involvement support between landlords and their tenants
- support for communities to develop and self-serve
- best practice on the relationship between those two key audiences.

This increased scope, and demand for work - alongside plans to grow as a consultancy by bringing on board a new consultant with an excellent reputation in the industry - is the thinking behind our decision to rebrand as YD Consultants (YDC). We want the new website to better showcase the range of services that we are able to offer housing associations, local authorities and arms-length management organisations in housing matters (as well as tenant engagement in governance and tenant involvement in services and their community).

We intend to use the new website to do all our business in the future. For a short-time we will sign post from the old site into the new site – but the old site will not be updated

We have registered the domain ydconsultants.co.uk with 123-reg, and this is the domain we'll be using for both the website, our new email addresses, and YDC's social media presence.

We do occasional work for charities, running awaydays and matters of governance strategy and business direction, though this is a small part of our workload.

The new website for a new brand will be an online showcase of our work and experience.

It will also serve as a resource for our clients – we intend to sell membership which allows housing organisations to access online resources, latest news, and opinion.

To ensure we show the history of our work, we hope to import “good practice articles” which are presently on the Tenant Advisor site, onto the new YDC site. This should be straightforward as both sites will be created via WordPress. We would like to bring the hashtags across to reference practices by category.

The membership area on the current site includes a section called “tenant activity” and area entitled page for contributions, written by members. We will not carry this over as members are too busy to contribute and too busy to tidy/align their details correctly on the site. We will delete this section on the new site and retain control of content.

We have a loyal customer base and a healthy rate of repeat business. Most of the business we win is through referrals and reputation.

Bringing our new lead consultant expands the range of our expertise on governance and regulatory compliance and adds something which I cannot currently deliver on health checks and support for boards and landlords on financial management. This needs to be reflected in our website, which will also become important as a tool to generate new enquiries.

Over the next 12 months our growth strategy calls for us to place more emphasis on our website and digital marketing and a better social media presence – with our primary social media platforms being LinkedIn and Twitter.

Our Current Website

This operates on WordPress.

Despite being built several years ago the site still looks and feels good, but the message is now too specific and misses large areas of the service that we now offer.

We have sought to provide an information service on the current website.

Whilst we wish to provide this on the new website, we want to be in a better position and to focus and showcase what we can do to support social landlords to improve.

We will keep some content on our old site (and over time we will post over any additional information from the news and tenant areas of the old site).

We want our old site to signpost all visitors by link to the new site for members and visitors.

What is good about our current website

- We are reasonably happy with the number of visits to our current site (1000+ visits per month)
- We currently rank for many keywords (1000+)
- The amount of information on the site is good
- The site is fast to load

What we need to improve about our current website

- Our content only covers part of our service offer – our brand is tenant-focussed, which is no longer the case for our work
- We lag well behind some major competitors in SEO for work on governance and finance and regulatory compliance. These are only covered in news/articles on our site
- We don't have a clear, compelling message and call to action throughout the site
- The site design is a bit dated in that it does not hold any pictures or videos
- The site does not enable discussion group in the members area, a forum, where members can add their own topics and leave comments.
- The content, whilst good in terms of volume, can be hard to navigate for the administrator
- Newer sites have greater functionality

What does not work with the website

Our present site is not secured via SSL. However, an SSL certificate will be purchased via 123-reg to secure the new YDC site.

Requirement

Aims of the website

We want to:

- Look professional to customers and potential customers when they look us up
- Provide clarity about our range of products and services, allowing potential customers to quickly find what they are looking for, whilst also making them aware of the range of other services that we offer
- Enable the website to be easy to edit content and easy to create new content, which demonstrates our depth of knowledge and expertise
- Showcase our work through case studies or testimonials
- Attract traffic from search (and we are open to proposals for ongoing SEO or PPC), through both 'brand' keywords and other relevant search terms
- Carry a clear compelling message of the services we offer and call to action throughout the site
- Show pictures and/or videos (we will need to build that content)
- Enable discussion group in the members area, a forum, where members can add their own topics and leave comments.
- Convert as many of our visitors as possible into enquiries
- Offer a secure members' area with a content paywall, including online registration and payment, and simple user management

Target Audience

We have three key audiences:

- Housing associations, local authority housing teams and arms-length management organisations – audience is mainly aimed towards boards and senior managers
- Tenants and communities and community leaders and their support staff, mainly based in housing organisations
- And, to a lesser extent, charity boards and other 3rd sector or public organisations

Technology

We believe that our audience is likely to access the site via multiple devices. Prior to COVID-19, much of our professional audience would access the site via mobile or tablet devices while commuting. Many tenants and communities do not have access to a laptop or PC, so can only access via their mobile.

Key Information

- The new website a rebrand to make our message clearer, increase the profile of our company, reflect the quality and extent of our services, and showcase the range of work we can undertake.
- Some key competitors are Altair, Ark, The Board Development Agency, Campbell Tickell, David Tolson Partnership, Housing Quality Network and Savills, and our review of these competitors' digital outputs (social media and websites) can be made available to you upon request.

Standing our brand from our Competitors

We intend the new website to be part of a wider rebrand. With that said, there are a few key points to consider:

- We do not want our brand to shift radically – evolution, not revolution!
- We want to stand out from competitors, in terms of style and colour, as well as compelling content.

Design Brief

The following outlines our thoughts on the look and feel of the site.

The website should:

- a) Showcase the knowledge, experience, and capabilities of our consultants
- b) Offer a members' area behind a paywall, which features high quality news, advice, and opinion
- c) Attract traffic from search engines and convert this into enquiries as often as possible
- d) Allow in-house editing
- e) Improve our online presence
- f) Have a modern design and our logo and create our brand
- g) Be responsive on mobile and tablet devices
- h) Generate leads and enquiries from search traffic
- i) Increase brand awareness – we have included our current logo but we anticipate we might need to adapt or change this logo, to retain continuity and reflect our new name and our wider focus around governance, regulation/complaint investigation, policy and strategy writing, facilitation of events, finance and customer involvement
- j) Have strong on-site SEO to increase the chance of organic search traffic on the keywords and more
- k) Facilitate a member log in for premium content
- l) Facilitate a secure client registration and payment for this
- m) Easy to navigate and limits the use of pop-ups
- n) Establishes a clear call to action page
- o) Keep depth of content to no more than three pages or less

Look and Feel of the New Website

It should have:

- a) A clean and clear layout, easy to read with a navigation bar clearly directing you to what you are looking for – examples of options may include “governance”, “operations”, “customer involvement” Training and development, and others where appropriate. Ideally this would be dynamic, so it can be easily updated in-house if needed
- b) A palette which is fresh and easy to read – ideally dark type on a light background, but with colours used sparingly (for quick print), and carefully to distinguish the three key products and possibly a fourth, more general one
- c) To have bold header text and with body text which is appropriate to the size of the site and discovery on google search – grey or black type. We would like you to suggest options for fonts which are accessible for our audience
- d) Show a call to action – phone, message, email, enquiry box or ask for a call
- e) Display pictures/photography of our most popular news and services, which are clickable for more information where appropriate (such as on the homepage). We particularly like the use of a header message (thinner than the examples below) with a ‘squares’ layout, and the use of some idea within this, for example:

- <https://www.pioneergroup.org.uk/>
- <https://www.blackburnehouse.co.uk/>
- <https://www.theconsultancy.co.uk/>

In the first headers we will show a bold call to action which expresses in a short sentence what we are about – but it does not need to take up the space in the above websites:

- f) Have a strong focus on up-to-date news content to demonstrate our expertise, analysis, and advice
- g) Have photos from our work – they may not be good enough and now we are not in organisations to improve on that due to COVID-19
- h) Display high quality smiling pictures of our consultants and a biography about their skills and expertise (and possibly our customers in our testimonials)
- i) Showcase three important points in the box underneath on the key services we deliver
- j) Showcase latest news and separately - latest articles for members
- k) Showcase testimonials and case studies in the user journey through the site
- l) Pull in/push out social media messages
- m) A strong header, like <https://www.paultalbot.at/index.html>
- n) Have clear case studies/testimonials – a bit like Virtual Radiologic on <https://www.crestviewcommunications.com/>
- o) Enable easy downloads and prints – a bit like some parts of <https://superspicymedia.com/>
- p) Have a limited video content on the site – a link to Vimeo/You Tube which we do not currently use - we want to use this to create a rapport with our audience
- q) We are interested in exploring discussion forums which our members might prompt, like: <https://www.housemark.co.uk/new-events/all-events/forums>
- r) Set us apart from our competition in a way which suggests to customers we are
 - a professional company in a people focused industry
 - inclusive and we care
 - informed and can provide expertise to support you
 - respectful of your needs, trustworthy and discreet
 - passionate about our work
 - are approachable, we can help you and we are friendly
 - can support you to grow, or develop, or improve
 - offer added value because our experience is far reaching

Content

We need to provide significant amounts of new content to ensure that our website is suitable for both potential and current customers. New content will be written and edited by our consultants.

As part of this project we need support to:

- Work with our team to determine which content we should be focusing on, to optimize our chances of being found through searches
- Streamline our content into clear, immediately obvious messages and calls-to-action
- Help us to understand the use of keywords for search optimization, so we may focus when we write our content
- Help us produce better corporate images, photography, or videos
- Advise us on integrating our website with social networks

Site Map

We welcome your advice and views on improvement on the following display:

- Home

 - About us
 - People
 - Testimonials and case studies
- Services:
- Governance
 - Board development
 - Board recruitment
 - New HA Registrations
 - Financial reviews
 - Risk and Assurance
 - Regulatory Compliance

 - Customer
 - Community/Citizen engagement
 - Customer Scrutiny of services
 - Customer governance
 - Complaints investigation

 - Organisation
 - Strategy, change and policy development
 - Performance and improvement
 - Learning and development
 - Service review and assessments

 - News and Views
 - News/views page (where our good practice articles will be carried over from our old website)
 - Publications
 - News/views pages

 - Training and Conferences
 - Training and development
 - Upcoming Events
 - Previous Events

 - Members Area
 - Discounted Training
 - Articles/Newsletters (carried over from the articles on the current site)
 - Quarterly Publications
 - Performance Clubs
 - Shared Learning Events/Networking

- Become a Member – call to action
- Contact Us

Call to Action

We have two primary calls to action: become a member; or book a call/meeting.

Secondary calls to action include following us on social media accounts, and a hint at content they are missing in the members area.

If possible, we would like to capture visitors email addresses in return for a premium content download.

Technical Requirements

- The membership section needs to be secure, easy to register for (including online payments) and easy to manage
- The website should be accessible via search engines and be coded with good on-page SEO. Google Analytics, or a similar analytics plug-in, must be installed and configured, including goal tracking.
- The website will be in the public domain for universal use and must be accessible for all, including disabled people. The chosen designer will ensure that the final website is accessible, considering the Equality Act 2010. There must also be an accessibility statement included on the site, which we are happy to lead on drafting
- Your continued services as an effective web host/designer
- We would expect the supplier to provide ongoing technical maintenance for the site – server, CMS, any plugins used and so on.
- We will be responsible for maintaining the site content

Other Marketing

We are aware that we will need to promote our new site both online and offline to achieve our aims. We would welcome an idea of ongoing plan and costs for your support for the first year.

Branding

We are keen to continue the theme of our existing brand, it is recognised and has been used since 2011. We like the logo, but we need to lose the words Tenant Advisor and either replace/interchange them with other services we deliver, or lose them to the words, like YDC or YDCconsultants.co.uk. We would like your suggestion on new branding of this nature, including any changes of colour/tone to match the new website.



Deliverable Timescale

There are tight timescales for the site redevelopment – we need to be live ideally in mid- December.

Any timeline cannot go beyond early January, when we need to be in a position when clients and potential clients return to work after Christmas to do some serious marketing linked to the new site.

Indicative Budget

- Our indicative budget for design and development of the new website is in the region of £6k - £8k
- We would like you to design the site, and we aim to populate the content pages
- We expect to be able to complete most of the copywriting, article publishing and page updating work following basic initial guidance
- We will need the site to link to our social media pages on twitter and linked in – which we will need to set up under YDC
- We would like you to host the site, ensure the technical side is regularly updated, and complete site back up regularly, as you suggest is appropriate and to suggest a fee for this service separately within your quote
- We would like you to support us occasionally if we are struggling with functionality (this is very rare)
- We have a small budget for ongoing support and maintenance of the new YDC site and would like an idea of costs for your time for per annum.
- We want to have a discussion forum with questions or comments posted by us, or our members, in the members’ section, linked to the front page of the site

Evaluation Criteria

Quotations will be assessed and scored on the following criteria:

- Cost (30%)
- Understanding of the brief/clarity of quotation (30%)
- Demonstrable skills and understanding of industry sector (20%)
- Delivery Timescale (10%)
- Ease of Communication (10%)

Scoring Methodology

4 Excellent	Proposal meets and, in some places, exceeds the required standard
3 Good	Proposal meets required standard
2 Acceptable	Proposal meets the required standard in most respects, but is lacking or inconsistent in others
1 Poor	Proposal falls short of expected standard
0 Unacceptable	Completely or significantly fails to meet required standard or does not provide the relevant answer

Proposal Format of the bid

Proposals should clearly demonstrate how they meet the requirement set out above.

We are looking for proposals that outline in detail how you would fulfil this brief, giving examples of how you will approach the work, and including both initial and ongoing costs, the timescales involved and any assumptions and conditions that you have made.

Quality

We would like you to provide us with the following information in your bid, against these headings:

1. Demonstrate your knowledge and skills for this type of project
2. A basic mock of the front page, or a drawing/clear explanation of what you feel this will look like
3. The cost for the build of the website
4. The cost for the tweak to branding
5. The cost for on-going marketing support and what marketing support you suggest in the first year
6. The cost for hosting the site, annually
7. How support is given and the hours this is available
8. The timing of the project, from start to finish, with any milestones, including what you will need from me in those times
9. How you will enable my website to be compliant for Google's new SEO rankings on mobile
10. Which payment gateway you suggest
11. Which font and text size you suggest
12. References, for us to follow up (phone number, e mail address and website link) to 2 companies and names contacts, who you have/do worked on a similar project to this project

Costs

Please quote for the following separately:

1. The design and build of the website, linked to social media and for us to populate
2. Pay forums (or similar add-on which is subscription based) to run the site
3. Hosting and updating the site, indicating how often updating would be completed (and by who, if this is to be completed by another company)
4. Rebranding which carries forward the established business
5. Ongoing marketing advice/tweaks to make the product work for members in the first year
6. Technical support, if required when the site is in operation
7. Any additional costs, related to the website or any part of the project which are not listed or included above to enable a fully functioning and professional site (even if you indicate that they might be optional and could be added on at a later date)

Deadline and Submission

Proposals are required by 5.00pm on Thursday 29th October 2020 at 5pm, electronically to yvonne@tenantadvisor.net

Date Published

The date of the tender publication is: Wednesday 14th October 2020.

This work is part funded by the European Regional Development Fund.

Conditions of Tender

- Please be aware that due to the relatively low indicative budget for this work (i.e. less than the current OJEU limits) there is no regulatory obligation for us to provide feedback if you are unsuccessful.
- We reserve the right to discontinue this tender process at any time and not award a contract.
- You will not be entitled to claim from us any costs or expenses which you may incur in preparing and/or submitting your Tender at any stage of this exercises. This applies whether or not your organisation is successful