WEBSITE DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT DECODED

Talking about websites comes with its very own language of tech terms, abbreviations, and jargon. Our dictionary is here to help you learn some of the most important terminology you'll encounter on your design and development journey.

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THE TERM	WHAT IT MEANS
UI	Stands for user interface, referring to the interactions, look, and feel of your site
UX	Stands for user experience, referring to the user's journey through each page and the site as a whole
Front-end development	Refers to building the user-facing parts of the website, i.e. what is seen on your user's screen
Back-end development	Refers to building the server side of the website, i.e. connection to databases, API integrations, etc.
Domain name	The name of your website and where it will be hosted, like agencyfifty3.com
Domain name system (DNS)	Translates domain names to machine-readable IP addresses, so you can type a domain and the internet knows where to send you
301 redirect	Tells a DNS that a website has permanently moved to a different URL and sends users to the new URL when they navigate to the old one
404 error	Occurs when the requested page can't be found, which usually happens when there's a typo in the URL or a page has been deleted without 301 redirecting
URL	A page's full web address, i.e. the unique identifier that includes a protocol, subdomain, domain, path, and additional queries or fragments
URL prefix	The protocol (https) and subdomain (www), which tells the browser how a user wants to access a domain
URL suffix	Everything after your domain name and slash, including the path, query, and fragments in a URL
Website hosting	An essential service that provides a secure place to store a website's files and makes them accessible online
Http vs. https	Both are network communication protocols that transfer data over the internet, but HTTPS uses encryption and verification for better security
SSL	Stands for secure sockets layer, which allows for an encrypted connection between a website and a browser so outsiders cannot access sensitive data
reCAPTCHA	Often a straightforward test for users to complete, this is a Google system developed to distinguish between human and automated access
TXT record	A type of DNS record in text format that contains information about your domain, often used for verification or configuration
MX record	Indicates how email messages should be routed from site elements like a contact form so messages and leads land in the right inbox

THE TERM	WHAT IT MEANS
Content management system (CMS)	A software application that allows for building, maintaining, and publishing websites
WordPress	A popular open-source CMS, which allows for building, maintaining, publishing, and editing your site
Plugin	Refers to specific tools developed for WordPress that have a range of uses, like adding forms, allowing custom code, and more
Website maintenance	Essential and ongoing upkeep of a site, necessary for keeping information, photos, and content accurate and to regularly check for bugs
Application programming interface (API)	A series of protocols that allow for two software applications to communicate so they can exchange data, like info from Yardi visible on a WordPress site
Cookies	A small text file websites send to your browser when you visit it, storing data about your visit
1st-party cookie	Cookies that are available only to the domain that created them, like saving a shopping cart or keeping you logged in
3rd-party cookie	Cookies that are available from any website that runs a 3rd party's code, often used to serve ads to relevant users
Splash page	A single, non-scrollable webpage, which often serves as a preview or lead generator before a full site is published
Landing page	A single, scrollable webpage that usually serves a defined purpose, like driving users to a contact form
Staging site	A clone website that is not live online, which allows testing, debugging, and collecting client feedback without publishing or altering a live site
Cache	A temporary storage location for data, files, login details, etc. and the fastest memory storage a computer can access
Hypertext markup language (HTML)	A coding language and the foundation of any website that defines the content and structure of a website
Cascading style sheets (CSS)	A coding language that adds styling and defines the way HTML is presented to a user on a browser
Javascript	A programming language that runs on web browsers to make webpages interactive and functional
Search engine optimization (SEO)	The process of making improvements to visuals, copy, and functionality on a web page or site in order to help it appear in search results and get clicks
On-page SEO	Optimizing user-facing web content, including copy and layout, to improve a page's ranking in search
Technical SEO	Optimizing a website's architecture and backend to improve its ranking in search
Core web vitals	Three metrics Google uses to measure how well a website performs for users: page load speed, how responsive it is to user inputs, and how stable the layout is
Robots.txt file	Tells search engine crawlers (used by sites like Google) which URLs the crawler can access on your site, i.e. which pages can appear in search results
Sitemap	Like a map of your site content, this lists all the pages on a website, including pages nested under parent or pillar pages, so you can see how they all interact
Schema markup	A type of code that helps search engines understand the content on a web page
Image compression	The process of making image files smaller, often by removing bytes of information, usually for better page load speed
Alt text	Copy that describes an image for use by screen reader devices and image search engines
Google Analytics (GA)	A platform that collects web traffic data and provides insight on SEO and UX
Google Tag Manager (GTM)	The tracking code added to a webpage or website that allows marketers to add or remove 3rd-party Javascript, i.e. chatbots, phone tracking, ADA widgets, etc.

Together, let's make it *legendary*.