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STERLINGDESIGN

Web design · Hosting · Maintenance · South Africa

WordPress Consulting & Maintenance Proposal

Professional support to finish, fix, speed up and safely maintain your WordPress website.

PROPOSAL DETAILS

Prepared for	
Contact person	
Website	
Email / phone	
Proposal number	SD-YYYYMM / _____
Date	
Valid until	

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All prices in South African rand (R). SterlingDesign is not VAT-registered; no VAT is charged.

Welcome

Most small-business websites are not broken – they are simply unfinished, slow on cellphones or no longer looked after. Plugins fall behind, placeholder text is forgotten, forms stop working and nobody notices until a client mentions it. This proposal sets out how SterlingDesign can finish and fix your WordPress website once, and then keep it safe, fast and up to date every month.

You can choose **once-off work** (to get the site properly finished), a **monthly maintenance plan** (to keep it that way), or both. Everything is priced up front, in plain language, with no lock-in contracts.

About SterlingDesign

SterlingDesign is a South African web studio working nationwide, run by Frederick ("Frik") Groenewald, offering web design, hosting and website maintenance to small and medium South African businesses. You deal with one person from start to finish – the person who actually does the work – and you can reach me directly on WhatsApp.

What I focus on

- WordPress sites that look good *and* bring in enquiries
- Speed on cellphones and South African mobile networks
- Security, backups and updates done properly
- POPIA-aware handling of your website and data

How I work

- Remote work – no need for office visits
- A backup is taken before every change
- Plain-English reports, no jargon
- You always own your website, content and accounts

What this proposal covers

#	Section	In short
1	How the work is delivered	How I safely access your business's website
2	Once-off consulting & fixes	Audit, finish-and-fix, speed, SEO, POPIA, email, security, training
3	Monthly maintenance plans	Essential and Business
4	Pricing	Once-off fees, monthly fees and hourly rate
5	Getting started	Onboarding steps and what I need from you
6	Scope & terms	What is excluded, payment and other terms
7	Acceptance	Choose your options and sign

1. How the work is delivered

All work is done **remotely and securely**. You do not need to hand over your personal passwords, and you stay in control the whole time. In plain terms:

Type of access	What it means for you
A dedicated WordPress login for SterlingDesign	You (or I, with your permission) create a separate administrator account in WordPress just for SterlingDesign. It is like giving a trusted contractor their own key to the office instead of yours. **You keep ownership of the website and can delete this account at any time** – access stops immediately.
Or: a WordPress "Application Password"	A special, revocable password that WordPress creates for one purpose (for example, for a maintenance tool). It cannot be used to log in to the normal dashboard, and you can cancel it with one click under *Users → Profile*.
Hosting / cPanel access – only when needed	Some tasks happen "behind" WordPress, at your hosting company: server-level backups, SSL certificates, email and DNS records (such as SPF and DMARC), and database restores. For these I ask for hosting access only for that job – ideally a separate user, or a temporary password you change afterwards.
Bigger custom changes	Delivered as a **child theme** or a small **custom plugin**. This keeps my changes separate from your theme, so future theme updates do not wipe them out, and the work stays yours if you ever move to another developer.

Safety first – every time

- **Backup before changes.** A full backup (files and database) is taken before any update or change, so the site can be rolled back if anything goes wrong.
- **Staging where your hosting allows.** Larger changes are first tested on a private copy of your site ("staging") and only then applied to the live site.
- **Quiet-time updates.** Updates are done outside your busiest hours where possible, and the site is checked afterwards.
- **Records.** Each piece of work is logged, so you can see what was done and when.

Your information and POPIA

SterlingDesign treats access to your website, and any personal information on it (for example enquiry-form messages or customer details), in line with the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA):

- Personal information is accessed only where needed for the work, and never sold, shared or used for anything else.
- Logins are stored in an encrypted password manager, protected with two-factor authentication, and never sent in plain email or WhatsApp messages where avoidable.
- Backups are encrypted and kept only for the stated retention period, then deleted. Where they are stored is disclosed on request.
- If I become aware of a security incident affecting your site or data, I will tell you promptly so you can meet your own POPIA obligations.
- When our work together ends, my access is removed and any copies I hold are deleted (or returned to you).

2. Once-off consulting & fixes

Choose any combination. Fees are listed in section 4: some items have a fixed fee, and others depend on the size and state of your site and are quoted in writing (at the hourly rate) before work starts – so you always know the cost up front.

Service	What is included
2.1 Website audit	A plain-English review of content, mobile use, speed, SEO, security, POPIA and email set-up, with a prioritised fix list ("what to do first"). Useful on its own, or as the first step before fixes.
2.2 Finish & fix	Replace placeholder ("lorem ipsum") text and fill empty sections (About, FAQ, testimonials) using content you supply or approve; add a working contact / quote form with spam protection; repair broken links and buttons; make phone numbers and email addresses **tap-to-call / tap-to-email** on cellphones; add a WhatsApp chat button; correct typos and template leftovers.
2.3 Speed optimisation	Resize and compress images (modern WebP format), reduce unnecessary fonts and scripts, set up page and browser caching, and tune for Google's **Core Web Vitals** (how quickly and smoothly a page loads). Before-and-after test results included.
2.4 SEO foundations	One clear main heading (H1) per page; page titles and unique meta descriptions that mention your services and area; a clean XML sitemap; set-up or check of **Google Search Console** and **Bing Webmaster Tools**; business details for Google (structured data) and a sharing image for WhatsApp/Facebook previews. *No ranking guarantees – nobody can honestly promise those.*
2.5 POPIA compliance (website)	A website privacy policy page, linked from every page footer; a cookie notice where analytics or tracking (e.g. Google Analytics) is used; consent wording on forms. Based on a reputable template adapted to your business – *not legal advice*; your attorney or compliance officer should approve the final wording.
2.6 Email deliverability records	Set up or correct **SPF, DKIM and DMARC** records for your domain. These tell other mail servers which senders are genuinely yours, so your emails are less likely to land in spam and criminals find it harder to send fake emails "from" your business. Requires hosting/DNS access; DKIM depends on your email provider.
2.7 Security hardening	Login protection (limit password guessing, two-factor authentication for administrators), disable unused features (e.g. XML-RPC), hide public user lists, add security headers, remove unused plugins and themes, review user accounts and file permissions, and bring everything up to date.
2.8 Training session	An online session of about 60 minutes (Google Meet or Zoom), recorded so you can watch it again, showing you or your staff how to safely update text, images, blog posts and form settings – and what *not* to touch. Includes a one-page cheat-sheet PDF.

> **Typical starting point:** most small-business sites benefit from **2.2 Finish & fix + 2.3 Speed + 2.5 POPIA**, followed by a monthly plan. A **website audit (2.1)** is recommended if you are not sure what your site needs.

3. Monthly maintenance plans

A website is like a vehicle: it runs best with regular servicing. Each plan keeps WordPress, your theme and plugins up to date, backs up your site off-site, watches for downtime and security problems, and gives you a short monthly report. Plans are month-to-month.

Essential — R550 / month

For simple sites that rarely change

- WordPress, theme & plugin updates every two weeks
- Weekly off-site backups, kept 8 weeks
- Uptime monitoring & monthly security scan
- 30 minutes of support / small edits each month

Business — R1,000 / month

Recommended · for active businesses

- Weekly updates, checked afterwards
- Daily off-site backups, kept 30 days + 6 monthly copies
- Weekly security scans, login protection & speed checks
- 1.5 hours of support / content edits each month

Included each month	Essential	Business
WordPress core, theme & plugin updates	Every 2 weeks	Weekly
Urgent security patches	Within 2 business days	Within 1 business day
Off-site backups (frequency)	Weekly	Daily
Backup retention	8 weeks	30 days + 6 monthly
Test restore of a backup	–	Twice a year
Uptime monitoring & alerts	Every 5 min	Every 1 min
Security / malware scanning	Monthly	Weekly + login protection
Monthly report (plain English)	Summary	Detailed
Support & content edits included	30 minutes	1.5 hours
Typical edits that fit (guide)	1–2 small text/image edits	Up to ~5 edits
Response time (business hours)	2 business days	Same business day
Website down – emergency response	Next business day	Within 4 business hours
Speed check (Core Web Vitals)	–	Monthly
Broken-link & form check	–	Monthly
SSL certificate & domain expiry watch	✓	✓

Business hours: Monday to Friday, 08:00–17:00 (SAST), excluding public holidays. Unused support time does not carry over to the next month. Extra time is billed at the hourly rate in section 4, always with your approval first. A full backup is taken immediately before updates on both plans. Hosting and paid plugin licences are not included unless stated (see section 6). Need more support time, SEO reviews or faster response? Ask for a custom quote.

4. Pricing

All amounts are in South African rand. **SterlingDesign is not VAT-registered; no VAT is charged.** Fixed fees cover the work described in section 2; items marked "quoted" are priced in writing at the hourly rate before any work starts.

Once-off consulting & fixes

Tick	Service	Fee (once-off)
☐	2.1 Website audit with prioritised fix list	R1,950
☐	2.2 Finish & fix (content, form, links, tap-to-call, WhatsApp)	Quoted after audit, at R450/hour
☐	2.3 Speed optimisation	R2,500
☐	2.4 SEO foundations	R2,500
☐	2.5 POPIA compliance (privacy policy, cookie notice, form consent)	R1,250
☐	2.6 Email deliverability records (SPF / DKIM / DMARC)	Quoted at R450/hour
☐	2.7 Security hardening	Quoted at R450/hour
☐	2.8 Training session (about 60 min online via Google Meet/Zoom, recorded, plus one-page cheat-sheet PDF)	R400
	Total if all fixed-fee items are chosen (2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.8)	**Fixed items: R8,600** + quoted items

Monthly maintenance plans

Tick	Plan	Fee per month
☐	**Essential** – updates, weekly backups, monitoring, 30 min support	R550 / month
☐	**Business** – weekly updates, daily backups, 1.5 hrs support, speed checks	R1,000 / month

Extra work

Hourly rate for work outside a plan or fixed quote		R450 / hour
Minimum charge / billing increment	Billed in 15-minute increments, minimum _____ minutes	
Optional: hosting (if moving to SterlingDesign hosting)		Quoted on request

Larger items (new pages, redesigns, online shops, custom features) are quoted separately in writing before any work begins.

5. Getting started

1. **Choose your options.** Tick the services and plan you want on the acceptance page and sign it (a scanned or photographed copy is fine).
2. **Invoice and deposit.** I send an invoice numbered in the format **SD-YYYYMM / 001** (e.g. SD-202611 / 001). Once-off work starts once the deposit is received (see section 6).
3. **Access set-up.** You create a SterlingDesign administrator login (I can talk you through it in five minutes), and hosting access if your chosen work needs it.
4. **Baseline backup & check.** I take a full backup, record current speed and health scores, and confirm the plan of work with you.
5. **Do the work.** Changes are made on staging where possible, then applied to the live site. You get updates on WhatsApp or email as milestones are reached.
6. **Review & sign-off.** You review the finished work. Up to two rounds of reasonable corrections are included in once-off fixed fees.
7. **Handover.** You receive a short summary of what was done, before-and-after results and, if chosen, your training session.
8. **Monthly care begins.** Your maintenance plan starts on the 1st of the following month (or pro-rata), with your first report the month after.

What I need from you

- A WordPress administrator account for SterlingDesign (or an Application Password)
- Hosting / cPanel and domain (DNS) access where needed – or the name of your hosting company so we can arrange it
- Your text content, or approval of draft text I write from your notes
- Logo files and photos (or approval to use suitable licensed stock images)
- Correct business details: phone, WhatsApp, address, hours, registrations
- Who receives enquiry-form messages, and your Google account for Search Console / Analytics
- Your Information Officer's name for the POPIA privacy policy
- One contact person who can approve work, and feedback within 5 business days

> **Timelines:** most once-off packages are completed within **5–15 business days** after access and content are received. Delays in receiving content or access move the timeline accordingly.

6. Scope & terms

Not included (unless quoted separately)

- New website designs, rebuilds, online shops (e.g. WooCommerce), bookings or membership systems, and custom development
- Copywriting beyond the agreed pages, professional photography, logo design, translations
- Paid advertising (Google / Meta ads), social media management and ongoing SEO campaigns
- Hosting, domain registration and email accounts (unless you take SterlingDesign hosting)
- Repairs caused by changes made by others, hacked-site clean-ups that happen while *not* on a plan, and recovering sites without usable backups
- Legal advice – POPIA documents are practical templates, to be approved by your own adviser

Terms

Payment	By EFT to the account on the invoice. Invoices are numbered SD-YYYYMM / 001. Once-off work: 50% deposit to start, balance on completion (amounts under R _____ payable in full up front). Monthly plans: invoiced at the start of each month, payable within 7 days. Please use the invoice number as your payment reference.
VAT	SterlingDesign is not VAT-registered; no VAT is charged.
Late payment	If an invoice is more than 14 days overdue, maintenance work may be paused until payment is received. Your site stays online and remains yours.
Contract period	Monthly plans run month-to-month. Either party may cancel with **30 days' written notice** (email or WhatsApp is fine). No lock-in or cancellation fees. You can change plans from the next month.
Ownership	**You own your website, domain, content and data.** Work paid for (including child themes and custom plugins written for you) becomes yours on payment. On cancellation I hand over any files and backups you request, and remove my access.
Third-party software	Premium themes, plugins, services and licences (e.g. backup storage, security or form add-ons) are at the client's cost and registered in the client's name where possible. I will always recommend free, reputable options first.
Limitation of liability	I take care to work safely and keep backups, but cannot guarantee that a website will never go offline, be attacked, or rank in a particular position, as hosting, plugins and search engines are outside my control. SterlingDesign's total liability for any claim is limited to the fees you paid in the three months before the claim, and excludes indirect losses such as lost profit or business interruption.
Confidentiality & POPIA	Access details and any personal information are kept confidential and handled as described in section 1.
Validity	This proposal is valid for 30 days from its date.

7. Acceptance

To go ahead, please tick your choices, sign below and send a copy to **f.groenewald@outlook.com** or on WhatsApp to **+27 79 535 5780**.

Your selection	Amount
☐ Once-off services (items ticked in section 4)	R _____
☐ Essential (R550) ☐ Business (R1,000) monthly plan, starting ___ / ___ / 20___	R _____ / month
Hourly rate for approved extra work	R450 / hour
Proposal number	SD-_____ / _____

By signing, the client accepts this proposal and the terms in section 6, and confirms that they are authorised to give SterlingDesign access to the website and hosting for the agreed work.

Client

Business: _____

Full name: _____

Position: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

SterlingDesign

Frederick Christiaan Groenewald

t/a SterlingDesign

Email: f.groenewald@outlook.com

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Questions? WhatsApp or call me on **+27 79 535 5780**. I am happy to walk you through any part of this proposal on a short call or video meeting.