

# Case Study:

## How Thunderbolt Digital Became the Preferred Web Design Agency for Surrey County Council

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### The Problem

We have approximately 70 different partnership and microsites across the council in addition to our main County Council website. We have guidelines for how these sites should be built and managed but we can't design and develop all of these sites within the Digital Delivery Team; it just wouldn't be sustainable.

Many of these sites are held with external design companies and the standard really varies. We wanted to give people a reason to approach our team and register their URLs with us. We needed to find a digital agency to work with, and get to a point where we would be in a position to help.

Many of the existing web sites had been designed by companies who understood print design but nothing about web design, so they are nice to look at but not that user-friendly, or have some other issues.

We needed to find a company we could work well with and who could help us check that the usability was there - and offer design and development, too, should it be needed. We want to ensure that every Surrey County Council partnership or microsite has good standards. Finding an agency was also about finding people with whom we could build a reliable working relationship and who could help us deal with the volume of work.

People were sourcing work from multiple suppliers and getting really different levels of quality. We wanted to find one, reliable supplier. If you work with multiple suppliers you end up spending most of your time training and standardising. Having some consistency with content management systems and usability standards was important to us.

### The Solution

I googled for web design companies in Surrey because I thought it would be a good idea for us to use a local company and promote Surrey business. It ended up working particularly well because we've been able to do a lot of face-to-face work which we wouldn't have been able to do with an agency that was geographically too distant.

When we first met Saybhan, his dynamic character won us over and once we started working with him and his team, it was clear we had found a company to whom we could easily explain where we wanted to get to but also take advantage of their design input as well. The Thunderbolt Digital team is friendly, approachable and great to work with. There is a good synergy between our in-house developers and Thunderbolt. Saybhan and his team really added value to our projects. There are several more websites we need to work on and Thunderbolt Digital is now our preferred web design agency.



We've found Thunderbolt to be really flexible and able to turn work around very quickly. There have been no complaints or stalling even when there have been hiccups on both sides. They've been really open to the way we work and able to adapt quickly. We appreciate that working with us must be quite different to how many other clients work, but Thunderbolt has always been able to apply the relevant resources and deal with whatever the situation has been. We enjoy seeing them and feel we've been able to develop a good working relationship. The personalities involved with the company have made a big difference.

I would recommend Thunderbolt Digital to anyone (and in fact already do so to our district and borough management). We have confidence in Thunderbolt Digital and in the way they respond to our requests. The personality and flexibility are just right. Personalities can't be changed so if you don't have a good relationship with a company there's not a great deal you can do about it. Finally, the diversity of Thunderbolt's portfolio - public, private, large, small - and the consistent quality they have delivered has really given us confidence that we can get what we need out of this. Thunderbolt Digital has developed three microsites for us so far and we look forward to working with them on future projects.

*Louise Hallaway, Surrey County Council*

### **About Thunderbolt Digital**

Thunderbolt Digital is based in the Georgian market town of Farnham, Surrey. The team works hard to deliver the best service possible and loves helping businesses in Surrey, Hampshire and Berkshire. Thunderbolt has worked with a range of clients from a small local PR agency to the Surrey County Council.

The team brings in expertise from large digital agencies, design companies and global retail. All the developers are developer-designers which allows them to consider the whole web design process and leaves room for greater project flexibility. Every website is designed to be mobile-responsive and to best reflect the company it has been designed for. Thunderbolt Digital also offers copywriting, online marketing, search engine marketing and branding advice.

Contact : +44 (0)1252 413 757

Email: [howdy@wearethunderbolt.com](mailto:howdy@wearethunderbolt.com)

Web: [wearethunderbolt.com](http://wearethunderbolt.com)

