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Unib Web Standard

A practical benchmark for what a professional website should be — built for how the web is actually used across Africa.

The Unib Web Standard (UWS) defines the measurable qualities every serious website should meet: that it loads fast on a real phone, works for everyone, is secure, is easy to find, and turns visitors into customers. It is organised into nine pillars and three compliance levels, so any site can be assessed objectively and improved deliberately.

Most "web design" conversations are about taste. The Unib Web Standard is about what can be measured. A website either loads quickly on a mid-range Android phone or it does not; it is either reachable over a secure connection or it is not; a visitor can either contact the business in one tap or they cannot.

We created the UWS because the businesses we work with across Cameroon and the wider continent deserve a clear, honest benchmark — one that reflects local realities such as mobile-first browsing, variable bandwidth, WhatsApp-led communication and Mobile Money payments, rather than assumptions borrowed from elsewhere.

The standard is deliberately platform-neutral. It does not care whether a site is built in WordPress, Laravel, Shopify or hand-written code — only whether it meets the requirements below. It is free to read and adopt; see the Licence & use section for how the name and compliance marks may be used.

Compliance levels

ESSENTIAL	PROFESSIONAL	EXCELLENCE
The non-negotiable baseline. Every professional website must meet every Essential requirement — a site that misses even one is not yet fit for business.	Expected of any serious business or organisation. Meeting all Essential and Professional requirements marks a site as genuinely competitive.	Best-in-class. Reserved for sites that go beyond the expected to lead their market on speed, trust and experience.

Requirements

F Foundation & Availability

The site exists on solid, owned, reliable infrastructure and stays online.

ESSENTIAL	**Served over HTTPS** — A valid TLS certificate is installed and every page loads over https with no mixed-content or certificate warnings.
ESSENTIAL	**Own domain and matching email** — The site runs on its own registered domain — not a free subdomain — with professional email on the same domain.

ESSENTIAL	**Reliable hosting and uptime** — Hosting keeps the site reachable; the target is 99.5%+ monthly uptime with no routine daily outages.
PROFESSIONAL	**Automated backups** — Files and database are backed up automatically on a schedule, and the restore process has been tested at least once.
EXCELLENCE	**Staging and recovery plan** — Changes are tested in a staging environment before going live, and a written recovery plan exists for a serious failure.

P Performance & Speed

The site is fast on a real connection, not just on a fibre line in the office.

ESSENTIAL	**Loads usably on 4G** — The main content is visible and usable within a few seconds on a mid-range phone over a typical 4G connection.
ESSENTIAL	**Optimised images** — Images are compressed and sized for the web; no multi-megabyte photos are shipped on key pages.
PROFESSIONAL	**Core Web Vitals pass** — Largest Contentful Paint, Cumulative Layout Shift and Interaction to Next Paint are within Google's "good" thresholds on mobile.
PROFESSIONAL	**Caching and efficient delivery** — Static assets are cached with sensible headers and, where the audience is distributed, served via a CDN.
EXCELLENCE	**Monitored performance budget** — A performance budget is defined and monitored so speed does not quietly regress as content is added.

M Mobile Experience

The site is built for the phone first, because that is where the audience is.

ESSENTIAL	**Mobile-first and responsive** — Fully usable from roughly 320px width upward, with no horizontal scrolling or content cut off the screen.
ESSENTIAL	**Tap-friendly targets** — Buttons and links are large enough and well spaced for thumbs, and nothing important depends on hover.
PROFESSIONAL	**Tested on budget devices** — The experience is verified on common low- and mid-range Android phones, not only on flagship devices.
EXCELLENCE	**App-like enhancements** — Progressive enhancements such as PWA installability or offline-aware behaviour are used where they add real value.

A Accessibility & Inclusion

Everyone can use the site, including people with disabilities and people on assistive technology.

ESSENTIAL	**Readable by default** — Text has sufficient colour contrast, legible sizes and a logical heading structure.

ESSENTIAL	**Images carry alt text** — Meaningful images have descriptive alternative text; decorative images are marked as such.
PROFESSIONAL	**Keyboard operable** — Every interactive element is reachable and usable by keyboard, with a visible focus indicator.
PROFESSIONAL	**WCAG 2.1 AA aligned** — The site has been measured against WCAG 2.1 AA and significant issues have been resolved.
EXCELLENCE	**Validated with assistive tech** — Key journeys have been tested with a screen reader, and with real users where possible.

D Discoverability & SEO

Search engines and the right people can actually find the site.

ESSENTIAL	**Indexable and titled** — Every page is crawlable and has a unique, descriptive title and meta description.
ESSENTIAL	**Sitemap and robots** — A valid XML sitemap is published and robots.txt is correct — not accidentally blocking the whole site.
PROFESSIONAL	**Structured data** — Appropriate schema.org markup (Organization, Article, Product, FAQ, etc.) is present and validates.
PROFESSIONAL	**Local presence** — Where the brand serves a local market, its Google Business Profile and consistent name/address/phone are in place.
EXCELLENCE	**Intent-driven content** — Pages map to real search intent and are kept current rather than published once and forgotten.

S Security & Privacy

The site protects itself and the people who use it.

ESSENTIAL	**No known vulnerabilities at launch** — Platform, themes and dependencies are up to date, and all default or admin passwords have been changed.
ESSENTIAL	**Protected forms** — Public forms have bot/spam protection and all input is validated on the server, not only in the browser.
ESSENTIAL	**Clear privacy policy** — A plain-language privacy policy explains what personal data is collected and why.
PROFESSIONAL	**Security headers** — HTTPS is enforced (HSTS) and a sensible Content-Security-Policy and related headers are configured.
PROFESSIONAL	**Actively maintained** — There is a routine for applying security updates and for noticing if the site is compromised.

EXCELLENCE	**Independent review** — The site undergoes periodic security review or scanning, with findings tracked through to resolution.

C Content & Clarity

A visitor immediately understands what this is, who it is for, and why to trust it.

ESSENTIAL	**Clear purpose** — Within seconds a visitor can tell what the organisation does and who it serves.
ESSENTIAL	**Accurate and current** — No placeholder text, broken links or out-of-date information on the key pages.
PROFESSIONAL	**Consistent brand** — Logo, colours, typography and tone of voice are consistent across the whole site.
PROFESSIONAL	**Visible credibility** — Real photos, testimonials, results or credentials give first-time visitors a reason to trust the business.
EXCELLENCE	**Genuinely helpful depth** — Content answers the questions customers actually ask, going beyond a one-page brochure.

X Conversion & Contact

The site makes it effortless to take the next step, the way local customers prefer.

ESSENTIAL	**Easy to contact** — A visible, working contact method — form, phone or email — is available from every page.
ESSENTIAL	**Clear next step** — Every key page has one obvious primary call to action.
PROFESSIONAL	**Local contact and payments** — Where relevant, WhatsApp contact and locally trusted payments such as Mobile Money are supported.
PROFESSIONAL	**Responsive follow-up** — Enquiries reach a monitored inbox and are acknowledged promptly, not lost in a form that goes nowhere.
EXCELLENCE	**Measured funnels** — Conversion paths are tracked and improved over time based on real data.

G Measurement & Governance

The business owns, measures and maintains its own web presence.

ESSENTIAL	**Analytics in place** — At least one analytics tool records traffic and key actions, in a way that respects visitor privacy.
ESSENTIAL	**Clear ownership of accounts** — The organisation controls its own domain, hosting and key accounts, and holds the credentials itself.
PROFESSIONAL	**Regular review** — Performance, content and security are reviewed on a defined cadence rather than only when something breaks.

EXCELLENCE

Documented for continuity — Architecture, integrations and key processes are documented so the site survives a change of people or supplier.

How compliance is assessed

A website is assessed against every requirement at the Essential and Professional levels, plus the Excellence requirements where they apply. A site is certified at the **highest level for which it meets every requirement at that level and all levels below it**. In other words, a site earns the Professional mark only when it meets all Essential *and* all Professional requirements; it earns Excellence only when it meets all three tiers.

Assessment happens in three ways, which may be combined:

- **Self-assessment.** Anyone may use this document to score their own site. It is free and needs no permission.
- **Unib assessment.** Uni B Agency reviews a site against the standard and issues a report of what passes, what fails and how to fix it.
- **Verification.** A site that passes an Unib assessment can be listed and verified, and may display the corresponding compliance mark.

Assessment is based on what can be observed and measured — performance, responsiveness, accessibility, discoverability, visible security posture, content and conversion. It does not involve publishing a site's private security weaknesses. Compliance reflects the site at the time of assessment; because the web changes, verification is re-confirmed on a periodic basis.

Licence & use

The terms below are the proposed version 1.0 licence and are open to refinement.

The text of the Unib Web Standard is free to read, share and adopt. You may assess your own or others' websites against it, quote it with attribution, and use it as the basis of your own internal checklists.

The names **"Unib Web Standard"** and **"UWS"**, and the official compliance marks and badges, are reserved. They may be displayed only by websites that have been assessed and verified by Uni B Agency at the stated level. A modified or extended version of the standard must not be presented as the official Unib Web Standard.

There is no fee to comply with the standard, and compliance cannot be bought — a mark reflects an assessment, never a payment.

Changelog

- **v1.0** (2026-11-01) — First public edition of the Unib Web Standard: nine pillars, three compliance levels.

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