How to Design Website Enquiry Forms That Support Better Leads

Mavocado Design · 18 November 2026 · 5 min read

A useful enquiry form helps visitors explain what they need and gives your team enough context to respond. Here is how to design the complete journey, from the first field to reliable delivery.

Start with the conversation after the form

Before deciding which fields to add, ask the person handling enquiries what they need to know before responding. A business offering website design may need a service preference and a short project description. An accommodation business may need dates and guest numbers. The right questions depend on the next conversation, not on collecting as much information as possible.

Choose one clear purpose for the form. Separate project enquiries from job applications, support requests or supplier messages when those requests reach different people. Explain what the visitor is requesting and what happens next. Do not promise a response time unless the team can consistently support it.

Keep required fields purposeful

For each field, write down why the information is needed at this stage. A name, one reliable contact method and a project message may be enough to begin. Location, approximate budget and intended start date can help qualify a project, but consider making them optional when a visitor may not yet know the answer.

Avoid making someone repeat a service they already selected. Carry the context from the service page into the form and allow it to be changed. Offer an “I’m not sure yet” option where appropriate. This preserves the person’s intent without forcing a guess or blocking a useful enquiry.

Use labels and instructions that remain visible

Place a clear label next to every control. A placeholder can illustrate an answer, but it should not be the only way to identify a field. W3C’s form guidance explains how labels should be associated with their controls so different ways of using the page are supported. Mark required fields in understandable language.

Use the appropriate input type and autocomplete information for common details. On a phone, check that the keyboard suits the field and that dropdowns have enough space for their text. Give instructions before a person encounters a restriction, especially for dates, file uploads or a specific phone-number format.

Help people recover from mistakes

An error should identify the affected field and explain what to change. “Enter a valid email address” is more useful than a generic warning at the top of the page. Preserve the visitor’s other answers when validation fails. Connect error messages to the relevant controls and make important status updates available to assistive technology.

W3C guidance covers validation and user notifications as related parts of the form experience. Apply those principles to both individual fields and the overall submission. A temporary connection problem should offer a practical retry route; it should not erase a carefully written project brief.

Treat delivery as part of the experience

Client-side validation improves feedback, but the receiving service still needs to validate the submitted data. Agree where enquiries are stored, who receives notifications and what should happen if a notification cannot be sent. Show a success state only when the submission service has accepted the enquiry.

Test a real submission with permission and confirm the saved record and the receiving inbox. Include failure states, duplicate clicks and spam controls in the checks. Direct WhatsApp links and automated WhatsApp notifications are different features: the latter require a configured provider and agreed handling. Do not imply an automatic integration exists when it does not.

Review useful outcomes rather than form clicks

Track accepted submissions separately from button clicks and validation errors. Then review which enquiries fit the business and which progress to a consultation. An increase in form completions does not automatically mean an increase in suitable projects. Traffic source, pricing, availability and the quality of follow-up all affect the result.

Improve the form using observed problems rather than adding fields whenever an unusual request arrives. Periodically check the complete journey after content, hosting or integration changes. For a focused starting point, ask Mavocado to review the service page, enquiry form and confirmation flow together.

Further Reading

W3C WAI: labelling form controls

W3C WAI: validating input

W3C WAI: user notifications