



Website Redesign

The Science and Art of Website Design

Getting the Most out of Your Redesign

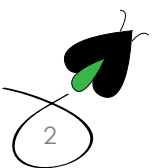
Websites have changed over the last ten years. Not long ago, you were safe with static websites that were little more than brochure sites and could simply sit and make sales, take information etc.

In today's 24/7, always able to Google, social media world, you need a website that is easy to update, even for a user of limited technical skills and will be easy to customize for two important reasons:

- 
- 1. It's easy for Google to find and index your site*
 - 2. It's easy for people to convert into leads so you can sell them services or products in the futures*

A new website design isn't just about look and feel. It's about the guts of the system, how easy it is to use and how much functionality it has. A website redesign can start with the branding but it should always contain and use functionality that lets it thrive in today's Google/Facebook world.

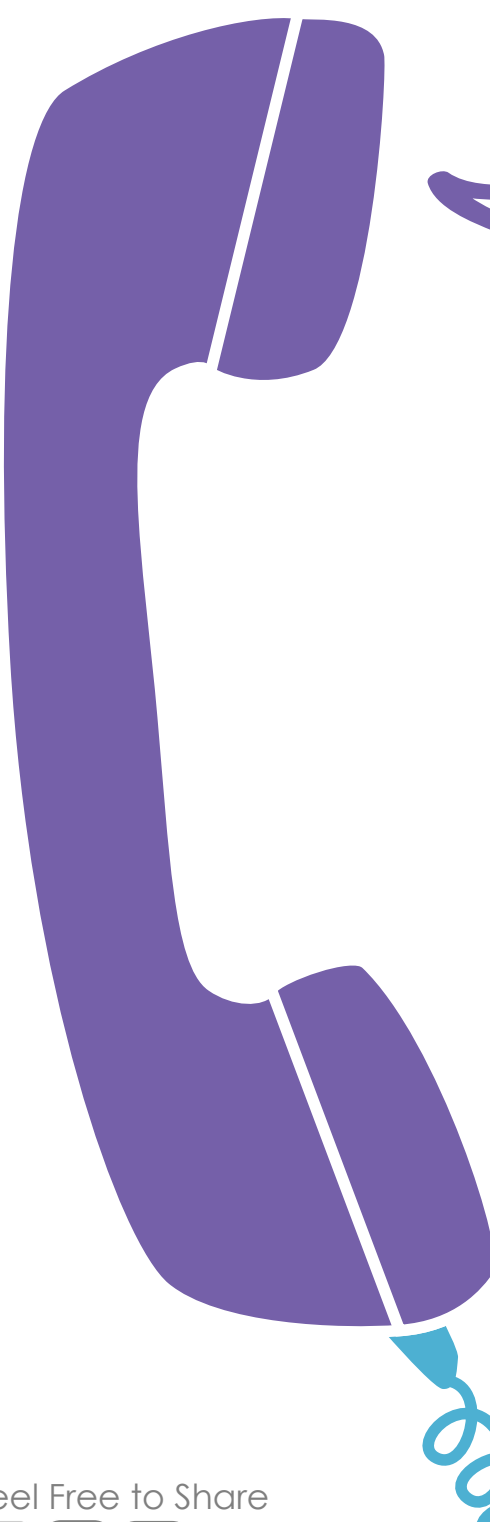
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Step 1:

Determine Whether a Redesign
is Right for You

The first step to determine if a website redesign is something you and your organization should undertake is to look at your current website and ask yourself if it's really meeting your needs. Here are five questions you can ask to determine whether or not you need a new website:



Should I redesign?

Are you able to track data on your website using a data package like Google Analytics?

Is your website easy to update or do you have to “call” someone?

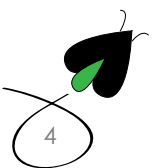
Does your website provide your company with leads?

Do you know why people are coming to your website?

Can people find your website easily?

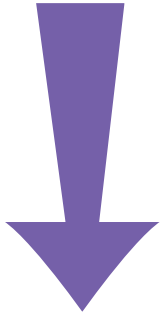
If the answer to any of the above is “no” then you really need to consider getting a new website.

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Not only should you ask yourself questions...you should also avoid some wrong reasons for redesigning the site.

Wrong Reasons



"We have a new corporate look and feel."

"It's been 12 monthys since our last redesign."

"Our CEO wants to do it."

Right Reasons



"We want to get found by more prospects."

"We want to convert more prospects into leads and eventually, into customers."

"We want to update the site ourselves"

Takeaways

Misguided reasons for redesigning your website are driven by the thought that the freshness and "wow factor" of a new website will increase excitement over your brand.

The main motivations behind website renovations should be to improve the performance of your website. A beautiful website, although intriguing and aesthetically pleasing, is secondary to a functional traffic and lead generating website.

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Step 2:

Make Sure You Protect Your
Website's Assets

Website design and development can be complicated even for the technically minded among us. Configuring a website can be easy which can make mistakes and omissions even easier. So before you start developing and designing a new website presence you need to take stock of your current website's assets and you may be surprised how many it has.

Asset Check List

-  *Determine how many pages you have.*
-  *Figure out which pages are most popular/powerful.*
-  *Determine how many inbound links you have.*
-  *Establish where these links are coming from.*
-  *Look up what interior pages have inbound links.*
-  *Find which inbound links are most popular/powerful.*
-  *Determine what keywords you rank for before the move.*
-  *Figure out which keywords are most effective.*

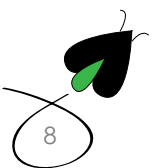
Takeaways

Like our questions above, if you are not able to determine the asset checklist then you are most likely in need of a new website. Google Analytics and Google webmaster tools are free tools to go through the asset checklist.



If you do not fully understand the importance and practice of proper SEO, *doing a web design can be more damaging than helpful*. If you do not feel comfortable around SEO work, *it may be best to hire a specialist* to perform an SEO audit and the redesign so all the hard work you have put into making a web presence does not disappear. It may also be time to contact a professional to set you up with a system that can track these metrics if you don't already have a system in place.

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Step 3:

Choose a Content
Management System Wisely

One mistake people and companies often make is choosing the wrong content management system. First off, a content management system is software that will run your website. There are a number of content management systems to choose from each with their pros and cons. We typically recommend using the following depending on a customer's needs:

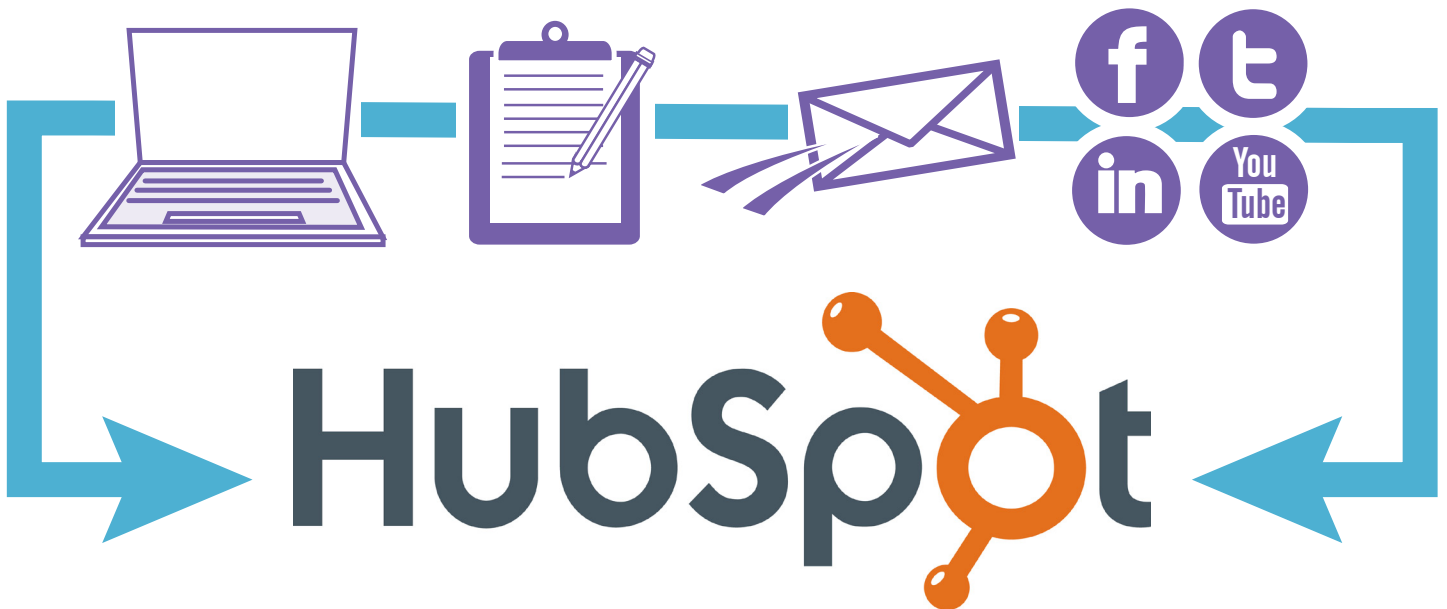


Drupal

Create simple to robust websites that are SEO compliant out of the box and has a ton of functionality that can be installed. Drupal also integrates with a lot of other 3rd party providers like MailChimp for email that can really increase your functionality. Drupal is free software that can either be configured by you or can be configured by a developer so you can use it to keep your website up to date.

Hubspot

Hubspot is a great one stop shop for inbound marketing and it a great solution for small businesses that don't want to configure multiple systems but want something to work. You can create all of your webpages and blogs as well as manage your email, manage social media marketing--measuring everything from one place.



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No matter what system you choose you should ask yourself the following questions:

- 1 Can I update the website myself without calling anyone?
- 2 If I update it in one place, does it update everywhere on the website?
- 3 Is there a mobile version of the site?
- 4 Is it being indexed by Google?

If the answer is no to any of these,
you should not consider that system.

Takeaways

Your website is going to be a living breathing extension of your person and company. You need to make sure you can keep it under your control and not waste endless amounts of money on updates and calls to the developer. It also needs to be with the times, meaning it needs to be easy to create a mobile version of the site and very search engine friendly.



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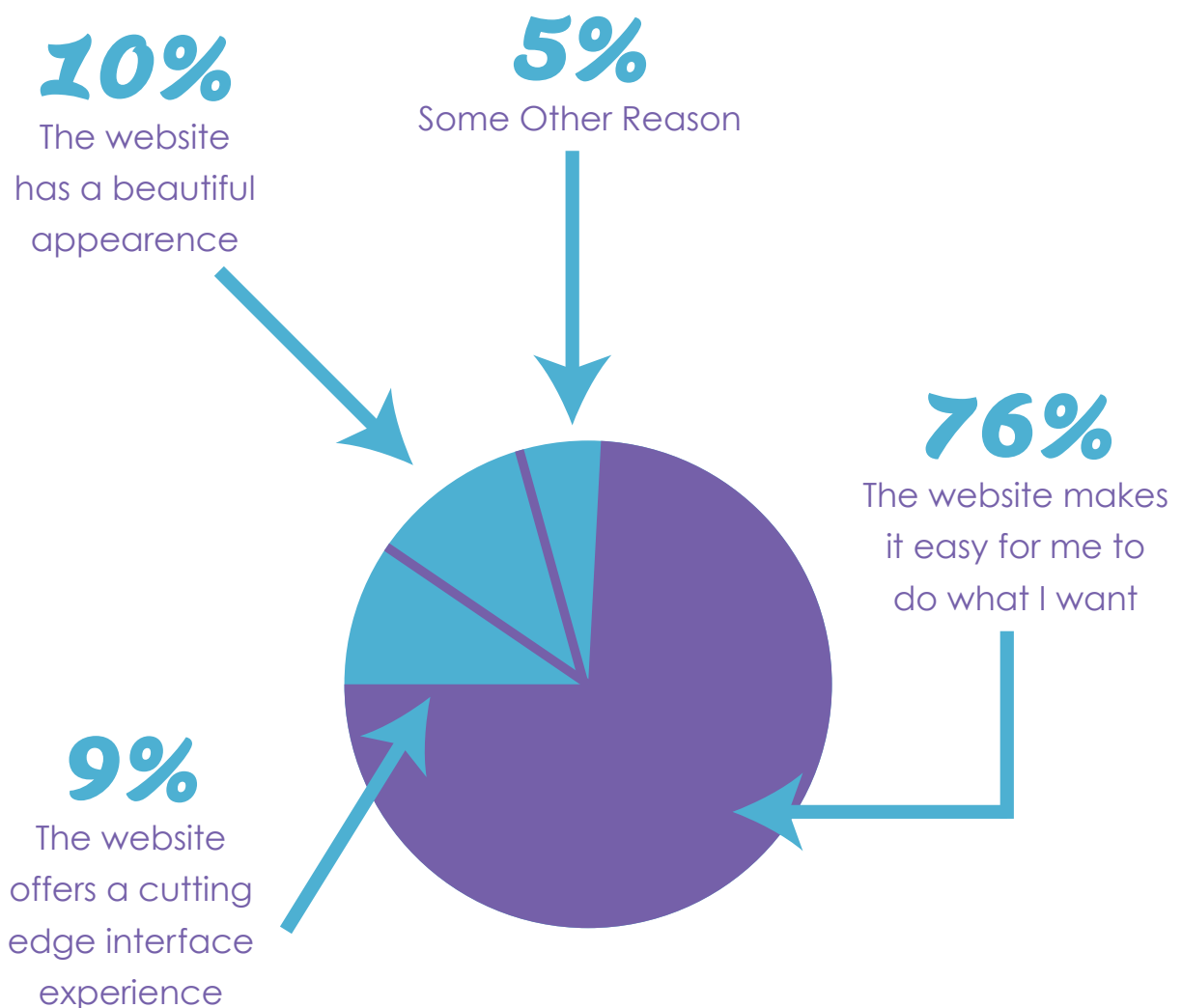


Step 4:

Keep Your Homepage Simple,
Stuipd!

One key concept that can be used to describe effective website design is don't make me think. You don't want people to spend any amount of time looking for content then is necessary. Keep the home page simple and uncluttered so people can have an easy to time find what they want.

The Most Important Factors of Website Design



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While simple design rules, so people can find what they want there are 5 core rules to follow for any home page:

Decide if you want to be `http://www.your-domain.com` or `http://yourdomain.com` and set up a 301 redirect from the one you didn't choose. This way if someone links to the other homepage, you will get SEO credit for it.

If you have more than 5 services, put each service under 4 overarching themes that people can drill into, more than 5 services will clutter the page.



Unless you are a multimedia site, keep the use of sound to a minimum. Nothing drives people away like sudden music coming out of a website when it's unexpected.

Put links to your social media page on the home page and make the boxes BIG and above the fold so people can find them. Don't put microscopic Facebook icons in the gutter of the webpage where no one can see them and hence no one can follow you on Facebook!

Highlight Recent News and Blogs on the home page so people can see that your website is being updated

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Takeaways

Your homepage is the face of your services or products. You only get one chance to impress that visitor, so make sure you carefully place the essentials you want them to know on your homepage. It should also act as a launching platform to places where they can contact you in the future (i.e. blog, social media, etc.)



My Name is:

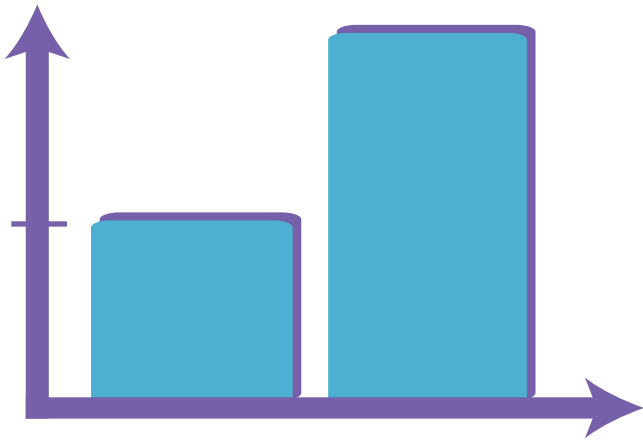
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Step 5:

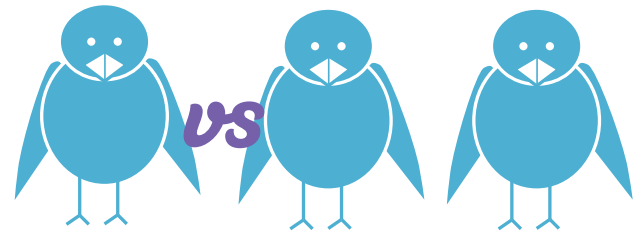
Focus on Continuous
Original Content that Attracts
and Converts

Most websites start out very small, usually around 10-20 pages. *How can you grow the size of your website if you don't offer any more products and services?*

The best way to grow your website is to blog and to blog about the industry that you are in. If you sell coffee, blog about coffee, if you sell dresses, blog about women's fashion, if you sell financial management, blog about finance. *If you started with 10-20 pages and blogged once a week for a year you would have quadrupled the size of your site.* Not only does blogging increase the size of your website, but you also end up getting a snowball effect.



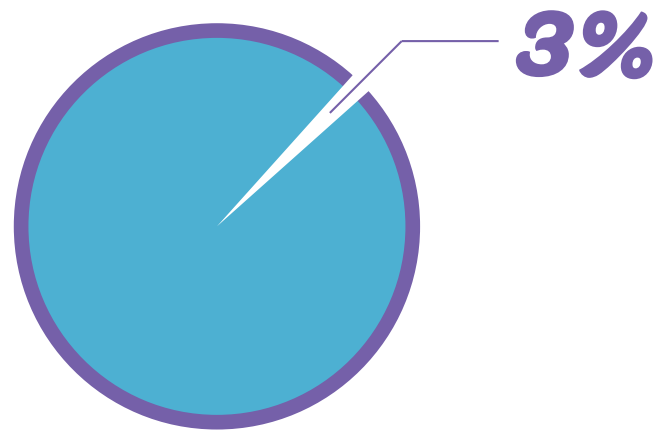
Blogging results in a 55% increase in website visitors.³



Companies that blog have 2x as many twitter followers than those that don't.⁴



Search engines like fresh content, which will increase your number of indexed pages and chances for more traffic



Companies that blog have 97% more inbound links than those that don't.⁴ and getting more links to your website is one of the keys to reaching number one in Google search results.

Now, one thing people tend to draw a blank on is what content do I put on my blog? Do they all have to be opinion pieces and the answer is decidedly NO! Here is content that you can use on your blog that you may already have.



A blog can be anything, but most of all it should be original and informative. It's also important, if you don't have time, hire someone to do it for you or use an employee to create content. The new work force today has more experience than ever on producing multi media content and sharing it on the Internet.

Takeaways

Original content is your website's messenger; it will inform your prospects on what you do, and how passionately you do it. With a vast array of formats to create content on, you should always be continuously contributing original content to keep your prospects engaged and constantly interacting with your website.

Step 6:

Format Your Landing
Pages Properly

Now that you have a pretty new website that actually works in terms of form and function and you are blogging, you need to start to capture some of those people who are on your website and capturing those people is all about creating landing pages and leads.

Landing pages are areas on a website that offer something like a book, a how to guide, or email sign-up with a corresponding form. Leads are people who have expressed some kind of interest in your service and provided you with information such as an email address. They may not be ready to buy, but they have shown interest.



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Landing pages are areas on a website that offer a offer and a form. Those forms generate leads. There are three kinds of landing pages people can create to get leads.

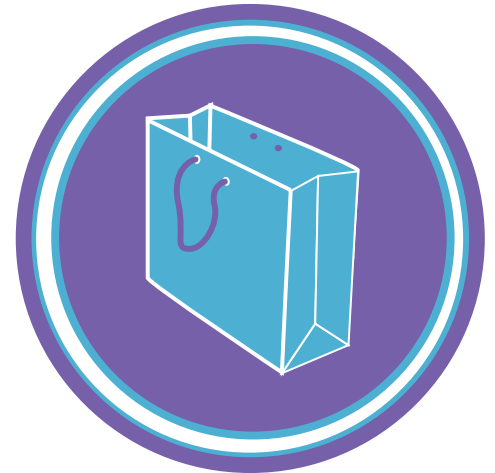
General Information

Offering a how-to ebook or general product catalog is a great way to get someone's interest about your service. They aren't ready to buy something specific but they have shown they want more information



Specific Information

Offering a specific evaluation or assessment to get someone more interested. For example, offering to send someone specials for any clothing sizes they prefer or performing a free evaluation on their house would be an example of this kind of lead



Contact Us/Buy

People are really interested in your service and want to talk to you, make an appointment, or discuss an opportunity or they buy from your e-commerce store.



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Best Practices

Designing landing pages still holds to the credo of keep it simple so there are some best practices to follow to make sure your landing pages generate a lot of leads.

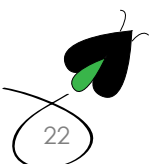
- 1 Make sure the form is *“above the fold”* don't make people pan down to get it
- 2 *Keep the offer simple,* clear and concise. Here is what you are going to get and here is how we are going to deliver it.
- 3 *Experiment with your Site.* Your website should be able to use Google website optimizer. Google's website optimizer will show people your original landing page and your experiment page so you can see if people convert more with different language, colors or placement of buttons.

Takeaways

Landing pages are where the magic happens; they are the gateway to your conversion offers that create engaged and interested leads. Make sure you can grab their attention with an interesting offer, but also coherently explain what you are offering through the landing page!

Not only should you create one landing page but multiples so you can try new things. Don't be overly reliant on what everyone “thinks” is the right answer, test it out on real live visitors and KNOW which webpage performs best.

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Step 7:

Review Your Metrics on
Visitors and Leads

Once your website is live you need to be able to see what your website is doing. Metrics are the heartbeat of any website and will tell us if the website is healthy or about to have a heart attack. Metrics will also tell us some very important information and they need to be reviewed on a monthly basis.



3 rules of the road for analytics

1 Concern yourself with the following statistics which are your bread and butter

Visitors.

How many people are coming to my website?

Where are they coming from? Google? Facebook?

Leads.

How many visitors converted to leads?

What did they convert on? Which offers worked, which didn't?

Sales.

How many leads converted to sales?

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2 Trending

Now that you know where your traffic is coming from, now you need to see if it's improving. For each of the three statistics, are the stats going up or down compared to last month or last year?

3 Technical stats to consider:

Bounce Rate

If your bounce rate is above 40% people are coming to your site and leaving immediately at too high a rate, meaning your site is either slow or uninteresting. Look at this stat by page to zero in on exactly what content people don't like or is having technical difficulties.

Time on site

Make sure the time on site is north of two minutes so people are actually **READING** your content

Demographics

Getting a lot of mobile? A lot of international? Maybe it's time to make your site mobile or international with multi-Lingual.

Takeaways

Metrics are pivotal for pinpointing the exact pain points of your website. By doing small, but constant adjustments to your website, you will be able to maximize the utility of your website so it becomes a platform for generating visitors, leads, and ultimately, sales. They are the eyes, ears and heartbeat of your website that will keep you in the know on what is happening with your marketing and your sales.



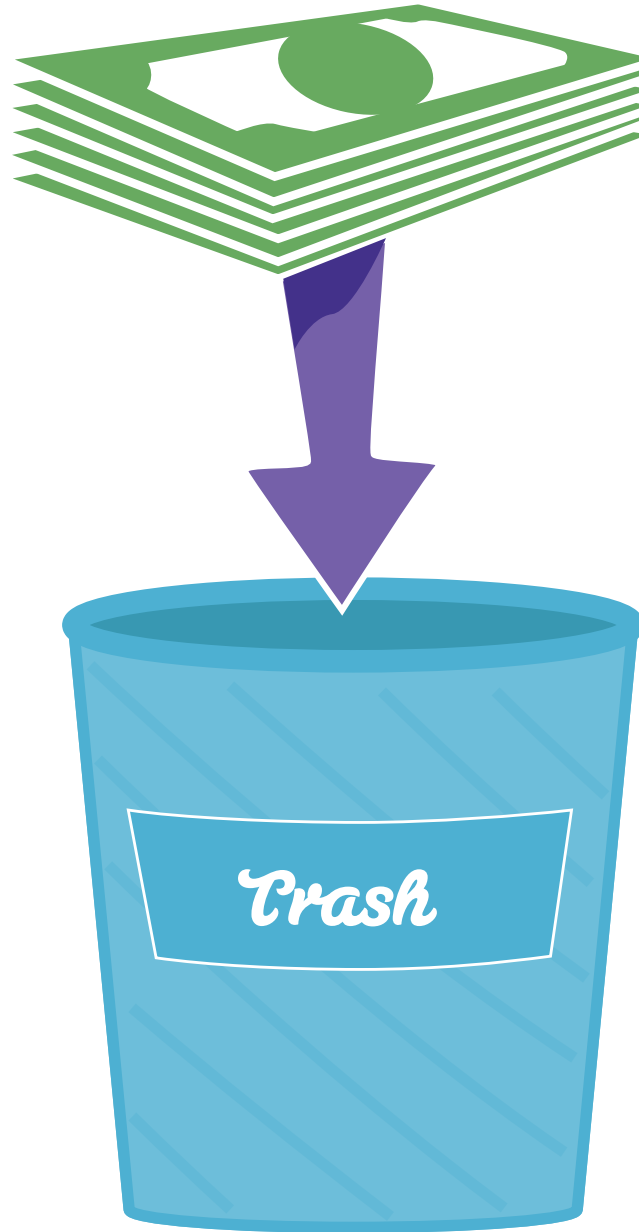
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Now What?

Avoid Common Pitfalls and
Redesign Mistakes

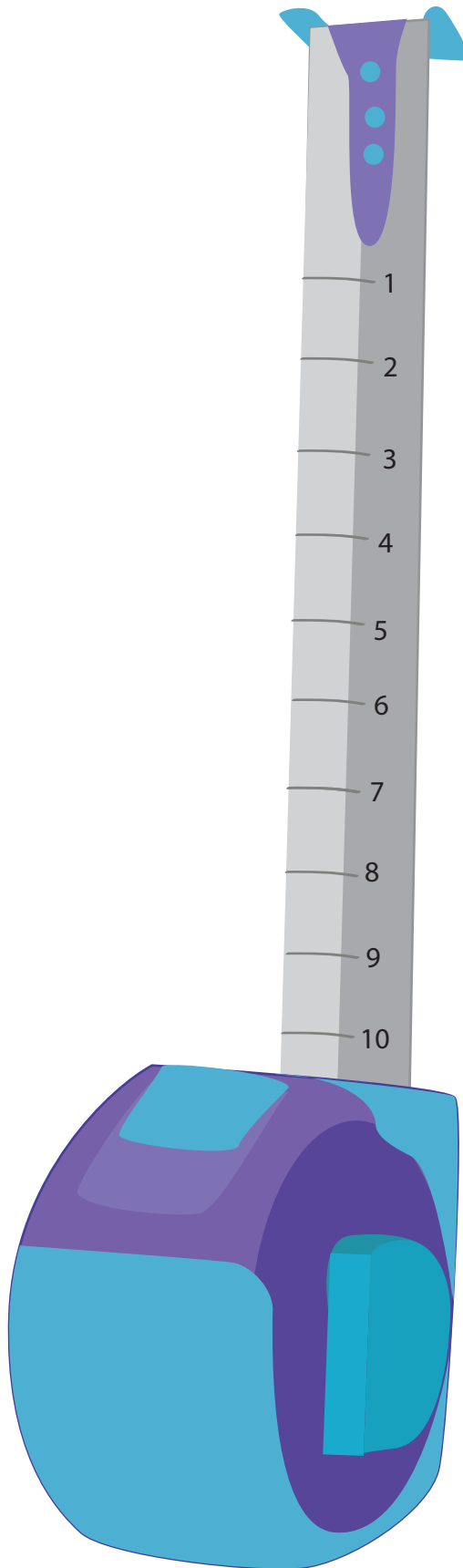
The biggest mistake a lot of companies make is doing a website design simply on looks alone. Looks and clean design are important, but nothing will waste time and money more quickly than a website that doesn't have the right tools in place. For example, if you spend a ton of money on a TV ad or a Google AdWords campaign and you can't see where the traffic came from or how many leads you generated, how will you know if you were successful?



Always start off with an audit of your websites assets so you can make sure the new website contains all your assets once it is moved and your previous presence is not diminished.

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Choose a system that meets your needs and doesn't keep you awake at night because its too costly or too creaky.

When you start to design your homepage, make it simple and easy to use not only for the user but for you and your staff so you can keep the website updated. Once your homepage is designed, let it dictate the design of the rest of your site.

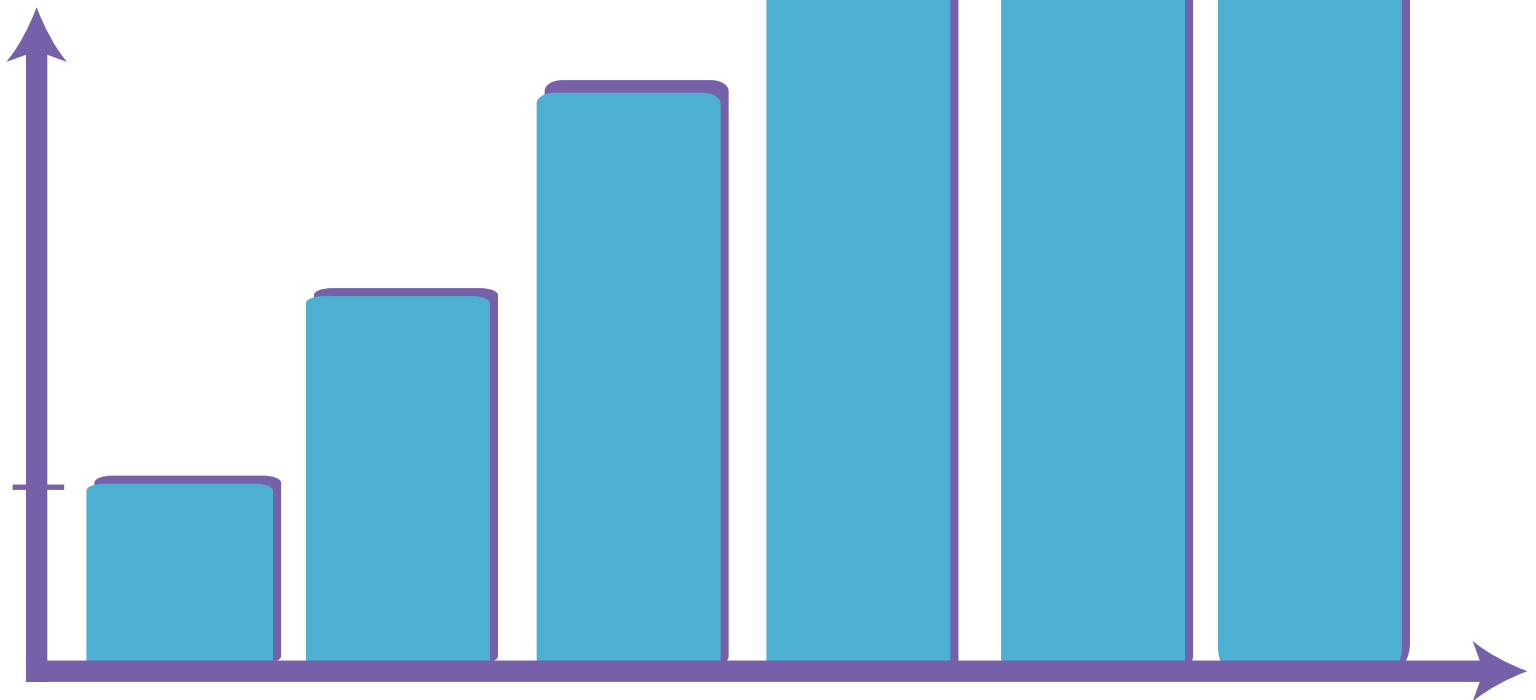
Now that your site is up, you need to start making it convert and that starts with landing pages.

When the landing pages are converting, try testing them out, which ones work, which ones don't

Never stop measuring so you know what's working and what's broken. This will keep your website healthy and most importantly, it will give you more opportunities to make money.

Wrap Up

Redesign projects can be laborious. While design can be beautiful most companies are better suited at trying to get more out of what they already have which means more functionality. Marketing tactics such as SEO, blogging, and social media are easy to include in your existing site, and are twice as effective as traditional web redesign elements. You should strive to make small, but constant and continuous improvements to each element of your current website so your website becomes a powerful traffic-generating machine.



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**If you'd like to discuss how we can
help redesign your website and
kickstart your digital marketing...**

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Sources

Unless Cited

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