

10-STEP CHECKLIST FOR YOUR NEXT WEBSITE REDESIGN.....



A Publication of



INTRODUCTION ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

Every now and then your website needs a refresh. There are many good reasons for a website redesign, whether it's part of a rebranding effort, moving onto a new Content Management System (CMS), the site is getting lackluster results or it looks like it was built in 1999 (eek).

Eventually, there comes a time when you've made all the "Band-Aid" changes you can. That's when you need a bigger change. Radical redesigns are a great way to transform your site into a dynamic and sleek sales tool.

A redesign can be a huge success – or it could fail terribly. That's where checklists can make your job a whole lot easier. Whether you're working with an agency or redesigning in-house, this checklist can mean the difference between an effective project and a torturous nightmare.

But, I will admit, this is not your average checklist. While many detailed and tactical checklists are available online (I've listed my favorites on page 16 for your viewing pleasure), the one thing commonly overlooked – that can make or break your redesign – is how the redesign will support (and improve) your overall marketing efforts. Your website isn't a silo. And it's not just about design. Your website affects your social media, email marketing, lead generation, brand awareness and sales strategies.

This checklist helps you turn your website into an inbound marketing machine geared towards long-term success.



1. BENCHMARK YOUR CURRENT METRICS

Before you start planning anything, document your current performance metrics. Start by collecting data from your existing site over its history, including:

- Number of sessions and unique visitors
- Bounce rate and time on site
- Total pages and pages per visit
- Percent of desktop and mobile traffic
- Current SEO rankings for important keywords
- Number of backlinks Google recognizes
- Number of pages in Google's index
- Number of new leads/form submissions
- Total amount of sales generated



If you don't have access to this information, then I absolutely recommend adding a tool like Google Analytics and HubSpot's closed-loop analytics for better tracking and visibility into site performance.



2. DETERMINE YOUR GOALS

If you're considering a redesign, you should have a good reason for it. Many times we hear "just because it's been a while since we've done one," or "I want our business to look bigger." These are surface reasons that often correlate to real business challenges once you dig beneath the surface. It's not just about how your site looks, but how it works.

Be really clear about why you're doing the redesign in the first place and tie it to measurable results. Then communicate your goals to your team or agency. Consider the following measurements for your website

● Percent of traffic from return vs. new visits

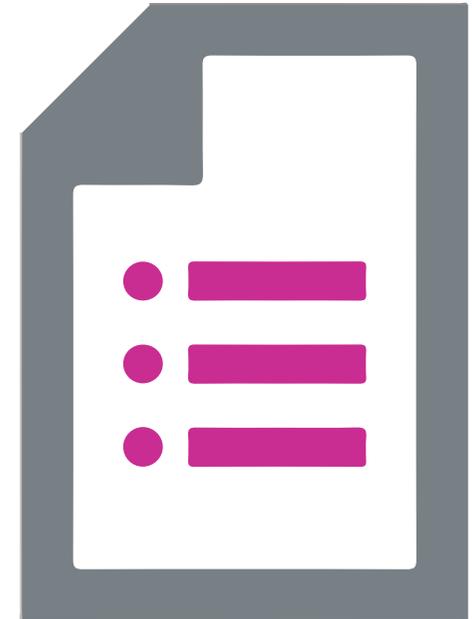
● Bounce rate and time on site

● Top site content; which pages have the most value

● Number of conversions or goals completed

● Total amount of sales generated

● Percent of traffic from valuable sources



Many of these goals are interdependent. For example, in order to get more conversions, you need to increase traffic while decreasing the bounce rate, so it's common to have many of these objectives. Some may be more important than others for your business. Once you determine this list, tie those objectives to a specific success metric e.g., "to increase site traffic from social and referrers by 50% in the next 6 months."



3. AVOID PITFALLS. INVENTORY YOUR ASSETS

While a redesign is a great way to improve results, there are countless ways it can hurt you. Your existing website may contain a number of assets that you have “built up”, and losing those during a redesign can damage your marketing. For instance, such assets might include:

- Most shared or viewed content
- Most trafficked pages
- Best performing keywords you rank for and associated pages
- Number of quality inbound links to individual pages

For example, if you remove a page that has a higher number of inbound links, you could lose search engine rankings for valuable keywords that generate leads or bottom line revenue.

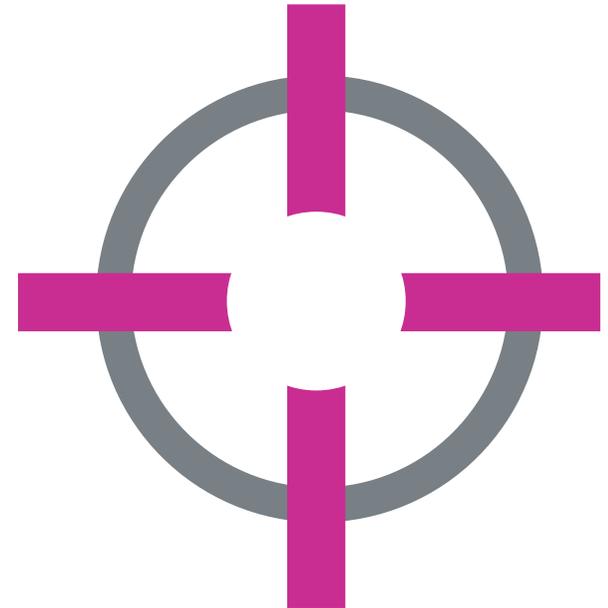
Keep in mind that many web designers/developers don't consider this step because they are not marketers.



4. ANALYZE THE COMPETITION

While we don't recommend obsessing over your competitors, it helps to know how you compare.

-  Run your website through **Marketing Grader** (<http://marketing.grader.com>) to obtain a report card of how your website and marketing is performing today.
-  Next, run your competitors through Marketing Grader so you are aware of their strengths and weaknesses.
-  Take a look at their websites, note what you like and what you don't. The goal isn't to copy them, but to uncover what you can do better.



Once you've run the analysis, put together an action list of what areas you can improve and what you can do differently (better!) than your competitors.



5. IDENTIFY YOUR UNIQUE VALUE PROPOSITION

Before you begin crafting your content, be clear about your Unique Value Proposition (UVP) so that it is consistent across your entire website. If you attract a high number of unique visitors, or you're a new business, your visitors might not be very familiar with you and what you do. You need to immediately answer if what you do is right for them, and why they should buy/convert/stay on your website.

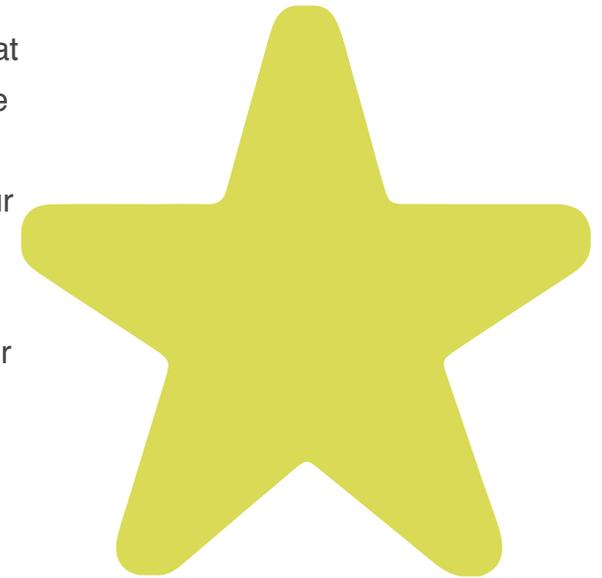
When creating your Value Proposition, make sure you sound human. Do not use gobbledygook or jargon. Consider the two examples below from well-known, successful brands:

The mission of The Walt Disney Company is to be one of the world's leading producers and providers of entertainment and information. Using our portfolio of brands to differentiate our content, services and consumer products, we seek to develop the most creative, innovative and profitable entertainment experiences and related products in the world.

Compare with Ikea:

Ikea's mission is to offer a wide range of home furnishing items of good design and function, excellent quality and durability, at prices so low that the majority of people can afford to buy them.

Remember that when you create your own Unique Value Proposition the messaging on your website will seek to translate this value into how it can benefit your site visitor, your prospects and your customers.



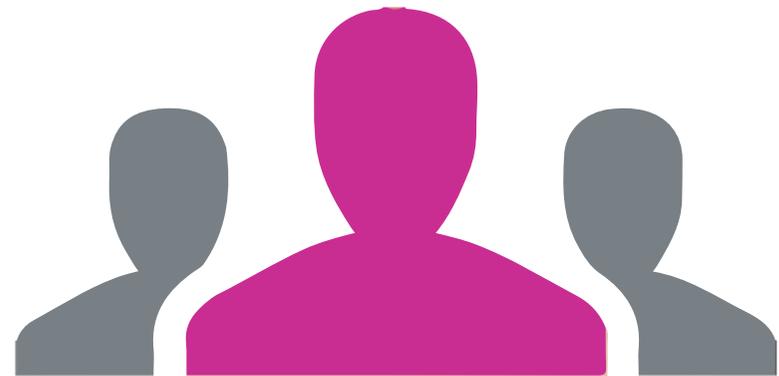
← ● SHARE

6. DESIGN YOUR SITE AROUND PERSONAS

Your website is not really about you at all. It should focus clearly on your visitor, their questions and what they're looking for. Speak to them in their language by designing content around buyer personas.

A buyer persona is a fictional representation of your ideal customers, based on real data about customer demographics and online behavior, along with educated speculation about their personal histories, motivations, and concerns.

For instance, if you are a marketing manager at a hotel who is looking to bring in new business, you might target five buyer personas: an independent business traveler, a corporate travel manager, an event planner, a vacationing family, and a couple planning their wedding reception.



Consider the following when building your buyer personas:

..... **SEGMENT BY DEMOGRAPHICS**

Start developing personas by researching your existing customer base to identify the most common buyers of your products and services. You may have several different types of buyers, so give each one a detailed description, including a name, job title or role, industry or company info, and demographic info.

..... **IDENTIFY THEIR NEEDS**

What are the biggest problems they are trying to solve? What do they need most? What information are they typically searching for? What trends are influencing their business or personal success?

..... **DEVELOP BEHAVIOR-BASED PROFILES**

What do they do online? Are they active on Twitter, Facebook, or other social networks? What kind of search terms do they use? What kind of information do they tend to consume online? Which of your products do they spend the most time researching? How do they use those products?

Your website is the perfect opportunity to match your messaging to the needs of different buyer personas. Build your pages into categories to fit these personas, or offer content in a way that your prospects can easily find what's relevant for them.



←  SHARE

7. OPTIMIZE YOUR SITE FOR SEARCH

Getting found online is essential to improving the rest of your site metrics. If no one is coming to your site, how can you increase leads, downloads, or sales?

Here are some tips to designing your site for search engine optimization (SEO):

..... **DOCUMENT YOUR MOST SEARCH-VALUED PAGES**

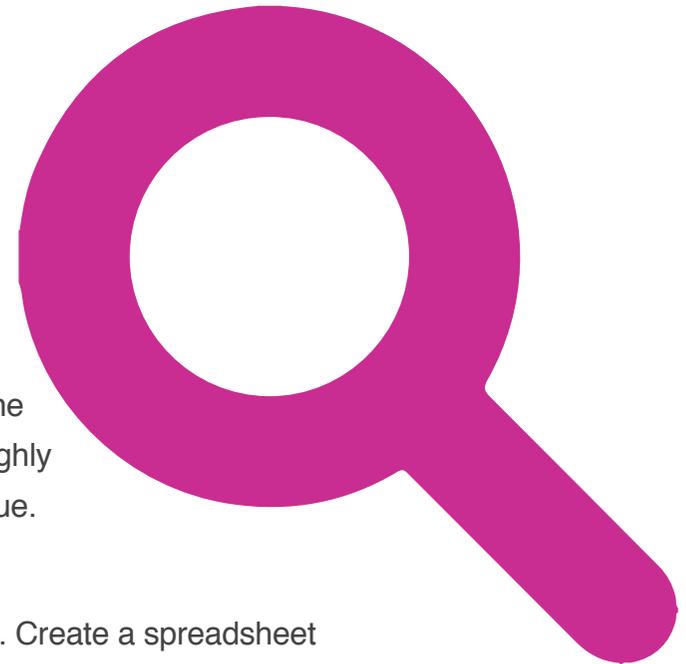
As mentioned in step three, know what pages have the strongest SEO juice, the most traffic, inbound links, and keywords rankings. If you plan to restructure highly ranked pages, create proper 301 redirects so you minimize the loss of that value.

..... **CREATE A 301 REDIRECT STRATEGY**

This may be THE most important step in terms of retaining traffic and rankings. Create a spreadsheet to record and map out your 301 redirects. This tells the search engines what the page name was and what the new page to send visitors to is.

..... **DO YOUR KEYWORD RESEARCH**

For every page, pick one to two keywords that the page will focus on. Once you determine the keyword(s), work to align the content, headers, meta data, and other on and off page elements to help users and search engines better determine the subject matter of that particular page.



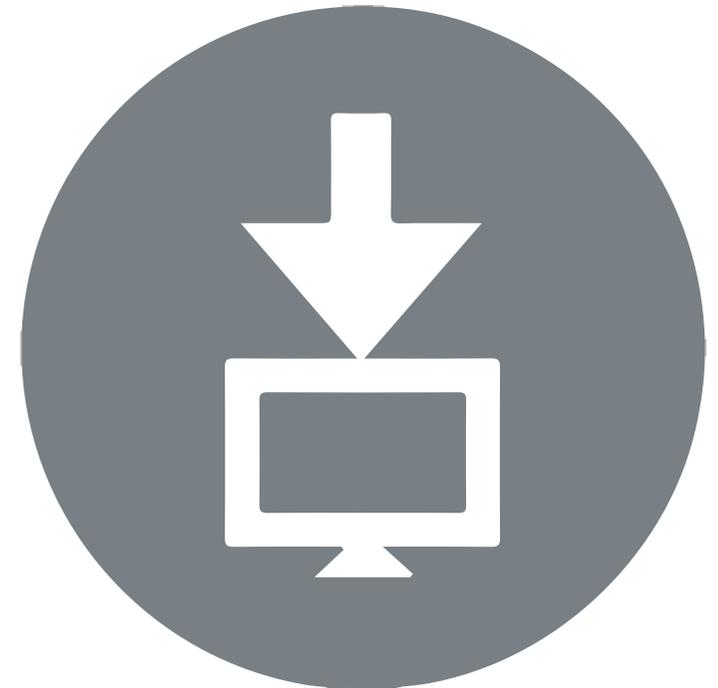
8. IDENTIFY CALLS-TO-ACTION

Calls-to-action are the elements on your website that drive visitors to take an action, whether it's a whitepaper download, contacting sales, or product purchase. Your website shouldn't be a static brochure, but should prompt your visitors to do something that further engages them with your brand.

When you're planning for the redesign, think about all the potential opportunities for conversion. For example:

-  Ebooks and whitepapers
-  Contests and promotions
-  Product purchases
-  Email newsletter subscription
-  Free trial
-  Demos and walkthroughs
-  Contact us / consultation / demonstration / etc.

While the “design” of your website is important, functional elements such as CTAs will turn it from a brochure to an active member of your sales team. Make sure there are an appropriate number of calls-to-action that align with your buyer personas so you don't lose visitors.



9. CREATE AN ONGOING CONTENT STRATEGY

If you have more quality content, on average you will have more website visitors and grow your business faster. A 100-page website will beat a 10-page website 99% of the time as long as the content is engaging and of high quality. And a 500-page website is even better, especially when it includes a consistent flow of fresh, quality content. Build a strategy to continue to add more content to your website over time.

START A BLOG

This is one of the best ways to have an on-going flow of great content.

In fact, companies that blog have 55% more website visitors and 88% more leads than those who do not.

INCLUDE SOME PR

Post press releases and updates, but don't rely on this alone.

OUTSOURCE WHEN NECESSARY

Lack time or resources for content? A company like Savoir Faire can help you develop and publish quality content on a consistent basis.

NEED IDEAS?

Download HubSpot's [100 Inbound Marketing Content Ideas](#) ebook.



10. DON'T FORGET THE EXTRAS!

Any website built today should include these basics: a homepage, product or service pages, a contact page and an about us page. But there's more than the basics that can really make your website awesome:

..... **BLOG**

A blog is a great way to create content on an ongoing basis, and to converse with your customers and prospects. A great way to engage and integrate with social channels.

..... **LANDING PAGES & CALLS-TO-ACTION**

Landing pages and calls-to-action are critical lead generation components. Create compelling landing pages as part of the redesign for your offers and assets..

..... **SHAREABILITY**

Add social media sharing buttons/links to all appropriate pages. You can use tools like ShareThis or AddThis. This allows people to become advocates for your brand when they feel your content is worthy

..... **ANALYTICS**

It's critical you are measuring the performance of your website from the start. Insight is everything for a marketer. Data is king and crucial business decisions should not be made without reliable data.



CONCLUSION

A successful website redesign starts even before the site is being “designed.” Often times, people get caught up in how the website looks and this focus overshadows how well it is working.

Remember, a website is not a silo. Its integration with other functions, such as social media, email marketing and lead generation, is critical. This is your chance to turn your website into an inbound marketing hub.

Follow this checklist and you’ll be well-prepared for any website redesign.

HANDY CHECKLISTS

I skipped over many of the very down-and-dirty checklists because there are so many great lists already available. If you’re looking for a tactical redesign checklist that covers all the little details, check out these resources:

[The Best Damn Web Marketing Checklist](#)

[Step-By-Step Website Development](#)

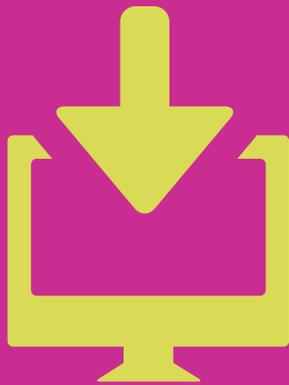
[The Ultimate Website Launch Checklist](#)

[15 Essential Checks Before Launching Your Website](#)



ABOUT US

Savoir Faire is an integrated marketing firm that sits at the crossroads of traditional and digital marketing, with an adventurous spirit when it comes to evolving disciplines. We have worked with a broad range of clients to solve a wide variety of business challenges. We are a collection of talented, curious, and dynamic individuals who all share a passion for bringing a brand story to life and getting it the results it deserves.



Get your assessment with an inbound marketing specialist

Liked what you read? Why not sign up for a free Inbound Marketing Assessment?

A Publication of  **Savoirfaire**
MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

MORE GOOD STUFF



FOLLOW US