10-STEP CHECKLIST
For Your Next Website Redesign

1 BENCHMARK YOUR CURRENT METRICS

Before you start thinking about anything, document your current performance metrics. Start by analyzing your existing site over its history, including:

- Site Purpose: Defining what you expect your site to do is key to designing the right one.
- Lead Generation
- E-commerce
- Thought leadership
- Brand Building
- Mobile: Responsive to viewing on any device and browser
- SEO
- Prospect and client engagement
- Increase lead conversions
- Increase return visits
- Ease of management and flexibility to change

2 DETERMINE YOUR GOALS

If you're considering a redesign, there needs to be 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 not good reasons for a redesign. 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 with your team, designer, or agency. Consider the following objectives for your own website:

- Number of visits/visitors/unique visitors
- Bounce rate
- Time on site
- Domain authority
- Number of new leads/form submissions
- Total amount of sales generated
- Current SEO rankings for important keywords

3 TAKE INVENTORY OF YOUR ASSETS

While a redesign is a great way to improve results, there are countless ways it can hurt you. Your existing website contains a lot 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 inbound links to individual pages

4 ANALYZE THE COMPETITION

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

- Run your website through HubSpot's Marketing Grader (https://marketing.grader.com/) to get 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. BUT, this is not meant to copy them. That's the last thing you want to do. Instead, you'll uncover what you can do better.

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 and not flee to your competitors.

6 DESIGN AROUND YOUR BUYER PERSONAS

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 a great way 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.

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?

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 move highly ranked pages, create proper 301 redirects so you don't lose any of that value.

Create a 301 redirect strategy
This may be THE most important step in terms of retaining traffic and rankings. Simply create a spreadsheet to record and map out your 301 redirects.

Do your keyword research
For every page, pick one to two keywords that the page will focus on. Once you determine the keyword(s), use on-page SEO tactics, such as internal link building and optimizing your header tags (H1, H2, H3, etc.).

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
- Contact us / consultation / demonstration / etc.

While the "design" of your website is important, focus on functional. Make sure there are plenty of calls-to-action so you don't lose visitors.

9 DON'T FORGET THE EXTRAS

Any website built today should include these basics: a homepage, product pages, industry resources and a Contact Us/About Us pages. But there's more to 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.

Landing pages & calls-to-action
Landing pages and calls-to-action are critical lead generation components. Create awesome landing pages as part of the redesign for your offers and assets. Remember - today's online visitors are scanners; offer downloadable assets for more detailed info on your products and services.

Add RSS subscription
RSS allows some content from your website to be automatically pushed out to other websites and people, increasing the reach of your content.

Shareability
Add social media sharing buttons/links to all your pages. You can use tools like ShareThis or addThis.

Analytics
It's critical you are measuring the performance of your website from the start. Insight is everything for a marketer. CRMs and Marketing Automation platforms are great tools to track and manage performance over time.

10 CREATE AN ONGOING CONTENT STRATEGY

If you have more 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. and a 500-page website is even better, especially when it includes a constant flow of fresh content. Build a strategy to continue to add more and 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? Contact Marsden & Associates for a well-designed and executed content strategy!

83%
of B2B content marketers say lead generation is their most important goal in 2015