

**WARNING:
DO NOT ATTEMPT WEBSITE
REDESIGN WITHOUT READING THIS.**

By

Lester Lee
Optimal E-Marketing
&
HUBSPOT



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Step 1: Determine Whether Website Design is Right for You

You may have a website for your company that has been literally “there” for years until you decide to take a look at it. If you have not been nurturing the website or if you have not seen it for quite some time, you would probably fall of your chair.

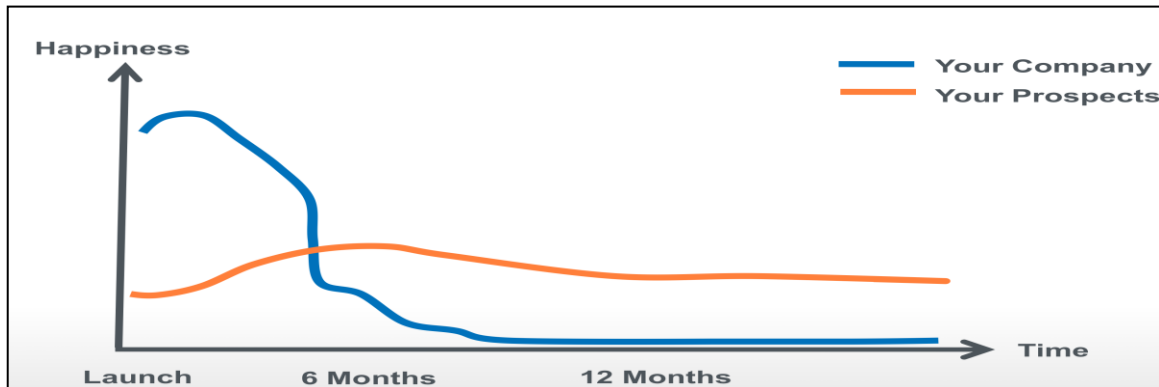
You will probably find outdated references and even names of employees and directors that are no longer with the company. Of course, you are embarrassed by your “Latest Company News” last updated more than a year ago. And the logo ... we no longer use it! All that screams of “website redesign”.

Before you call your old faithful website design company, you need to ask if you actually need to have this website. After all, nobody missed it for over a year and business went on as usual. But if the answer is “yes”, then we proceed to asking you “what are your reasons for doing a makeover”. There are the right reasons and the wrong reasons – some may be familiar to you!

Wrong Reasons For Redesign	Right Reasons for Redesign
“We have a new corporate look and feel.”	“Want to get found by more prospects.”
“It’s been 12 months since our last redesign.”	“Want to convert more prospects into leads and eventually, customers.”
“It is embarrassing. Everything is so outdated even my pictures”	“We need to create more relevant content that your customer love and value”
“The CEO wants to do it.”	“We want to improve branding.” (Only appropriate if oriented around one of the previous reasons.)



Website Redesign Half-Life Chart



Hubspot, Webinar Redesign Strategy, 2010

- The excitement you and your CEO will have from a complete renovation of your website will be short lived.
 - Once you have visited your site repeatedly, the excitement of a new website will turn into boredom.
 - All the beautiful layout and pictures can be a drag especially if it is repetitious.
- But user look as website redesign with another lens:
 - Complete website renovation is even worse for users.
 - Users are accustomed to the constancy of old website.
 - Need time to adjust, causing them more confusion.

Just keep in mind who you are redesigning the website for: Your Boss or Your Customer? Ideally both, but you should settle for Your Customer”.

Takeaway

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. In fact, they can have adverse effect.. For example, if you use animation as an intro in your website, watching it each time you log in can be quite annoying and tedious to your customer. The main motivations behind website renovations should be to improve the performance of your website. A beautiful



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website, although intriguing and aesthetically pleasing, is secondary to a functional traffic and lead generating website.



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Step 2: Ensure that your Website's Assets are In Order and Safe

Please do not throw the baby out with the bathwater. Your old website probably have many important content – or more importantly, digital asset that you can redeploy in your redesigned website. You want to make sure you preserve pages in your old site that has done well and are popular. If you have lots of inbound links, let's make sure they do not drop off the cliff and got lost in cyberspace! Also remember the keywords that have got you your SEO ranking – let's try not to throw them all out! Try not to change a new URL without a valid reason – then you will really start from ground zero.

Key Concepts and Statistics

- Website assets such as content, inbound links, keyword rankings, and conversion tools are critical to a strong web presence.
- To preserve your web presence, you must keep track these assets to insure that they are all transferred in the redesign process.

The 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.
- Figure out which inbound links are most popular/powerful.
- Determine what keywords you rank for before the move.
- Figure out keywords are most effective.

Takeaway

If you do not fully understand the importance and practice of proper SEO, doing a web design can be more damaging than helpful. You may be throwing away assets you do not quite understand or realize you have. If you do not feel comfortable around SEO work, it may be



best to hire a specialist to perform 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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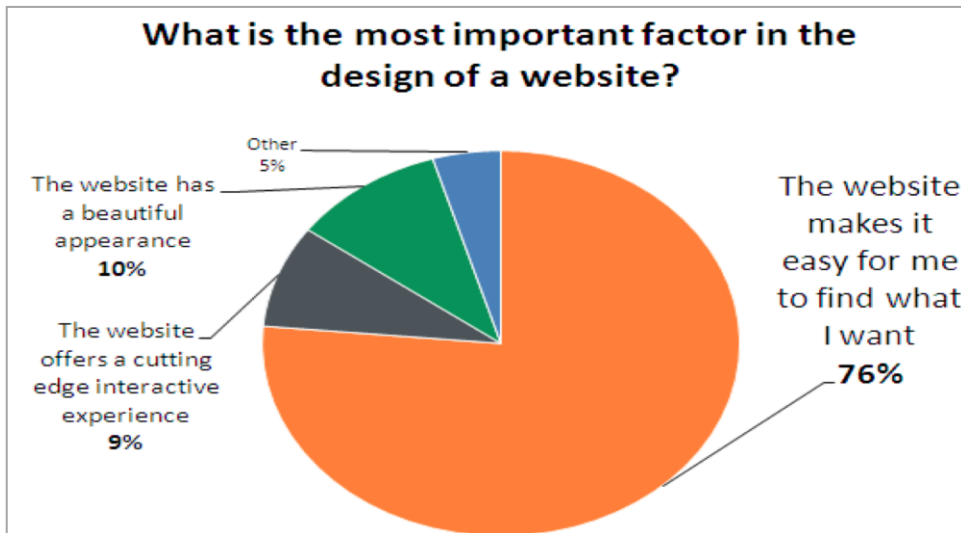
Step 3: Formatting your Homepage

Before you sign up for the wireframes with the “extra saucy” homepage – start with a simple question. Who is this website intended for? If it is for the busy teenager or busy user, forget the flashy and slow loading intro – they will not likely stick around for it. You may want a website that get them to what they are looking for – fast. In fact, flashy gets old beginning with visit #2 – try sitting through a commercial more than 2 times! In most cases, it is more important to give your visitor a clean and clear access to your website and content.

Key Concepts and Statistics

- The first impression is all about simplicity.
- 75% of Internet users never scroll past the first page of search results.¹
- 76% of consumers want a website that makes it easy to find what they want.²
- Highlight blog on homepage.
- Set up a 301 redirect, for SEO’s sake!
- Have a permanent redirect.
- Limit the amount of choices the consumer must make.
 - If you offer 25 services, put those 25 under 4 overarching umbrella services so consumers will not be overwhelmed.
- Links to social networking pages are a must on home page.





Source: HubSpot, The Science of Website Redesign, June 2011

Takeaway

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.)



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Step 4: Focus on Continuous Original Content that Attracts and Converts

Like fruits and vegetables, fresh is good. And more of the fresh stuff is better. Your customers are attracted to fresh and original content they value – and knowing what that “good stuff is” starts with knowing your customer. In most cases, persona analysis should be completed before any web redesign. If you know your personas, you can target content that they want and like. By content, I mean anything from blogs, ebooks, videos, and even plain old photos. The days when you need a programmer to change content in a website is over. If content in your website has not changes in more than one month, it is seriously getting old! If you are stuck thinking website is the “rock of Gibraltar” – the steadfast brochureware that is well vetted and constant, you may learn that you are wrong the hard way. Your visitors vote with their mouse!

Key Concepts and Statistics

- Blogging results in a 55% increase in website visitors.³
- Search engines like fresh content, which will increase your number of indexed pages.
- People like fresh content.
 - Companies that blog have 2x as many twitter followers than those that don't.⁴
 - Companies that blog have 97% more inbound links than those that don't.⁴
- Original Content Vehicles:
 -

Blog	Video Content (Youtube Channel)
Podcasts	Photos (Flicker)
Presentations (Slideshare)	eBooks
News Releases	





source: HubSpot, 100 Awesome Marketing Stats, Charts and Graphs for You, 2011

Takeaway

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.



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Step 5: Formatting Your Landing Pages

Your website is likely a maze of tens of pages with hopefully a decent navigation so people can get to things they need. If you want to hyperlink someone to your site, please make sure you send them to the RELEVANT page, and not just the Homepage URL. This ranks high in what is causing your bounce rate to be high.

Another important concept is Landing Pages. Landing Pages are independent pages that is 100% “purpose built” and “highly targeted” that should be used in line with your campaigns and promotions to “get the customer to act”. For example, if you want a customer to sign a petition to your governor for faster broadband in your state, you would use a landing page for that. In the landing page, you would have content to “sell” you “desired do”. In that page, your visitor can read all about “your business case” and execute “a call to action” like “sign your petition here”.

Landing pages can be stand-alone microsites that you cannot access from the main website through links and you must type in the full URL to get there. This makes them useful sometimes as “throw-away” web pages in your URL. Ask your Hubspot specialist for more details – that is what they are really good at!

Key Concepts and Statistics

- Leave out any website navigation.
- Keep the description of the offer clear, simple, and concise.
 - One company found that they had a 32% conversion rate with longer description and form field.⁵
 - Cut it down, which brought their conversion rate to 53%.⁵
- Keep the form above the fold.
- To maximize efficiency, consider these questions:
 - How fast can you launch a new landing page?
 - Can one person do it in 15 minutes?
 - What is the cost of experimentation?



The screenshot shows a HubSpot landing page with the following content:

- HubSpot Logo** at the top left.
- Free Internet Marketing Kit with 2 Videos and a 12 Page Whitepaper** as the main headline.
- A video thumbnail titled **5 Tips to Turn Your Website into a Marketing Machine** with a play button icon.
- A sub-headline: **Improve Your Website - Fast and Easy Tips**.
- Text: "Did you complete a HubSpot Website Grader report and were unhappy with your score? Our free Internet Marketing Kit gives you the tips and tricks you need to improve your score so you can optimize your website to get found by more visitors and convert higher percentages of them to leads and paying customers."
- Text: "The Internet Marketing Kit contains the following valuable information:"
- Bulleted list:
 - Video Webinar - "5 Tips to Turn your Website into a Marketing Machine"
 - Whitepaper - "5 Tips to Turn your Website into a Marketing Machine"
 - Video Webinar - "The New Influencers: Blogging for Business"
- Download Free Internet Marketing Kit** as the primary call to action.
- Form fields: First Name, Last Name, Email (with a [privacy policy](#) link), and Phone.
- Additional video thumbnails:
 - "Video with tips about search engine optimization (SEO) and lead conversion."
 - "The New Influencers: An Online Revolution" by Paul Gillin, Author, *The New Influencers*.
 - "Video with an overview of business blogging and tips and tricks."

source: HubSpot, 2011

Takeaway

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!



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Step 6: Conduct Conversion Experiments

The objective of a good website is all about “conversion”—whether you are converting a stranger into a prospect, or lead into a customer. The success or failure in conversion is normally something most web owners do not even think about. Since most of the conversion takes place using CTAs (call-to-actions), you can measure how effective your conversion execution is by measuring the landing pages – how many visit, clicks and downloads. Over time you will get a good idea by analyzing the effectiveness of your high performing landing pages, what works and what doesn’t.

Key Concepts and Statistics

- Your offers should be living, breathing documents that are constantly changing.
- They need to help educate your prospect’s on the buying process.
- If your landing pages and offerings do not seem to be reaching their full potential, you should try to:
 - Attach their links in your email newsletters.
 - Have your pay-per click ads go right to the landing page.
 - Use them as the next step after a trade show or event.
- Helpful sites for experimenting with your conversion events:
 - [Five Second Test](#)
 - [Feedback Army](#)
 - [User Testing](#)
 - [Loop11](#)

Takeaway

Website design is not a one and done deal. Your web pages should evolve and improve over time. This is especially important for your landing pages since they help convert your faceless website visitors into opportunities that you have collected vital information about.



Step 7: Review Your Metrics on Visitors and Leads.

If you think that rebuilding your website is something you do once every year or two, STOP NOW – and rethink what you want your website to do for your business first. If you still draw a blank, you should start by giving your Inbound Marketer a call.

The correct way to think about your website is to value it as a digital asset – part of your digital footprint that represents your brand and brings you new customers. Your website should not be a PROJECT or a CAMPAIGN, but a marketing channel that you use continuously to build your brand presence. To be useful, you need to think about continuous improvement, and to do that, you need to look at analytics on visit, leads and conversion. By analyzing the data, you will learn how to prioritize effective execution of web pages and CTAs – and change those that do not work so well. You know which of your blogs and ebooks got the most downloads or forwards. Simply do more of what works – and you need metrics to help you do that.

Key Concepts and Statistics

- Should avoid “paralysis by analysis.” – stay focused on a few critical KPIs.
- Do not concern yourself with metrics that track the technical performance of your website.
- Focus on these three metrics:
 - Visitors.
 - How many people are coming to my website?
 - Where are they coming from?
 - Leads.
 - How many visitors converted to leads?
 - What did they convert on?
 - Sales.
 - How many leads converted to sales?
- These metrics will help you determine what parts of your website need revision.



Takeaway

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.



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So What?

Before you dash off to do that web redesign you have been eyeing to do, let me recap some important points:

- *Redesign your website for the RIGHT reason – not just because it is old.*
- *Do not throw everything in the old website away – there are things that worked well. Keep them.*
- *Homepage or any page for that matter – choose simplicity and clarity over anything else.*
- *Focus on fresh and relevant content that your customer like and want – everything else is secondary.*
- *Make sure you are driving “conversion” with appropriate CTAs(call-to-actions). You want your customers to go through the “conversion funnel” from TOFU to MOFU to BOFU!*
- *Your website is an ongoing journey of continuous improvement by analyzing what works and what doesn't. Make sure you spend time on your metrics.*

Key Concepts and Statistics

- Start with defining your website redesign goals.
 - Remember that most companies don't need a new website, but rather need better tools on their existing site.
- Protect your assets during the design process so you do not damage your website presence.
- Make a great first impression by focusing on the functionality of your homepage.
- Creative and original content is the most powerful way of attracting and retaining website visitors.
- Design compelling landing pages so visitors will be more willing to give away their contact information for your content offerings.
- Make constant adjustments to landing pages by experimenting with their layout and formatting.
- Set up a system to measure the metrics of your website so you can reproduce successful campaigns, and scrap failing ones.



- Last but not least, have fun creating “marketing that people love”

Takeaway

Redesign projects can be laborious, so most companies are better suited at trying to get more out of what they already have. Inbound 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.

SOURCES, UNLESS CITED:

¹MARKETSHARE.HITSLINK.COM, OCTOBER 2010

²Hubspot, THE SCIENCE OF WEBSITE REDESIGN, JUNE 2011

³Hubspot, 2010

⁴HubSpot, State of Inbound Marketing Lead Generation Report, 2010

⁵Hubspot, Webinar Redesign Strategy, 2010



Optimal eMarketing is all about helping SMEs and Regional Companies develop and execute fully integrated digital marketing solutions using INBOUND MARKETING strategies. Our goal is to help companies GET FOUND in an increasingly crowded internet by achieving a strong digital footprint for your brand. Based in dynamic and centrally located Singapore, we support clients who view ASEAN as their market.



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