

OTR Web Solutions

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO

CREATING A WEBSITE REDESIGN STRATEGY



A Step-by-Step
Strategy Guide
to a New and
Improved Website

A publication of



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INTRODUCTORY ◀..... *This ebook!*

Introductory content is for marketers who are new to the subject. This content typically includes step-by-step instructions on how to get started with this aspect of inbound marketing and learn its fundamentals. After reading it, you will be able to execute basic marketing tactics related to the topic.



INTERMEDIATE

Intermediate content is for marketers who are familiar with the subject but have only basic experience in executing strategies and tactics on the topic. This content typically covers the fundamentals and moves on to reveal more complex functions and examples. After reading it, you will feel comfortable leading projects with this aspect of inbound marketing.



ADVANCED

Advanced content is for marketers who are, or want to be, experts on the subject. In it, we walk you through advanced features of this aspect of inbound marketing and help you develop complete mastery of the subject. After reading it, you will feel ready not only to execute strategies and tactics, but also to teach others how to be successful.

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THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO CREATING A WEBSITE REDESIGN STRATEGY

By Rebecca Churt

Rebecca Churt is the SEO Marketing Manager at HubSpot. Over the last 10 years, Rebecca has successfully developed and implemented online marketing, SEO, and conversion campaigns for 350+ businesses of all sizes, from the Fortune 500, to startups, to non-profits. Through creative internet marketing campaigns, she has helped companies improve their brand awareness, customer loyalty, retention rates, drive more traffic and leads, reduce overhead, and improve overall return on investment.



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Introduction

So you want to redesign your website? A redesign can be a huge success – or it could fail miserably. It's a long and tedious process. But that's where this guide can make your job a whole lot easier. Whether you're working with an agency or redesigning in-house, this guide will serve as your guide to strategizing your website redesign, and the complimentary tracking sheet will help you track your progress as you move beyond strategy and into each stage of redesign.

Every redesign starts with a vision and/or problem. The better you are at defining this vision and/or problem at the very beginning, the more successful the redesign will be and the smoother the entire process will be as well. That's exactly what this guide and tracking sheet are meant to solve.

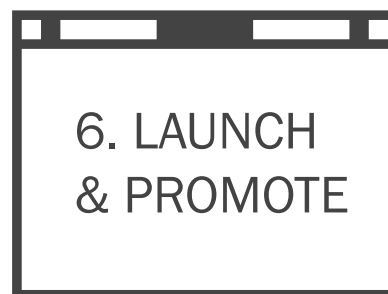
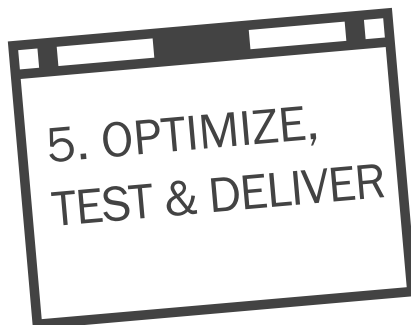
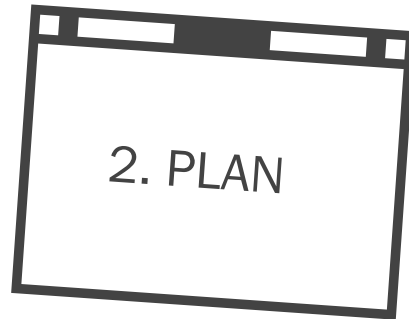
There are seven stages of website redesign (highlighted in the first chapter and described in detail in the tracking sheet). But none of the latter six stages can be completed without focusing time on the first stage: strategy.

This guide will serve as your official resource for defining your redesign strategy so you can successfully commence a website redesign. Let's jump in!

CHAPTER 1

STAGES OF WEBSITE REDESIGN

7 Stages of Website Redesign



NOTE: You won't attack all seven stages at once. You may choose – depending on time and budget – to do some or all of them in-house and/or in different phases.

CHAPTER 2

DEFINING YOUR WEBSITE STRATEGY

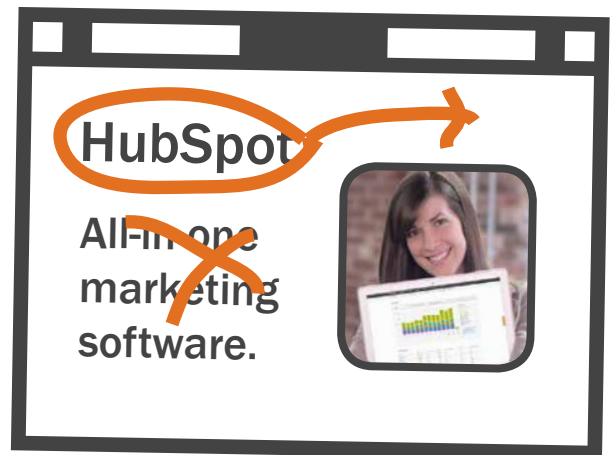
The strategy stage is one of the most crucial, and often overlooked, steps of a website redesign. It's the springboard for your new design -- that's why we wrote this guide! To truly go deep into the first stage of a website redesign. For the other steps, refer to the complimentary tracking sheet.

Now back to strategy. Start by defining some of the following:

- Clear benchmarks
- Realistic goals
- Your brand and target audience
- Relevant keywords
- Competition and market opportunity
- A full inventory of all content assets

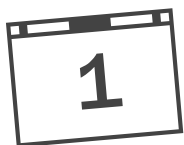
Ideally you'll know all this before any planning starts as it will affect every other element of the redesign process.

The next seven steps will outline your strategy and take the steps needed to getting started in more detail.



CHAPTER 3

7 STEPS OF YOUR REDESIGN STRATEGY



Benchmark Your Current Metrics

Before you begin planning your redesign, document your current performance metrics. Start by analyzing your existing site over its history in areas such as:

- Number of visits/visitors/unique visitors
- Bounce rate
- Time on site
- Current SEO rankings for important keywords
- Domain authority
- 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 or HubSpot's marketing analytics for better tracking and visibility into site performance.

TIP: Keep note of which tools you used to determine these benchmarks. Ideally you'll want to use the same exact tools when collecting post-design metrics – otherwise you'll be comparing apples to oranges!



Determine Your Goals

When considering a redesign there needs to be a good reason behind it. Many times we hear “it’s been a while since we’ve done one,” or “I want our business to look bigger.” These are not good enough reasons. 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 measureable results. Then communicate your goals with your team, designer or agency. Consider the following objectives for your own website:

- Number of visits/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

Many of these goals are dependent on one other. For example, in order to get more conversions, you need to increase traffic while decreasing the bounce rate.



Define Your Brand

Before you begin crafting your content, be clear about your branding and messaging so that it's consistent across your entire website. A new visitor should immediately understand what you do, how it relates to them, and why they should stay on your website and not flee to your competitors.

Make sure you sound human, and don't use industry jargon (aka gobbledygook). Consider the following example of how we could describe HubSpot in a gobbledygook way:

HubSpot helps companies across multiple countries reduce churn by backfilling the sales pipeline with highly qualified traffic that generates leads that convert into customers with high lifetime value. We achieve this by providing leading-edge software that integrates all marketing channels for a synergistic view of the data that determines and prioritizes high value marketing activities.

What? Let's translate that into the way people actually speak:

HubSpot's all-in-one marketing software helps more than 6,000 businesses in 45 countries attract leads and convert them into customers. A pioneer in inbound marketing, HubSpot aims to help its customers make marketing that people actually love.

Ahh yes, much clearer!



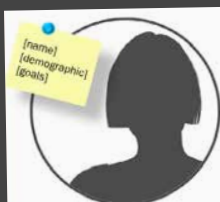
Define Your Buyer Persona

Your website is not just about you. Your visitors ask, “what’s in it for me?” Speak to them in their language by designing content around buyer personas.

A buyer persona is when you slice your marketplace into individual groups of people. They are fictional representations 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.

Free Template: The Marketer’s Guide to Creating Buyer Personas



Unsure who your buyer personas are? Download HubSpot’s free PowerPoint template to discover your personas today!



Protect Optimized Pages

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 content with search friendly topics:

● Document your most search-valued pages

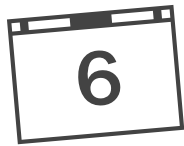
Figure out which pages receive the most traffic, inbound links, convert the most leads and ultimately cover the most influential topics. If you plan to move highly valuable pages, create proper 301 redirects.

● Create a 301 redirect strategy

This is important in terms of retaining traffic and link value associated with a page. Try creating a spreadsheet to record and map out your 301 redirects (old URLs vs new URLs). Then hand this document to someone technical for implementation.

● Do your keyword research

For every page, pick one keyword/ topic that the page will focus on. Once you determine the keyword(s), use on-page SEO best practices to optimize those specific pages.



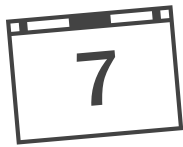
Analyze the Competition

While we don't recommend obsessing over your competitors, it helps to know how you compare. Here's a few tips:

- Run your website through Marketing Grader - marketing.grader.com - to get a report card of how your website and marketing is performing.
- Run your competitors through Marketing Grader so you are aware of their strengths and weaknesses.
- Take a look at competitor websites, and note what you like and what you don't. This is not meant to copy them, but to uncover what you can do better.

Once you run the analysis, put together an action list of what areas you can improve and what you can do differently than your competitors.

hubspot.com	
Top of the Funnel Top 3 Action Items	81%
Middle of the Funnel 2 Action Items	67%
Analytics ★ Nothing left to do here (see report)	100%



Inventory Your Assets

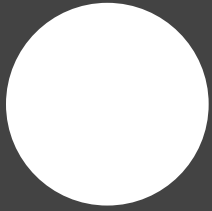
While a redesign is a great way to improve results, there are countless ways it can hurt you. Your existing website contains many assets that you have built up, and losing those during a redesign can damage your marketing. For instance, such assets might include:

- Most shared or viewed content
- Most trafficked pages
- Best performing/ranking keywords and associated pages
- Number of inbound links to individual pages

For example, if you remove a page that has a higher number of inbound links, you could lose a lot of SEO credit, which will make it increasingly difficult for you to get found.

Keep in mind that many web designers don't consider this step because they are neither marketers nor SEO specialists. Don't hesitate to remind them about this step or take the initiative to do it in advance.

NOTE: the checklist will help guide you through this process.



CONCLUSION

MAKE SURE YOUR NEW WEBSITE IS GENERATING LEADS

