

VIDEO: WHY IS TRADITIONAL WEB DESIGN BROKEN?

Hi. I'm Luke from HubSpot Academy.

For those of you who have experienced a website redesign, you know it's quite the journey. Sometimes it feels like you're hiking a mountain or traveling to a different country. You need a budget and resources, and you have to make all kinds of preparations for this journey to be successful.

Think back to previous website redesigns you've been involved in. What went well? What didn't go well? Which emotions did you experience during those redesigns? HubSpot sent a survey to more than 100 marketers, and wow. There are a lot of different emotions they experienced during a website redesign.

Do these look familiar to you? There are some positive emotions: "excitement," "hope," "pride." But the majority of responses were negative: "frustration," "stress," and "overwhelmed."

And even... "vacation." These people are thinking, "I want sun and sand and anything to get me out of here..." Kidding aside, it's true.

The traditional web design process is broken, and that can make it frustrating.

Let's think about what you have to do each time you embark on a website redesign journey.

First, you build a team of experts that can join or lead you along the way. The assembled team often consists of people from your own company and some outside experts like a web design or marketing agency and contracted developers.

Next, you need a budget. More often than not, you'll request a budget from your executive team. The average website redesign for a small- to medium-sized business can cost between \$15,000 and \$80,000, and even more for an enterprise business.

And just like a trip up Mount Everest or planning your dream vacation, a website

redesign is a long journey. On average, it takes three to six months to build a redesigned website.

You plan every step of the timeline: when things are delivered, when things need to be approved, and when things are handed off to specific teams.

Yet, how many times does a website project go over budget or miss a deadline? Think about your previous web design projects. Were they launched on time? Did they stay in scope and on budget? Things happen and obstacles arise.

Most teams have been approaching web design projects in the same way for the past twenty years. But if you take a step back, there are two systemic problems that shouldn't be ignored.

First, traditional web design is risky for your business.

Why? Because of the large upfront cost, the amount of dedicated time, energy, and resources, and the project usually still goes over budget and beyond its delivery date. After all of that, it's still unclear how much the website is going to impact the bottom line of the business.

Eventually the website goes live ... (well, hopefully). And it's time to rejoice. Finally, this long, grueling project is done and the team can return to all the other things that were set aside during the last six months while building the website.

Now, on a scale of one to ten, how important is your website to your business? What would happen to the growth of your business if your website disappeared tomorrow?

HubSpot found that marketers overwhelmingly agree that their websites are critical to the growth of their businesses.

But now, the real question...

How often do you make impactful improvements to your website? "Impactful" is continually improving, optimizing, and building key parts of the site to drive business value. So not updates or marketing activities like blog posts or offers.

While all marketers agree that the website is critical to business growth, 42% of marketers make impactful improvements to their website only once or less each year. Think about that for a second.

Your website is your company's number one marketing asset. It's the first place people go to get information and get a first impression of your business. It's also your company's number one salesperson, working 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to nurture people through the sales process.

Instead of being neglected for years with minimal updates, shouldn't this important asset get the resources and attention it needs to continue being a top performer?

The second problem with traditional web design is that it produces poor results.

In considering these two conclusions, that traditional web design is one, risky, and two, produces poor results, it's easy to see that the traditional web design process is broken.

It's not due to a lack of talent. Often there are talented people involved in a web project. It's not due to a lack of budget, either. Even in projects that have an unlimited budget, these problems still arise.

These problems happen because of a broken playbook.

Gabe, from Square 2 Marketing, says, "The traditional web design model is totally broken. Whether you're an agency or business, it leaves you extremely vulnerable to project failure and often does not produce optimal results."

So what are you supposed to do? What if this is how you've always built websites? There is a better way, and it's called Growth-Driven Design.

Growth-Driven Design is a smarter approach to web design that reduces the frustration and risk of traditional web design.

Growth-Driven Design drives optimal results by learning about your visitors through

data and continually improving the performance of the site.

And Growth-Driven Design improves the entire company through sharing user learnings with other departments and helps users achieve their goals by using the website.

VIDEO: HOW DOES GROWTH-DRIVEN DESIGN WORK?

How does Growth-Driven Design work? The Growth-Driven Design methodology has three major stages: the strategy, the launch pad, and continuous improvement. Let's discuss each one.

First is the strategy phase. The goal of the strategy phase is to develop an empathetic understanding of your audience and how the website can solve problems along their journey.

Try to imagine the world from your audience's perspective. Who are they? What challenges are they facing? What are their goals? And where does the website fit in as a part of that?

There are several steps you'll need to take to complete the strategy phase.

First, define the website goals by reverse-engineering the overall business' goals and identifying how the website will influence them. The website goals should be SMART goals — that's specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and timely — to help you properly measure the website's impact on the business.

Next, to understand your audience, you'll need to do user experience, or UX, research. The research may be qualitative, quantitative, observational, or a combination to uncover user insights that guide you through the rest of the strategy stage.

The next step is called "Jobs to Be Done." This framework will help you identify the underlying needs that drive your audience and what it takes for them to switch to your company's products and services as a solution.

Following Jobs to Be Done, you'll refine your fundamental assumptions. This step involves boiling down what you already know about your market, your business, and your website. You'll refine or create new user problem statements, unique value propositions, situational triggers, current user habits, switching anxieties, and more. Fundamental assumptions are at the core of the success of your users, business, and website.

The next step in the strategy stage is to develop personas using the deep understanding of your audience that you've gained. A persona is a fictional representation of your ideal customer.

Then, you'll need to forecast and map the persona's journey of what happens before, during, and after they interact with your business. By mapping your persona's journey, you'll have a direction for how to weave your website into your persona's life and solve their problems along the way.

After that, you'll develop a website-specific strategy that includes elements such as site architecture, on-site SEO, key sections and pages, integrations, technical requirements, and more.

The last step in the strategy stage of GDD is for you to brainstorm an initial wish list for your website. The wish list will contain creative and impactful website ideas that aim to solve your user's challenges, provide value to the user, and help your business reach its goals.

The website wish list will have anywhere between 75 and 200 different ideas, including site elements, sections, pages, specific features and modules, integrations and more.

With a strong wish list of high-impact ideas, you'll begin the second phase of the Growth-Driven Design methodology, which is the launch pad website.

The goal is to quickly build a website that looks and performs better than what you have today but isn't a final product. Rather, your launch pad is the foundation you'll build upon and optimize.

The main driver for launching quickly and without sacrificing quality is to collect data

from real users interacting with the site. Then, you're equipped to make better, data-driven decisions on how to improve the website. Launching quickly also creates a quicker time-to-value versus the six or more months of a traditional web design project.

How can you quickly build a launch pad in this stage of the methodology? Well, there are a few key areas you can focus on to accelerate the launch of a remarkable and effective website.

First, find a way to customize your approach to building the new website that maximizes acceleration while maintaining quality. There are a number of ways to make that happen.

Each website is uniquely different and will require a mix of approaches to make sure it's a well-performing launch pad. This is why it can be helpful to work with an experienced HubSpot partner agency to guide you on the best approach for your new launch pad.

The second way you can accelerate your launch pad website is by running design sprints on high-impact pages and sections. A design sprint is a short, concentrated time period focused on solving a problem using brainstorming, design, prototyping, and testing.

Design sprints help you use the team's collective knowledge and generate the best possible ideas, but they also help you come to a high-quality prototype of your new website in record time.

Next, for anyone who's built a website in the past, you may know that developing high-quality content — including text, images, and video — is one of the most challenging parts of a website build and often causes huge delays.

Having an effective content development process and great content collaboration tools can accelerate your content production speed and increase the quality of the content you produce.

The last way you can accelerate the build of a launch pad website is through investing in internal efficiencies. Internal efficiencies include switching from a waterfall process to an agile or scrum process, building an internal library of pre-built templates, removing

developer dependencies so marketers can make updates on their own, leveraging collaboration tools, and more.

Once the strategy has been created and your launch pad website is live, you'll move into the continuous improvement stage of the Growth-Driven Design methodology.

The goal of the continuous improvement stage is to start identifying the high-impact actions you can take to grow your business based on real user data.

Once you've launched the website, it may be difficult to stay focused on improving the highest impact items at any given time, so you'll follow a simple yet powerful agile process: plan, build, learn, and transfer. Let's look at each step.

In the planning step of the cycle, you'll define the most impactful items to build or optimize at that moment in time to drive toward your goals. This starts by determining an area of focus that your team can rally their improvement efforts around. Focus is key.

The challenge is, there are many areas you could work on: from messaging to layouts to building new pages to optimizing existing ones. The wide range of options can make it overwhelming and difficult to determine where to best focus your time.

To solve this, you'll use the website performance roadmap. The performance roadmap is a framework for you and your team to ensure you're spending time and energy on improving the most impactful areas.

The roadmap helps you set clear expectations with your boss, stakeholders, or clients on exactly what you should and should not be working on and why. And because there are specific metrics to measure for each focus area, you can easily measure and report on your progress building a peak-performing website.

What does a performance roadmap look like? There are three major themes: "establish," "optimize," and "expand."

The "establish" theme revolves around the core foundational activities you can do when you've built something new. Within this theme, there are three focus areas. First,

you can focus on “harvesting low hanging fruit” or building high-impact items that are easy or quick to accomplish after launch. Secondly, there’s building an audience to collect data and run experiments. And third, there’s confirming the website is driving value to those users.

The “optimize” theme revolves around improving the user experience and business performance of existing items on the site.

The three focus areas under optimize include improving usability on the site to ensure visitors can unlock value as quickly as possible. Doing conversion rate optimization, or CRO, to reduce the friction and steps in your conversion funnels. And personalization, to provide a hyper-relevant experience for each user or user-segment to ensure they get the perfect experience for their needs.

Lastly, the “expand” theme revolves around building new items on the website to expand the impact the website has.

The three focus areas within the expand theme include building new digital products onto the website, such as tools, directories, digital resources, or interactive experiences.

Expand into developing new items on the website to improve other areas of the customer journey map, such as a new customer experience, customer website, or advocate program.

And expand into using the website to help other teams achieve their goals and help the business grow. This could be building items on the website to help the sales team prospect, qualify, and close deals. It could be helping the HR team recruit more quality candidates and retain current employees, or helping the customer service team reduce support tickets and inbound phone calls.

There are many ways you can use the website as a tool to help the entire company grow.

The website performance roadmap is ordered to match the lifecycle of a particular website. After your launch pad is live, you’ll often focus on the establishing and

optimizing steps, and over time you'll progress to focusing on the expand step.

Every website is different, and it's key that you let the performance metrics and experience guide the flow of your focus.

Each quarter, you should reassess how to divide your continuous improvement efforts between each focus area based on performance metrics. Once your quarterly focus area is set, it's important not to shift. Shifting focus can create a lot of motion with little actual improvement.

Once you've determined your focus area, it's time to complete user experience research, or UX research, to understand what challenges or friction points your website users are running into that's preventing their progress.

Once you have a good understanding of the challenges, your team will brainstorm all sorts of new action items to build. These items will drive user value while improving the performance metric in the current focus area. All ideas should relate to your team's current focus area.

With your list of brilliant ideas, it's now time to prioritize the list to identify the highest impact action items you can implement to boost performance in your focus area. Based on your workload capacity, you'll go down the list and select the high-impact action items until you run out of capacity. Anything you don't get to will be re-considered in the planning step of the next cycle.

With those high-impact action items in hand for the current sprint, you'll write out action item cards with four key elements. One, an outline of the specific customer scenario in the form of a "job statement." Two, a hypothesis statement about your proposed change and the impact it will have. Three, any research or data that will back up your hypothesis. And four, an experimental design for how you plan on testing the hypothesis.

Now that you have a focus and prioritized action items to implement, you can move to the second step in the continuous improvement cycle: Build. The goal of the build step is to host a working sprint with a cross-functional team to complete all the high-impact action items.

Just like a sports team, your team will swarm on the action items to collaboratively tackle them in an aggressive fashion. With these action items as their focus, they'll sync schedules, meetings, and work times.

In addition to building the action items, the team also needs to set up the experiments as outlined in the experimental design in order to properly measure the impact the action item has and validate or invalidate the original hypothesis.

You'll launch what you've built and let your audience interact with your experiments. After a period of time, which will be different for every experiment, you'll then move on to the learn step of the cycle.

In the learn step, you'll take a step back to review the experiments you're running to extract learnings about your audience. Was your original hypothesis correct or did you prove it wrong? If it was proven wrong, this is okay and fairly common, especially when first starting out and trying bold ideas.

It's critical to assess the outcomes to learn more about your audience. What did their actions and behaviors tell you about them, and how could you incorporate these learnings into future action items?

This is such a critical step because the more you repeat the cycle, the more you learn about your audience. The more you learn about your audience, the more likely you'll have success in providing value and hitting your goal metrics.

The final step of the continuous improvement cycle is the transfer step. The goal of the transfer step is to share your learnings and exchange ideas throughout the entire company to improve the entire business, not just one of the parts.

Between internal communications and meetings, you'll share your user learnings from the experiments you performed the previous month. You can make recommendations based on the learnings of how other departments could improve.

You can ask questions to other departments to pull insights and fill gaps in your user research.

You can also use this time to a consistent user experience during all interactions with your company. You'll look for possible collaboration opportunities with other departments and teams.

This a cycle because you'll continually repeat the steps, building momentum each time you repeat them.

Generally, the cycle is repeated every two weeks, with new action items being built to impact the current focus for the quarter. Eventually, you learn and improve enough on that focus area and meet the metric goal that was set. Then you'll move to a new theme or focus on the website performance roadmap to start the cycle again.

To recap, the Growth-Driven Design methodology starts with planning and research in the strategy phase, which concludes with the creation of a solid wish list. The wish list is built into the launch pad website. In this phase, you're building a website that looks and performs better than what you have today but is a starting point for your website success. Then you'll start the continuous improvement phase with month-over-month improvement.

This process is a great alternative to the existing nightmare of a launch, with the "set-it-and-forget-it" process in traditional web design.

Now you're continuously improving, using the website to help all aspects of the business grow and seeing results each month.

Of course, marketing and sales are layers that live on top of Growth-Driven Design. Think of Growth-Driven Design like a sports car, but you still need gas, or marketing and sales, for that car to drive. To develop a peak-performing growth business, you need all three working together, as they're all interconnected and working off each other.

All of the challenges associated with the broken traditional web design process are now solved with the new playbook, Growth-Driven Design. This is the future of web design and the playbook for building a peak-performing website.

Hopefully you're feeling inspired to grow as a marketer, to grow as a web designer, to grow out of the broken, traditional web design process and to start building peak-performing websites using Growth-Driven Design. Let's transform the world of web design together.

VIDEO: WHAT DOES GROWTH-DRIVEN DESIGN LOOK LIKE IN ACTION?

When you start using Growth-Driven Design for your website, what can you expect? How does it compare to the traditional web design processes?

Thousands of companies across the world are finding more success with Growth-Driven Design.

Gabe from Square 2 Marketing says, "The traditional web design model is totally broken. Growth-Driven Design is the new gold standard for delivering results and bringing measurable business value through web design."

At Square 2 Marketing, they've seen major growth for their clients' websites that are using GDD, with ten times the number of visitors and five to six times more leads generated for each website using GDD.

Gabe isn't alone. HubSpot conducted a "2017 State of Growth-Driven Design" survey of 350 GDD agencies in more than 40 countries to understand the impact of GDD on their clients. Here are some of the results.

Marketers who use Growth-Driven Design see a quicker time-to-value and better lead generation by launching their new website in nearly half the time.

On average, it took only sixty days to launch the new website using GDD, and the site was launched on time and on budget. Once launched, they rapidly improved it by using the real visitor data from the new site.

How impressed would your boss and company be with a new website in less than sixty days?

Those same agencies said when they build a website using traditional web design, it takes almost double the time, it's launched two weeks late, and it's left alone once it's launched.

Redesigning a website is a frustrating process. But marketers who use Growth-Driven Design find the process much more enjoyable than traditional web design.

And here's the most important reason for you and your boss to choose Growth-Driven Design: This process drives better business growth.

The 350 agencies in more than 40 countries reported seeing 14% higher website traffic, 16.9% higher leads, and a whopping 11.2% more revenue when using Growth-Driven Design instead of traditional web design.

Growth-Driven Design is a smarter approach to web design that drives business growth.

Kevin from Lean Labs highlights this. "Growth-Driven Design is the foundation of our agency. It has transformed how we work and has helped us 10x leads and opportunities for our clients."

The data speaks for itself. If you're trying to grow a business, Growth-Driven Design is the best option for your next website redesign.