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Web Solutions

# Ready to Launch: Website Redesign Guide



# Planning Your Website Redesign

If you're planning a website redesign, this **Ready to Launch: Website Redesign Guide** can help you by providing **best practice recommendations** and **checklists** to move your project (and organization) forward.

**This Guide provides questions to ask** and planning guidance for:

- Creating Your Website Strategy
- Budgeting for Success
- Planning for Mobile Delivery
- Ensuring Ongoing Success

**and much more...**

## RESULTS DIRECT CAN HELP

Results Direct is here to help you on your website redesign journey.

From **Digital Strategy, Website Redesign, CMS, AMS/Systems Integration**, and **Hosting to Mobile Apps**, we've delivered results-driven solutions for 100s of associations over the past 25 years.

**We'd love to work with you.**



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# Creating Your Website Strategy

- 1 Who are the critical audiences?
- 2 What are the tasks that we need users to be able to complete online?
- 3 What's our member value proposition?

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## Ready to Launch: Website Checklist

- **Start with organizational goals** & make sure the website strategy is in direct support of these goals
- **Define specific success measures** for the goals & determine data benchmarks
- **Talk with members directly** & better define their needs & expectations
- **Define the member value proposition** & what your association delivers better than anyone else
- **Conduct planning sessions** with staff leadership to define an aspirational vision
- **Contract with a website partner** to develop a phased roadmap
- **Define short-term (immediate) & long-term strategies (over next 2-3 years)** to reach website goals

# Balancing Department Needs

- 1 How do we balance the needs of many departments?
- 2 How can we ensure accountability?

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## Ready to Launch: Website Checklist

- **Break down silos** & create staff partnerships
- **Facilitate collaboration** with creation of cross-functional working teams
- **Look to current best practices** from the commercial sector & discuss how to apply them to your organization
- **Use research & data** to build your business case

# Budgeting for Success

- 1 Is the website viewed as a critical member engagement resource?
- 2 What are the budget & revenue goals?

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## Ready to Launch: Website Checklist

- **Think of the website not as a communications tool**, but the central point of contact & engagement with your key stakeholders & the face of your association's brand
- **Establish measurable goals for the website** in building your business case, such as increase in member retention, reduction in membership grace periods, increase in event registration, increase in advertising & sponsorship, increase in content subscriptions & identification of membership prospects
- Research from ASAE shows that **associations typically spend 2-3% of annual revenues on each website redesign**. This goes up to 4-5% when investments are made in new tools/tech such as a content management system

# Choosing the Right Technology

- 1 Out-of-the-box or custom CMS?
- 2 Commercial or open source?
- 3 Who will host the website & maintain the software?

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## Ready to Launch: Website Checklist

- **Define the business requirements:**  
Multi-site management?  
Multi-lingual?  
E-commerce?  
Integration needs?  
Usability for staff?  
Federated search?
- **Understand the workplace culture:**  
Who owns the website?  
Developers on staff?  
Client premise hosting?
- **Determine scaling needs**

# Focusing on Business Needs

- 1 Do we adapt the technology or the business process?
- 2 How do we work with non-technical staff to define the requirements?
- 3 What department bears the costs of the systems integration?

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- **Focus on the user experience** first & then back into the best technologies to deliver those experiences
- **Be open to revisiting your business process** ("we've always done it that way") to avoid costly customization
- **Sit down with staff teams & walk through their processes** with them, ask questions & identify the inefficiencies. Staff are more likely to support change that saves them time & aggravation
- **Focus on automating the highly repeatable tasks** (the 80/20 rule) to gain the greatest ROI. Don't focus on the exceptions which drive up complexity & costs
- **All departments share the benefit of quality systems integration** & should share in the costs of implementation



# Prioritizing Website Features

- 1 What are the critical features for website launch?
- 2 What features can be deferred to future phases?

- **Bring in a 3rd party** to help guide cross-functional discussions
- **Create a website purpose statement** & use as a decision-making tool. Features that don't support the purpose statement go to the bottom of the list of priorities
- **Build support at the top of your organization** to trickle down to the individual departments
- **Focus on features that facilitate** your users' most frequent tasks. Tasks that occur more often should take priority over tasks that only occur occasionally
- **Use data & analytics** to determine priorities

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# Getting Your Team Onboard

- 1 How do we communicate what's possible & manage expectations?
- 2 How do we allocate staff responsibilities?
- 3 How do we get the team on board to support the project?
- 4 How do we garner executive support for the investment of staff time?

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- **Encourage staff feedback & input** throughout the process
- **Conduct regular meetings** that involve department heads to facilitate team collaboration
- **Create a cross-functional Website Task Force** (staff or include volunteers)
- **Develop standard forms where staff can communicate challenges** & ideas in an organized way
- **Contract with a 3rd party firm to help encourage change** & define needs
- **Make participation part of goals**
- **Develop a shared calendar or project plan** so all team members are aware of task deadlines & expectations

# Migrating Your Content

- 1 How will content be migrated to the new site - automated process or copy & pasting?
- 2 How do we define business process (content governance) & adapt to the technology?
- 3 How do we maintain staff communication & transparency?

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- **Create small working teams** that are responsible for reviewing & assessing content
- **Archive old content:** Don't migrate anything more than 3 years old unless there is specific data to back it up
- **Use budget as a reason** not to migrate everything
- **Determine the chain of command** for review of content & migration
- **Review your website analytics** to determine what content is most (& least) popular. Use this data to prune content that is no longer of interest to your website visitors
- **Prioritize migration of your most popular content.** Less visited content can be migrated post-launch or archived

# Planning for Mobile Delivery

- 1 How do we address having too many PDFs on the website?
- 2 How do we streamline complicated online forms & e-commerce?
- 3 How do we fix poorly written/structured content?

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- **Implement responsive design templates** with break-points for mobile
- **Review website analytics** to identify top accessed PDFs & convert to HTML
- **Consider the click area when writing content** & make sure items are easily “tap-able” on mobile devices
- **Increase use of images, call-outs of key takeaways, infographics & sub-headings** to make content easy to skim/scan
- **Simplify online forms** to limit the info collected to only the critical pieces
- **Optimize your page performance** to ensure quick load times
- **Eliminate dense paragraphs of text**, add executive summaries of important content & increase use of bullets

# Focusing on User Experience

- 1 How do we determine what's intuitive to website visitors?
- 2 How do we prioritize audiences?
- 3 How do we fix poorly written/structured content?

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- **Create personas** to better understand the needs & behaviors of key audiences
- **Conduct an online Card Sort** to gain insights from users on what organization is intuitive
- **Include members** in the testing process & have them complete tasks (Tree Test) to validate the new website navigation before building
- **Turn unknown audiences into known audiences** via content capture forms

# Ensuring Ongoing Success

- 1 How do we best govern/manage going forward?
- 2 How do we ensure ongoing content quality?
- 3 How do we ensure ongoing brand adherence?

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- **Ensure there is an ongoing budget** to support website iteration & improvement
- **Form a strong vendor partnership**
- **Allow staff the needed time** to maintain the website
- **Have a training program** in place
- **Create workflows** & identify a managing editor
- **Use strategy as a framework** to empower you to say “no”