



# Time to review and update your website?

Website Review Checklist

## 1. Content

- **Company information:** Is the information up to date? Is your home page highlighting the newest and most relevant information? Contact information, location, phone, skype, email, hours of operation. Is the copyright statement on your site up to date?
- **Topics:** Is there any really old content on the site? Are you still covering topics that are: a) aligned with your brand, b) interesting to your target audience?
- **Images:** Are all images still correct? Does every image have an alt tag? Are photos of high quality?
- **Products & services:** Descriptions, photos, pricing, packages. Are you still presenting outdated or discontinued products and services? Is the language that describes products and services simple? Are previous project or engagement details up to date and current?
- **Staff:** List of employees, bios, CVs, photos
- **News & events:** News coverage on other sites or in print, announcements, past event photos or reviews, upcoming events? Can blog post be repurposed or updated with new data?
- **Add/Delete:** Are there any pages to delete? Are there any pages to add? What new features are needed?
- **Social Media:** Are you active on the social media accounts linked to? Have you added channels that are not yet linked on the site?
- **Broken links:** Does every link lead to the right page? Any new links to add?
- **Typos:** Are there any?

## 2. Think about your audience – website fit with business and marketing strategy

- **Business Goals:** What are overall business goals/objectives?
- **Mission. Purpose. Values:** Does the site still represent your current mission, purpose and values?
- **Marketing goals:** What are marketing goals/objectives?
- **What are the website goals/objectives:** Information finding? Build user engagement? Build perception of brand and organisation? Overall better perception of organisation? Do they fit with marketing and business goals?
- **Target Audience:** Who is the website aimed at? Does the target audience match the personas<sup>1</sup> you have described? Has your target audience changed? What are their most pressing problems? How can you help solve those pain points?
- **Value proposition:** Has your unique selling proposition (USP)/value proposition changed to the target audience?
- **Call to Action:** What actions do you want visitors to take on your site?

## 3. Engage in focused competitor research

It's not urgent that you implement features to match every move competitors make, but it's worth noting their efforts to do something you're not doing – and then considering whether those additions make sense for you as well.

- Do your competitors' sites look better than yours?
- What website improvements have your competitors made, that you might consider?
- Complete these fields for each of your top competitors:
  - Competitor website address: [fill in the blank]
  - Features on this site that you could consider adding to your site: [fill in the blank]
  - Content items on this site that you could consider including on your site: [fill in the blank]

## 4. Think about a makeover – website design

### User experience (UX)

- **User Personas:** Who are the various personas<sup>1</sup> that use your site (e.g. for a food supplier: chef, purchasing manager, restaurant owner, front of house manager, general public, potential hires/job seekers)? Have you got persona sheets set up? Does your content still make sense?
- **User flows:** Is information still organized in the best possible way to reach your audience? What are the user flows (user journeys) for each persona? Can the user journeys be easily mapped out? Where would they want to go on your website. Can they do it? Does the navigation still make sense?
- **Analytics:** Are google analytics set up? Is website accessed more via mobile or desktop? What does the flow behaviour report say?
- **Usability review:** Easy and quick to find important info? Minimal user frustration? Are there functions or features on your website that are no longer used?
- **Design:** Consistent? Alignment ok? Page hierarchy ok? Mobile response time ok (e.g. images right resolution to load quickly)? Does your site design look old or dated?
- **Accessibility:** Is the site accessible? (e.g. use google lighthouse on chrome to check out)
- **Technical review:** Performance/speed? Best practice incorporated? Search engine optimised (SEO)?
- **Opportunities:** how to close the gap in the user experience.
- **Set performance metrics.** E.g. Decrease the bounce rate of X page by 5% by adding related articles

### Branding

- **Message:** Is your brand<sup>2</sup> message clear?
- **Consistent:** Is the brand being represented consistently throughout the site?
- **Logo:** Is your logo high quality and is it prominently placed on each page? Has your logo been changed or updated? Do newer marketing materials have a different look?
- **Imagery:** Does your imagery represent you and your brand accurately?
- **Colour Scheme:** Do you have a solid colour scheme, and does it connect with your brand?
- **Tag lines:** Are you using powerful tag lines that engage your user and relate to what they need?
- **Calls to action:** Are these prominently placed on your home page and on your sub pages?

### Typography

- **Headlines:** Are you currently using H1, H2, H3 headlines that are vital to SEO?
- **Font:** Are your fonts readable and appropriate? Is style and colour consistent?
- **Size:** Is the size of all your headline and paragraph text legible and visually pleasing?

### Layout

- **Home Page:** Do you feature your most important content? Can your users get a real sense of who you are just by looking at the home page?
- **Organization:** Is your content (and the sections they are in) well organized within the layout?
- **Modern:** Is your layout clean, easy to read and navigate? Does it look fresh?
- **Layout Width:** Does your layout meet the current standard widths for differing browser types?

<sup>1</sup> Buyer personas (sometimes referred to as marketing personas) are fictional, generalized representations of your ideal customers. Personas help us all -- in marketing, sales, product, and services -- internalize the ideal customer we're trying to attract and relate to our customers as real humans. Having a deep understanding of your buyer persona(s) is critical to driving content creation, product development, sales follow up, and really anything that relates to customer acquisition and retention.

<sup>2</sup> Technically, branding means the use of a name, term, symbol, or design or a combination of these to identify a product or service. Importantly branding strategy is dedicated to instilling those distinctions that give a brand substance, validity and acceptance.

- **Sub Pages:** Do your sub pages have consistent layouts and is it easy to find pages that are deeper in your site?
- **Footer:** Do you have your contact information, repetition of your main navigation menu, more detailed information on your footer?
- **Navigation:** Is it easy to find your main landing pages and sub pages when you are on any given page of your site?

### Interactive Elements:

- **Main & Side Menus:** Do you have an obvious rollover effect or different link color when your mouse hovers over any of your menu items to indicate that it is indeed a link?
- **Show/Hide Features:** Do you utilize show/hide or expandable menus to minimize the look of very long content?
- **Buttons:** Do you utilize buttons to help guide users through your site?
- **Calls to Action:** Do you have effective “Calls to Action” on your site directing the user to take the action you want them to?
- **Anything Clickable:** Are all items that are clickable, including images, links, buttons, etc. made obvious to the user that they can click them?
- **Social Icons:** Are you utilizing social media icons on either your header or footer?

### Website performance and interest

- **Activity:** When are the busiest times for use of the site?
- **Mobile friendly:** Is the site mobile-responsive?
- **Traffic:** What are the visitor numbers? Have you seen a significant increase/decrease in website traffic?
- **Page performance:** What pages attract the most visits? What pages have high bounce rates? Which pages have very long or very short sessions?
- **Trends:** What has changed since last month? Can you think of the reasons why?

## 5. Value and cost - managing hosting and web resources

If your hosting is up for renewal in the next six months, evaluate whether a newer package would better suit your needs. For example, you might have a WordPress website running well on the cPanel hosting, but if it's coming up for renewal, it could be the perfect opportunity to upgrade to Managed WordPress.

- Is it time for a platform or package change, or additional technology additions?
- Is it time to consider moving to a newer development platform, such as WordPress?
- Is there a newer hosting package that would better serve your needs?

New packages may offer a discounted price on the initial purchase. So, moving to a newer package could be more cost-effective than renewing an older package.

## 6. Scout out security improvements

No one wants to think about potential hacking or security breaches, even if you think it's not strictly required because you don't sell anything on your website, it might be a worthwhile step to add SSL.

### Is it time to beef up your website security?

- Look into tools that offer automatic backups and malware scanning
- Add an SSL certificate

One indication of a website that is secured with an SSL is HTTPS instead of HTTP in the website's URL.



## 7. Evaluate the need for a resource and supplier shake-up

Whether you manage your own site or have hired someone to take on that responsibility, situations change over time. It might be time to consider hiring a dedicated resource. Or maybe the relationship with a current external website developer is not serving you as well as it might, and it's time to find someone new. It's also possible that a new or alternative resource has appeared through hiring, a partnership, or even your own upskilling.

### Is it time to consider hiring a dedicated website developer?

- Does your site need more time and attention than you are able to provide?
- Does your site need more technical horsepower or knowledge than you are able to provide?
- Does someone on your team have the time and willingness to learn to do the job?
- Does your website seem unprofessional or below standards, when compared to your competitors?

### Is your current external website developer still meeting your needs?

- Is your website developer unresponsive to emails and phone calls?
- Is your website developer meeting time commitments?
- Does your website developer have the skills to do what you need?
- Has your website developer closed up shop, or announced a plan for retirement?
- Has your website developer changed the focus of his or her business or is now working only with certain client types or development platforms? Are they working with competitors?

### Is your external website developer providing the attention you deserve?

- Is your website developer making too many mistakes when implementing your requests?
- Is your website developer sticking to the terms of your written contract or verbal agreement?
- Are you happy with your website developer service charges?
- Is your website developer overwhelming you with technical information beyond your understanding and beyond what you need?
- Is it time to consider changing website developer solutions?
- Do you now have a staff member who can manage your website?
- Have you engaged with a marketing or PR agency that also offers web services?
- Have you identified a web management resource that is a better match for your needs?

## Consolidate suppliers

Whenever practical, it is best to maintain domain registration, hosting and email with just one supplier, in one account. It makes dealing with billing and technical support easier, you only need to remember one login, and you're covered with one support number. If your resources reside with multiple suppliers, take stock and identify opportunities for consolidation. From your list, identify services that are coming up for renewal soon, and that need evaluation for possible replacement. Then, identify services to consider consolidating to one provider.

Are there opportunities to upgrade or consolidate services? Make note of the provider name and expiration date for each of these services:

- |                               |                    |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| • Website domain registration | • SSL              |
| • Hosting                     | • Website Security |
| • Email                       | • Other            |