

CMA CAN HUNT

Time to Refresh Your Website?

By Jeff Barnhart

President and CEO

A website should evolve as a business grows, supporting refinements in strategic direction, branding and positioning as well as the introduction of new products or services. Here are a few thoughts to consider as you refresh your website:

Check the stats. How often is the record of site visits, page popularity rankings and other statistics reviewed and analyzed? By watching the patterns of visitor engagement, you will get a clearer picture of viewer response to your content. Based on that information, you may cut some content types and boost or add others.

How's your homepage? When visitors hit a homepage, they should immediately understand who the business is and what it does. They should also be offered clear paths for exploring the site. A homepage offering a barrage of disorganized options, clickables, photos and graphics can be confusing—keep it simple.

Hot news. Consider including a homepage ticker or an in-house banner ad on the homepage to highlight a new service or a promotion and have it link directly to more details. This is an easy way to keep the site fresh and immediately drive traffic to important information.

Success by design. Websites can become dated as once-hot colors and design trends cool. When designing a site's bells and whistles, consider that the best websites provide information first and then make the content look good. Also keep in mind that, according to *Business Week*, 62% of those online are researching products and services. They're not dropping by for a display of visual pyrotechnics.

Sharpen messages. Consider all your touch points with customers. Could website content be fine-tuned to supplement, complement or reinvent those touch points online?

Website copy is different. Can copy presentation be improved? Effective website copy is developed in a layered information format so a reader can quickly navigate concise top-of-mind statements with bulleted supporting benefits and then click deeper to learn more detail on a specific topic of interest.

Is there sufficient redundancy? A visitor should be able to get anywhere in the site from every single page, without having to take two clicks backwards. Each page should contain not only your business name, contact info and logo, but should also give the viewer the ability to navigate forward and backward through the site or to return to the home page at will.

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