

Three Solid Reasons to Refresh Your Business Website

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October 15, 2020

CEOs and entrepreneurs are puzzled over whether or not to redesign their business websites, why to do it, when and what might be the benefits if any. This essay explores the fundamental reasons in favor of a well-designed web application.

You knock on a door of a company you've never heard of before. Three seconds have passed; the door opens and you enter the premises.

You can see the windows right across the room opposite to the wall you're standing next to. But even though it is a beautiful sunny day outside, the space feels gloomy. The daylight barely penetrates the thick layer of clay-colored rain dust stains. It looks like the vertical vinyl blinds serve as an extra-precautionary measure to make sure the odd beam never gets through.

As you make your first daring step the most prominent thing that grabs your attention is the carpet. The rich burgundy color fades into the annals of history as only a few original spots remain under the layers of dust in *too-hard-to-vacuum* corners of the room. The fabric is grey now with hints of soil and there is significantly less of it towards the center of the area. The serpent-like achromatic pathways curve from one desk to another. The tables are cluttered and littered with stationeries, breadcrumbs, scribbles and product samples. The scarlet top of one swivel chair has a pee-like splotch on it.

Your eyes adjust quickly to the absence of natural lighting. You almost manage to *unsee* the unforgettable mark and while the snowflake-sized dust particles itch your mucous membrane you notice a plant pod and a coffee machine on a nearby table. The stains on the cups are at least a week old and look more like a permanent imprint. The pot has no vegetation in it – just chunks of cracked soil; even an accidental weed doesn't stand a chance there.



You don't see anyone smoking but you'd bet this space turns into an industrious ashtray after official business hours. Everything screams: "No one is welcome here!" and it would probably be for the better if this gem of an enterprise doesn't see the light of day.

An unexpected but unavoidable thought flashes: do you stay and talk business or do you run away while you still can?

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If you compare the company's office with its website you'd be able to identify some similarities. A business website isn't that different from the actual premises if you think about it. When it comes to dealing with clients, it serves the same purpose – it is a space where customers get to know the company better. I have seen some websites that are way worse than the image outlined in the previous paragraphs but they all do summon the exactly same urge – to leave, *unsee* and never come back.

You could say that all of the above is a made-up exaggeration and fair enough, although I didn't conjure the story out of thin air; I used to work for a company with a similar furnishing and had to sit on that particular scarlet swivel chair. I had also built several websites for my own business ventures and went through thousands of other companies' websites analyzing their strong and weak spots. So, when it comes to web design critique, I guess, I'm in a good position to point out the problems and contemplate on possible solutions.

Three main reasons to redesign a website

Entrepreneurs are usually hesitant with making changes because they understand that even a small adjustment can produce unpredictable results. In addition, any action will require investment of time and money which are always scarce. A company should have a couple of very good reasons to even start thinking about redesigning their website.

Positive First Impression

Everyone seems to be in agreement about the importance of the looks and making the first impression: the *clothes* that *make the man* and still *judging the book by its cover* and all that. But when it comes to designing websites one can definitely tell these principles aren't applied as broadly as with regards to our attitudes towards clothing and hygiene. The reasons for putting the pants on, ironing the shirt and having a fresh pair of socks, as well as washing your hair, brushing



your teeth and restraining from alcohol consumption before the meeting with a customer are simple – to show respect and to be if not pleasant then at least tolerable.

Even business cards – while becoming less popular – are still considered a part of the requirement in corporate etiquette. The point of having a well-designed, good-looking *carte de visite* is to show you're serious about your business.

Business websites shouldn't be that much different. Company's web app at the very least should express the same attitudes toward the client, employees and partners: respect and commitment. It takes less than a second to formulate an opinion about a company by taking a first glance at its home page. Sloppy websites designed on a napkin over the weekend would never produce a sense of a serious, committed business. If the web app that represents the company has inconsistencies and misspelled words, lacks structure and order, is cluttered and feels overwhelming, is it fair to say that the people behind it are exactly like that?

The first reason in favor of the website redesign is to make a **good first impression**.

Appropriate Expectations

The quality of design should match the price point and value of the product or service. Luxury brands, for instance, offer their products in state-of-the-art stores tweaking some interior elements and decorations now and then; their e-commerce websites are on par with brick & mortar siblings. Visitors **expect** the products to be expensive because it has been made obvious for them to see.

Imagine being proposed to purchase a thousand dollar purse by an untidy sales person with greasy uncombed hair in a dusty, ramshackle hut of a store. I don't believe this prestigious brand would be successful or luxurious for long. Cheap, shabby interiors imply a low-quality service where customers expect to get little value and are willing to pay as little as possible (if anything). The same holds true in regards to shoddy websites.

When the company sells cheap stuff then it might be ok not to have a unique web design. But if the company is offering something of value it might as well shoot itself in the leg if it doesn't make that extra effort and redesign the website to create the image of what customers are supposed to expect from dealing with this business. Well-designed things are always perceived to be of higher value.

The second reason for the web design refresh is to set a **benchmark of what to expect**.



Implied Trust

It is difficult to tell when the last time the website had been updated on was unless it has dated blocks of content. A new visitor can't tell right away whether the website is maintained or it is a legacy of the old. Outdated web design raises the red flag. People will always find it hard to trust a company that fails to showcase their current state of affairs through modern design or relevant recent content.

If the company isn't the only game in town, chances are that potential customers/clients/target audience had already visited competitors' websites and made up their minds about them; or will do it eventually. Unless there is a clear, undisputable benefit of working with one company over another, the design will help to distinguish which company is worthier.

The issue of trust is especially important when it comes to making online payments. Website visitors tend to refrain from filling any forms that look sloppy, inconsistent or *buggy*. A customer must be very desperate to contact or place an order with a company that has an archaic layout design. If the website looks as old as the tombstone perhaps it is best to let it rest in peace.

The third reason for redesigning the website is to **establish trust**.

How to notice if company's website needs a design refresh?

1. If you look at the web page and your eyes hurt or some of the key elements blend with the background – there is a problem with the chosen **color palette and contrast**.
2. If you can't read the text because it is either too small or too large and it's hard to figure out how content is grouped together – that is a problem with **typography and hierarchy**.
3. If the sequence of paragraphs doesn't make sense and there are grammar mistakes – the issue with **copy and spelling** has to be addressed.
4. If it takes more than 3 seconds to load the page, if something is not working properly – that is an issue with **bugs and speed**. You can learn more about [how to make your website load faster](#) following this link.
5. If you have to use your fingers to zoom in and out on your phone when viewing web pages –there is a problem with a **mobile version**.



6. If there were no **software updates** for framework or content management system for more than a year then that is a potential black hole of all sorts of problems: security, malicious injections, digital ransom, conflicting dependencies, malfunctioning plugins, etc.
7. If the design seems to be outdated and inconsistent – that’s a **trust issue**.
8. If the number of conversions, leads and sales are on a steady decline – that is a billboard size sign that says: “Redesign me”.
9. When employees are spending a lot of time on a regular basis doing similar, monotonous work – it is time to redesign those processes.

What is possible to achieve with a website refresh?

The website is a tool and the most beautiful thing about it is that it can be tailored to different jobs. The company’s website can act as a digital business card or it can exist as a transforming, adjustable, adaptive online store customized for each individual user – the possibilities are nearly endless. It is up to the management of the company to set appropriate business goals for their web application.

Some common website business goals:

- Reduce bounce rate and drive traffic to **increase sales**;
- **Get more leads** with emails and phone numbers;
- Create landing pages and craft user journeys to **improve conversion rates**;
- Create, distribute and optimize content to **get found on the web**;
- Attach web analytics and trackers to **harvest big data**;
- Engage users to spend more time in order to **sell more ads**;
- **Qualify customers** using forms;
- Sign up the target audience to **keep in touch** via a newsletter;
- **Grow a talent pool** and attract the best candidates;
- **Automate** monotonous repetitive **business processes**.



Summary

The attempt to put a value next to a web page redesign is rather puzzling to most entrepreneurs and business owners – it isn't that clear how much should a website design cost because the benefits aren't obvious at first sight. The worth could be derived upon achievement of business goals, but when none were defined, measuring the return on investment is quite challenging.

Perhaps the surest way to calculate an outcome is to put a price tag on client's trust. The higher the price of the product or service, the riskier the transaction perceived. The more risk there is, the harder it is for the prospect to make the next step. Since that is the case, the company has to appear more trustworthy which is achieved, in part, through a rigorous web design.

The positive effects of a redesigned website could be monumental and swift in case of an e-commerce store or sure and steady in case of a business or brochure type web app. What's common for every type of the website is that a good design creates a proper, trustworthy image of the company and people behind it.

About the author

Sergei is an entrepreneur with over 16 years of international experience in business development across various industries: construction, real estate, retail, wholesale, manufacturing, entertainment and digital services. He works at awezzom [Digital Brand Strategy Design agency](#) as an Art Director and Brand Strategist.

If you feel like your company could benefit from a web design refresh or you want to know more, feel free to contact Sergei. At awezzom our goal is to **create business Websites that are Worth Making**.

The original article can be found here:

<https://awezzom.com/blog/web-design/business-website-design-refresh-core-reasons-to-redesign>

