Preparing for a Successful Web Design Project

Many people are surprised at the amount of information that goes into building an effective website. There is a lot more to it than choosing a pretty template. Identifying the functionality you want is just as critical as anticipating functionality that you may want in the future. Here are some questions that will help us determine the type of website that's right for you:

Marketing Overview

- What types of marketing are you currently involved in or practice on a regular basis?
- Do you have a tag line?
- What is your elevator pitch?
- Do you have a mission statement?
- What differentiates your company from your competitors?

Marketing Goals and Objectives

- When it comes to marketing (in general), what are your biggest challenges?
- When it comes to obtaining qualified leads, what are your biggest challenges?
- When it comes to closing leads, what are your biggest challenges?
- Are there any short-term or long-term corporate goals that need to be considered in the website redesign?

Product and Service Overview

- How would you briefly define your product or service offering?
- Do certain products and/or services speak to different type of clients?
- What differentiates your product or service from your competition?

Sales Overview

- What is the target demographic of your website visitors? Are there specific sectors, industry segments, company sizes, geography that needs to be focused on more than others?
- How would you describe the various types of people that visit your website during the sales cycle? Can they be classified into clear "personas" with varying degrees of needs and selection criteria?
- Do your potential clients have a typical or standard list of needs or problems that they discuss with you during the sales process?
- At the end of a project or sale or even website visit, how do you qualify it as a success?
- At the end of a project or sale or even website visit, how does your client qualify it as a success?

Competitive Overview

- List a few competitors that you'd consider benchmark companies?
- What about these companies makes then stand apart from others?
- What elements of these companies and/or their online activity would you like to model after in your redesign?

Search Overview

- Based on what you know right now, what keywords or phrases would "you" use to search for your products and/or service offering?
- What search terms are your competitors targeting?
- Of the words you just listed, which ones would you like to target with the new website?
- Do you have existing content that can support these keywords or phrases?
- Does your existing website and content rank for these phrases?

Website Current State

- What does your website currently do well?
- What does your website currently do poorly?
- Are there any aspects of your website that you love?
- Are there any aspects of your website that you hate?
- Is there anything on the current website that needs to be removed entirely?
- Is there anything on the current website that must absolutely stay?

Website Future State

- What is the most important factor of your new website?
- What functional requirements are needed within the new website?
- What visual elements are needed within the new website?
- Are there any color preferences for the new website?
- What social media elements would you like integrated?
- Do you have a proposed sitemap prepared?
- Do you need a subscription option or other offer?
- Will you be blogging?
- Will you require responsive design (adapts automatically to mobile devices)?
- Is there anything that you would like to have included in the new website that you lack currently?

Happiness Factor

- What websites (in general) make you happy?
- When looking at these websites, what particularly makes you happy on each one?

Local Requirements

- Do you have multiple locations?
- Where are they located?
- Do you offer different products or services per location?

SEO Requirements

- Do you need assistance with search engine optimization?
- Do you have someone who can review desired keywords and match the keywords to your existing or future content?
- Do you have someone who can review content for SEO best practices?
- Do you have someone who can create unique meta titles and descriptions per page or blog post?
- Are you familiar with popular SEO plugins and their configurations?
- Do you have a Google Analytics account?
- Do you have a Google Webmaster Tools or Bing Webmaster Tools account?

Hosting Requirements

- Who is your current website host?
- Can they support WordPress (not all hosts are great at database driven websites)?
- If switching hosting companies, do you know where your DNS is controlled?

Project Constraints

- What is proposed date for kicking off your web design project?
- What is you desired date for go-live?
- What is your project budget?

Content to Assemble for Go-Live

- High resolution logo
- Content pages
- Blog posts
- Literature or brochures
- Sales presentations
- Case studies
- Press releases
- Videos or podcasts
- Images
- Testimonials
- Articles
- Events
- Other marketing collateral