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IS YOUR WEBSITE ON PAR?

Evaluating Website Design, Functionality and Performance as the owner

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Content

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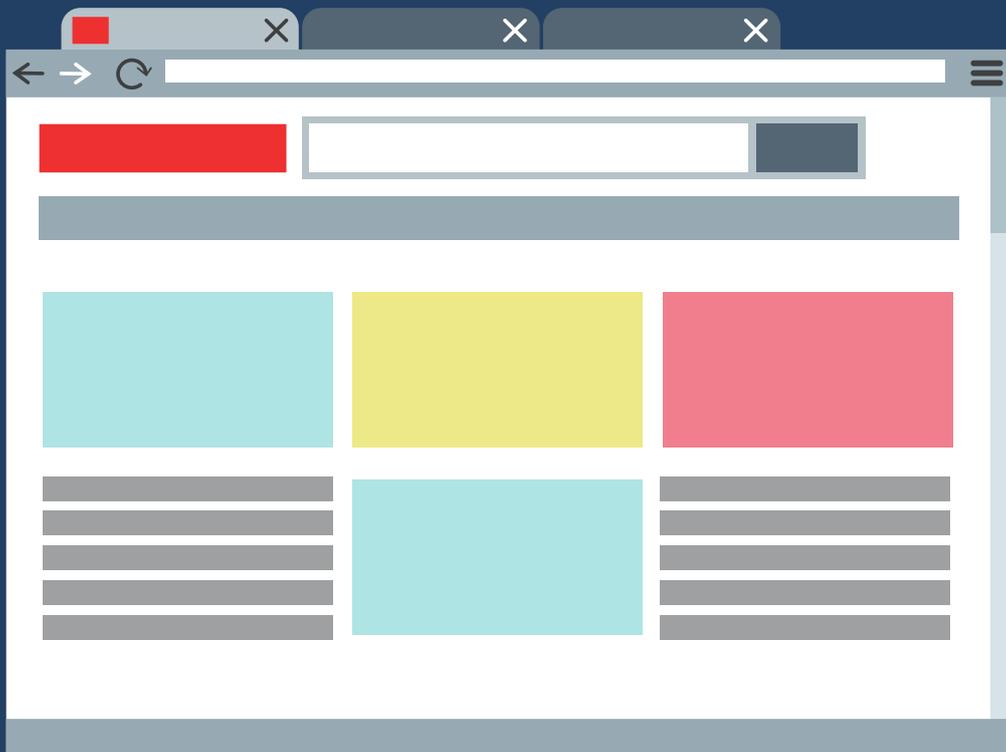
Why is it important to evaluate your website in each phase

Purpose

5 W's 1H a simple methodology that you could use in order to make sure that you are spending your money to obtain the optimum return. Given below are the abbreviations and

Who (Audience)   : Your audience who will visit the website
What (Product/Service): What you could offer for the visitors
When (Time to market): When should you launch your website
Where (Platform)   : Hosting or Development Technology
Why   : Justify the degree of functionality

Design

After you complete the above step and move on to designing your website, It is important to iteratively evaluate your design and refer to the purpose of the website in order to make sure that you achieve the exact outcome that you have planned. You can always alter the above purpose as long as it brings in either tangible or intangible value towards you business. Make sure to evaluate your design before you move to development

Pro Tip

Your web designer should usually allow you to change the design 1-2 times during the process without any surcharge. However, know that your changes need to contribute to making the design align with the purpose.

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Development

The development process can be broken down to several iterations as well. This can be according to the number of pages or the functionality. Your developer will be able to rationalise one of the above options, where you could review the development and measure the quality of the work. The following process may help you save valuable time and conduct adjustments more effectively and efficiently. Both you and developer will not be needing to rush through multiple changes closer to your launch.

Testing

Testing is one pf the most important aspects of website lifecycle. tThere are two main types of testing that you could conduct.

1. Developer Testing/QA Testing
   Your developer will check whether all technical functions perform according to the industry best practices.
2. User Testing
   User testing will help you identify whether the visitors to your site can easily identify and complete website functionality. This may allow you to root-out any behaviour that could confuse or mislead a user.

Pro Tip

You could conduct user testing during the design phase, provided that your designer use a tool that allows prototyping.

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Top 3 things to look out for when you benchmark your website

Time

Make sure to create a timeline for all the above mentioned stages of your website. This will help track the efficiency during each stage. This will allow you to launch your website according to the proposed timeline. This step may be critical since your website launch is usually paired with an event to signify its launch, therefore having the attention of multiple stakeholders who expect to see fruitful results within a timeline.

SEO

Search Engine Optimisation key aspect of successful Digital marketing. Therefore, it is important know that your developer has basic knowledge on it. A simple google search will let you know the basics that will help you question your developer. You may also notice that there are hundreds of links as results when you search on your preferred web browser, where you may only browse through the first few page results. SEO is the method in which you improve your online visibility, driving your page towards ranking within the first few pages of your browser search results.

Project Management

A lot of small organisations might not a dedicated Project Manager for your website. This does not mean that you cant govern the development of your website. Daily or weekly followups through a phone call are a great way to track the progress of your project. You can use the above evaluation process and create a checklist, where you could keep track on how much effort in time is spent on a daily basis to complete the above 3 stages of development.

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Top 4 questions you need to ask your Web Developer

1. Will you design a custom website template?

Make sure that your developer will not be using a readily available template for a marginal cost of your expenditure.

2. What CMS will you be using?

Wordpress and Joomla are two of the main Content Management Systems (CMS) that is being used by developers. This will help you make sure that your content is managed well, so that any developer will be able to edit content with ease. Note that custom CMSs will result in you needing to re-develop your website if you switch your website maintenance from one developer to another.

3. What will be the Technologies that you would use?

Developers use several technologies in order to make sure that your website will look and operate according to your expectations. Your top picks for a stack of technologies would be HTML 5, PHP, MySQL and CSS3, where each component is crucial in building a well structured website.

4. Which design tools are you familiar with?

Web developers usually use tools such as Adobe Illustrator to design your custom websites. Latest tools such Adobe XD and Sketch allows the developer to save valuable time due to their ease of use. They also allow you to use prototyping so that your design can mimic some of the

Evaluating your website performance

How will you know whether your website is performing?

1. User feedback

You could verify whether the user experience offered through your website is up to standard. You may want to reassess your website if they struggle to navigate through the website and complete their objective.

2. Alexa website statistics

Alexa statistics will help you evaluate the traffic, bounce rate and keyword ranking, which will help you identify the performance of your website compared to your competition.

Ways of improving your website performance

Design

Your website design may not be user friendly as you thought to be. If the feedback of the visitors point this out through your Click Through Rate or Bounce Rate, you should do minor adjustments to your Call to Action button placement, Colours and font size used to evaluate a change in performance.

Content

Your on-site content should be unique and moulded towards highlighting your Unique Selling Point. It should also be highly relevant to your product or service offerings. This will help you SEO process and make sure quality traffic is brought into the site that will drive inquiries.

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