



THE MEETINGS COACH »

AN INSIDE GUIDE TO WEB REDESIGN

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Q: Our current website is no longer meeting the needs of our internal and external audiences. I'm in the market for a web redesign, but I don't know where to begin. Do have you any pointers?

A: Whether the site is narrowly focused on a signature event or more broadly focused on your overall organization, there are a number of steps you can take to build a successful and buzz-worthy website. Having recently undergone a significant web redesign, here are seven of my key lessons learned.

CAREFULLY CHOOSE A PARTNER. Serious websites require serious expertise. If this expertise truly resides within your current team—bonus. If not, carefully select a partner you trust who is capable of delivering your vision. Peruse websites they've designed within the last two years to quickly narrow the field.

IDENTIFY YOUR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY GOALS. Whether it's increased awareness, reputation or revenue, it's important to articulate your top two goals. Then ensure all future design and development decisions align with these established goals.

CONSIDER YOUR MUST-HAVE ASSETS. Scan competitor websites—and those you envy outside of your industry—to determine your complete asset wish list. This may include professional photography, a promotional video and/or regularly updated content.

REALISTICALLY DETERMINE YOUR INVOLVEMENT. Writing or securing some of the content and images for the new site will likely cut down on costs, but it's important to realistically determine what you and your team will have the time, energy and resources to achieve. Likewise, if you will

be photographed or videotaped, be sure to account for this time commitment up front.

ESTABLISH A BUDGET AND TIMELINE. Price points for websites can vary greatly depending on your identified outcomes and deliverables. Determine early on how much you have to spend and a reasonable timeline for launch—then build in a buffer for each. Regularly check in with all key stakeholders to ensure the project remains on time and within budget.

DON'T UNDERESTIMATE REVIEW TIME. Whether it's simply to comment on the wireframe or to provide more in-depth testing of key features, don't underestimate the review time needed during the design, development and launch phases.

PLAN A TWO-STEP LAUNCH. Plan a smaller beta launch where team members and other champions can review, test and provide feedback on the new site. Then follow up with an official launch. Consider and leverage all available communication channels (e.g., social media, email, print) along with a special offer (e.g., registration discount, highly anticipated whitepaper) to attract attention.



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Email your questions to Coach Aaron at aaron@eventgarde.com; please write "Meetings Mag" in the subject line.