

Brief Answers to Big Questions: Do I Need a New Website?

By OC Creative

You loved the shiny look of your website when it first launched. Of course, that was ten years ago. Have you taken an honest inventory of that site that was once shiny and new? It might still work for you, but is it working for your customers? Come with us as we walk you through an assessment of your site, giving you things to consider and ways you might be able to update it to better serve both you and your clients for years to come.

Is your website weird on mobile? This is one of the bigger issues you might run into. If people can't usefully view your website on their smart devices, that's at least half your audience who won't even bother to look at it. If you decide to refresh your site and the design doesn't come with a mobile-friendly build, you're asking the wrong people to build your website. This one is a surefire indication that you need a new website as soon as possible.

Is anyone excluded from accessing your content? If you don't provide alternative text for photos, if you don't make all graphically represented information available in plain text, and if you don't provide tools to help everyone be able to get your website's content in a way that works for them, you're doing yourself and your clients a disservice. Screen readers for the visually impaired need to be able to find all the information on a page to relay it to visitors. Videos need captions for those who cannot hear or aren't in a place to listen. Sometimes even being able to upsize text for those who may want an easier read can make people feel valued. Make sure everyone has equal access.

Is your website loading at tortoise speed? While the fable has the slow and steady tortoise winning the race, that won't be the case if it's your website loping along. To put it plainly, people won't stick around to wait for your site to load. It could be the best thing ever designed, but if it takes forever to load, they're not going to see it at all. Resizing photos, optimizing things that slow your performance, and simplifying overcrowded and dated designs could help bring you from shelled slowpoke to rapid rabbit.

Are search engines missing you? What's the point of having a website if no one knows you're out there. That's where search engine optimization (SEO) comes in. We'll put it this way: there are things that make you less visible to search engines, and thus less visible to people trying to find you on the web. No one's going to see you four pages into a Google search. Modernizing your site, following the rules for what Google likes, and making sure you have focused keywords and searchables will help.

Is your content outdated? We see websites every day that lack current, updated, and correct content. Is your events page still listing things from 2017? Are your listed board members and employees people not even you've heard of? That probably means more areas of your website are out of date. While this might not mean you need a whole new website, it's good to refresh your web content every few years.

Are you leaning on trends that are long over? While a style upgrade and modernized language may not make your site unusable, it can contribute to a need for a new digital home.

Did you answer yes to any of the bigger questions? Several of them? If you feel like you're too close to your website to evaluate it yourself, we're ready to help. Maybe all you need is some new photos, a video, or some refreshed and updated copy. That's fine too! But consider a change for the more accessible, the faster, the more searchable. Consider a change for the better.