

# 5 Steps to a Successful Website Redesign

BRIDGELINE WHITEPAPER SERIES





# Introduction

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So, your company is thinking about redesigning its website? That's great, mainly because no matter how big or small your company is – whether you're a household name or a mom & pop shop – your website is becoming increasingly important to organizational success. And as the cliché goes, first impressions are indeed everything.

## How useful and insightful can web design be to your marketing initiatives?

Your website's performance doesn't just engender organizational ripples; it can cause an organizational tidal wave that heavily influences – and changes – future business decisions. According to MarketingSherpa, **70% of marketers** say they are using website optimization lessons to inform offline campaigns and other marketing communications. Your website's design plays a massive role into this performance.

It's important your website design stays fresh, but while real life fashion changes day to day – web design is akin to dog years, meaning no one expects you to redesign your site every year, but it shouldn't be archaic either. This whitepaper outlines the **5 Steps to a Successful Website Redesign**.



**Important:** Tips & language discussed in this guide may seem obvious, but as you'll find out, each of steps play into one another, like a flow chart. Thus, yes, these are “steps” – as in you don't get to skip one without completing the preceding section.



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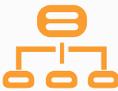
## Introduction



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## About Bridgeline's iAPPS Product Platform

# 1. Goals & Objectives

Have you ever been in a relationship where your significant other just doesn't know what they want? Just us? OK. Awkward. Well, surely you've been stuck at a restaurant, waiting for a friend, who, even after what feels like an interminable amount of time, "Just can't decide what they want"?

"What are you in the mood for?" you passively aggressively ask. "I'm not sure; the menu just looks sooooo good!" your friend responds.

This could go on and on (and on). The point of the story is that you won't get anywhere without knowing **What Good Looks Like**. We all aspire to be "customer first" organizations – and that's great, but web design has to start with being a selfish endeavor, a one way street.

**Ask yourself:** *Are you trying to convert a visitor via a form? Trying to get them to buy something from your web store? Sign up for a newsletter? Building brand awareness?*

Typically, organizations have a particular **Call to Action** that they want to steer visitors toward, which determines success (or failure), but ultimately, **Return on Digital Investment (RODI)** cannot be pigeonholed into this whitepaper. One universal truth is that it's important to establish your goals before you can even begin to work with a design team. Your goals will inherently play a role in determining how the project will ensue.

Once you determine what these goals are, perhaps you need to ask an even bigger question: *Are you even in the right "restaurant?"* What we're getting at is determining whether you have the right **Content Management System (CMS)** powering your website & its design.

**SUSAN, I JUST CAN'T MAKE UP MY MIND ON WHAT CMS TO GO WITH.**



A Content Management System (CMS) is a web platform that allows users to centralize data editing, publishing and modification on a single back-end interface. On an enterprise level, the software's primary goal is to enable nontechnical business users to seamlessly manage how content appears on a company's website. Going one step further, the core functionality of an enterprise-level CMS helps users optimize the way their business is able to interact with customers in an increasingly online world; leveraging the most important digital channel, their website, to do so.

## 2. Developing A User Centered Design

You're good with what YOU are trying to accomplish? Alright, alright – now we're getting somewhere! Once those goals are determined, you need to clearly relay each to the web design team you're working with so they can wireframe out a **User Center Design (UCD)**.

A what????

A **UCD**, as defined by <http://usability.gov>, results in a “**User Experience (UX)** focuses on having a deep understanding of users, what they need, what they value, their abilities, and also their limitations. It also takes into account the business goals and objectives of the group managing the project. UX best practices promote improving the quality of the user's interaction with and perceptions of your product and any related services.”

Your user in this case is a site visitor, who hopefully is a prospective or current customer. In order to create a design that finds that intersection where your goals align with your customers, the web design team should conduct stakeholder interviews as well as provide multiple wire frames compositions, outlining how your website will render depending on what device (desktop, tablet, smart phone) a visitor is using. After all, goals are often dependent on context; someone accessing your website on a mobile device is likely looking for different information than someone who is viewing the site on a desktop.

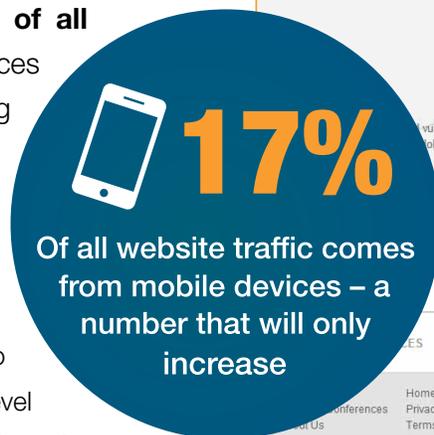
Plus, Statista reported more than **17% of all web traffic** comes from mobile devices – a number that will only increase going forward.

Your best bet here? Implementing **Responsive Design** in your new redesign. Responsive Design is a methodology that automatically triggers content to adjust to device based on screen size. A few high-level key benefits of Responsive Design include its **Search Engine Optimization** advantages (Google recommends

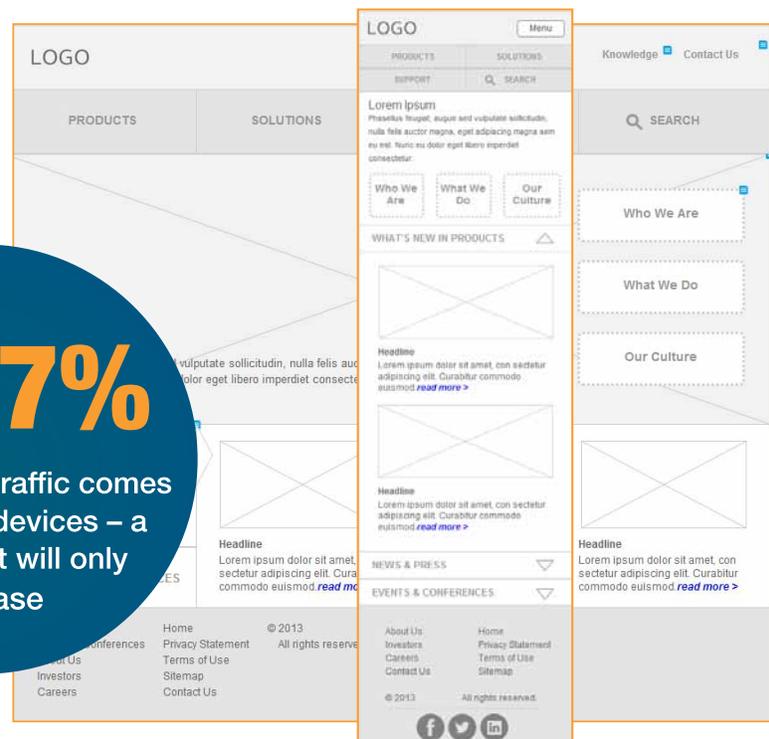
Responsive Design); a consistent User Experience; and the security of having future-proofed your website to new devices.

Back to usability: The consequences of poor usability range from disastrous to detrimental. According to Forrester Research, Inc. **75% of customers** who cannot complete their goals on a company website end up escalating their question to a higher cost support channels such as phone, email, or chat. And the other 25%?

16% give up or find other solutions, and the remaining 9% end up going directly to your competition. And, astoundingly, **only 55% of companies are currently conducting any online user experience testing, per Econsultancy.**



**17%**  
Of all website traffic comes from mobile devices – a number that will only increase



## 3. Establishing Your Content Hierarchy

**Usability.Gov** defines **Information architecture (IA)** as the on “organizing, structuring, and labeling content in an effective and sustainable way. The goal is to help users find information and complete tasks. To do this, you need to understand how the pieces fit together to create the larger picture, how items relate to each other within the system.”

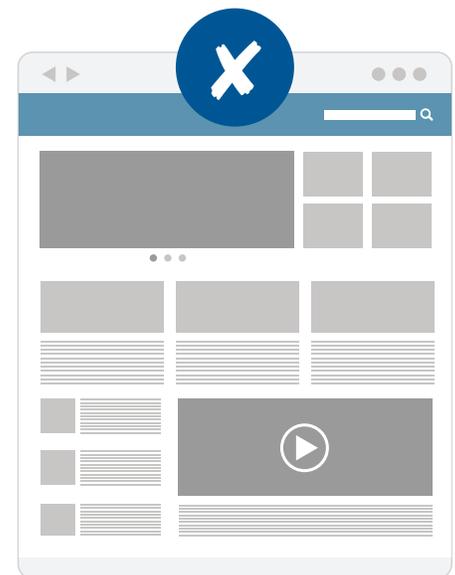
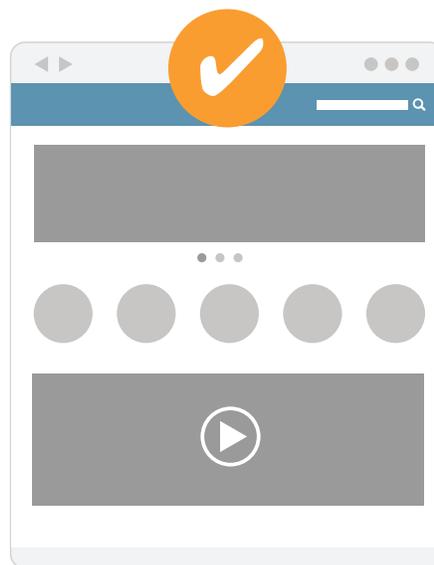
For our intents & purposes, once your UCD is developed, you need to determine how to optimize your messaging within that framework to provoke desired visitor outcomes (again, typically geared toward converting through a Call To Action). As web design evolves, trends are steering toward a minimalist approach. Visitors crave speed, convenience, & clarity. So while the digital age has made your organizational more accessible than ever, it has also made your website’s “elevator pitch” that much more important. To maximize successful outcomes, your content should contain concise messaging that supports – rather than undermines – whatever action you want visitors to take.



The web seems to be becoming a lot less text-heavy, and some apps and websites have almost no visible text, instead relying on images and icons to convey information to the user.

– **Chris Lake**, Director of Content at Econsultancy

*“18 Pivotal Web Design Trends for 2014”*

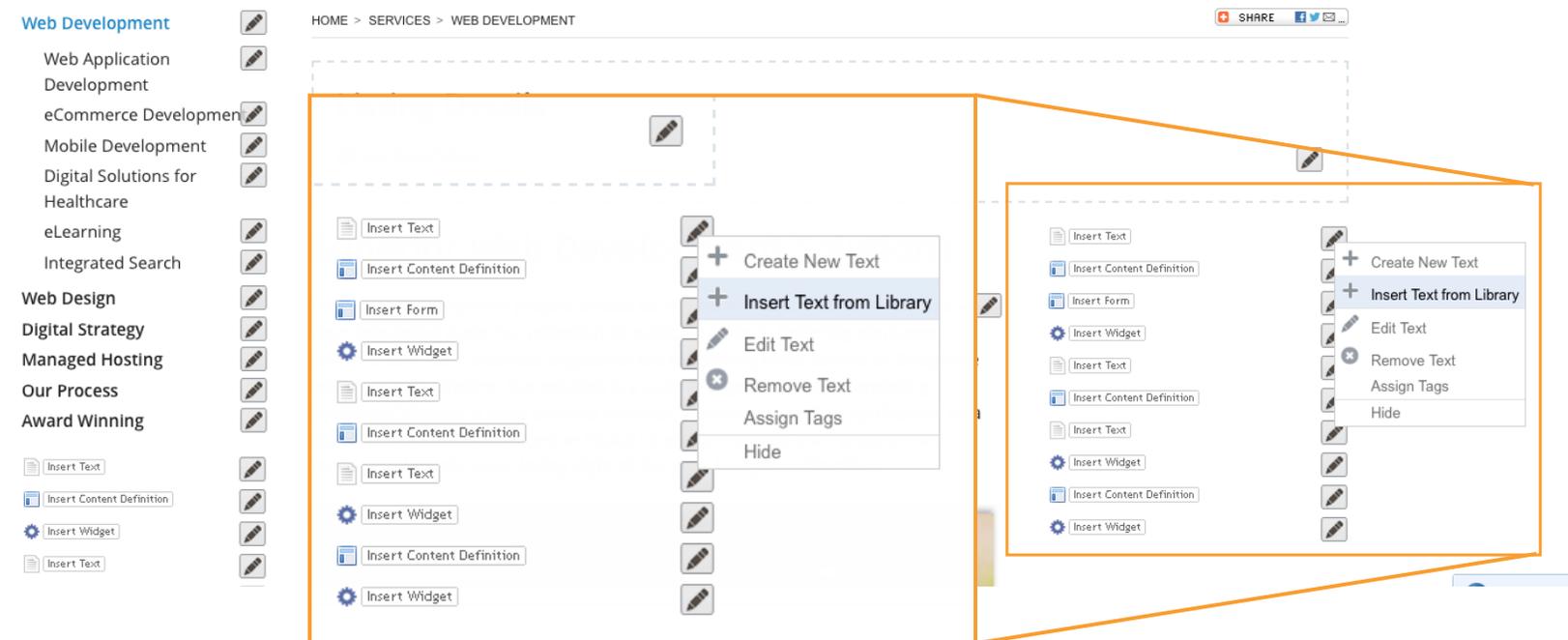
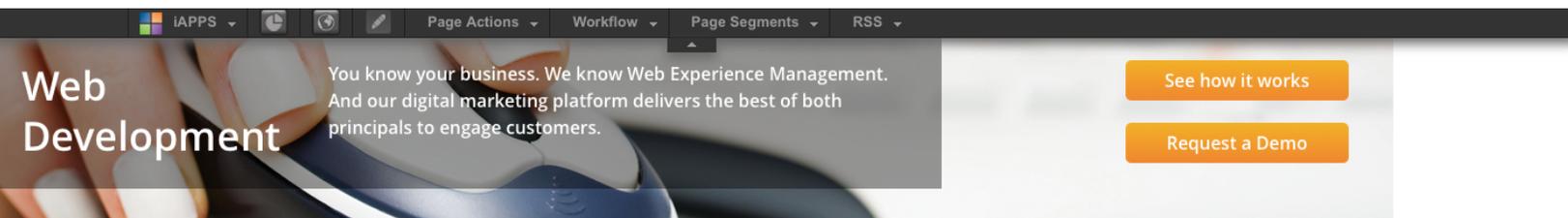


## 4. Ensuring Layout Versatility & Adaptability

Depending on where you look, most studies find that **companies redesign their website every 2-3 years**. There's a difference between a full overhaul of a web design & necessary tweaks to keep things fresh. The former involves implementing an entirely new Content Management System; meanwhile, the latter, obviously, is much cheaper in the long run and thus you should make sure your web design has an element of adaptability to it.

In other words, you want to be able to change a lot, with minimal effort.

Examples? Maybe it's altering the way imagery renders – perhaps, something as simple as adding an fade-in effect – or re-organizing the site template to push your Call To Action to a different spot. The point is to create an environment that allows for versatility.

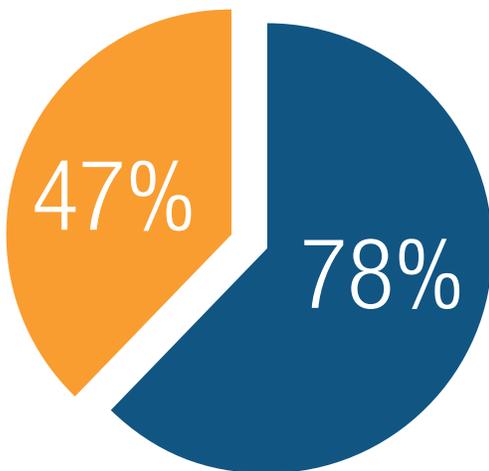


## 5. Creating a Post-Launch Strategy

Piggybacking off that last step, having a strategy that takes advantage of your allotted versatility is important. MarketingSherpa reported that **78% of marketers** say that while broader marketing campaigns were at least somewhat driven by website optimization results, only **47% of marketers indicated that their web design actually changed as a result of optimization lessons.**

The lesson? Relaunching your website will always provide knowledge about your business (e.g. what's working, what's not & how can you improve results). However, you need to leverage a Content Management System that not only allows for change, but is backed by a team that can take the analytics gained from your redesign &

help you take advantage of it by combining it with the rest of your digital marketing strategy (e.g. Search Engine Optimization, Email Marketing, Social Media).



- Marketers say their website optimization lessons actually changed results.
- Marketers say their website optimization results drive broader marketing campaigns.

# About Bridgeline Digital's integrated iAPPS Platform

## What Does Award-Winning Web Design Look Like?

The biggest brands in the world rely on Bridgeline Digital to develop websites that spark customer engagement.

From conducting a discovery process that combines expertise in design and digital strategy to create a website that meets your needs in order to help your organization grow, all the way to post-launch optimization ... We're with you every step of the way.

The best part? We build these dynamic websites on our all-encompassing iAPPS Digital Marketing platform, recently named "Champion" in Info-Tech Research Group's Web Content Management landscape report. In the report, analysts touted iAPPS' ability to equip enterprise businesses with easy-to-use tools that optimize digital assets and capitalize on growing trends in Digital Engagement.



## Award Winning iAPPS Product Platform



**iAPPS**<sup>®</sup>  
content  
manager



**iAPPS**<sup>®</sup>  
marketier



**iAPPS**<sup>®</sup>  
commerce



**iAPPS**<sup>®</sup>  
social



**iAPPS**<sup>®</sup>  
analyzer

**iAPPS Content Manager** is a part of Bridgeline's **iAPPS<sup>®</sup> platform**, a Digital Marketing solution that deeply integrates **Web Content Management, eCommerce, eMarketing, Social Media management**, and Web Analytics to help marketers deliver online experiences that attract, engage and convert their customers across all digital channels. Bridgeline provides end-to-end Digital Engagement solutions and boasts an award-winning team of interactive services professionals across our 11 offices worldwide.



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