

# Why Re-Design?

By Craig Kistler

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Small Farm Design <http://www.smallfarmdesign.com/whyRedesign.html>

My site is working fine. The links work. Content is added regularly. We have new features. Why does my company need a re-design?

Those are all great things. Sites should be updated regularly, have new features added, and by far have working links. However, as the site grows it soon outgrows its foundation. Leading to an unorganized use of content, poor usability, and eventually chaos. A re-design is a perfect opportunity to take an inventory and put things back on track. It will also allow for a better user experience.

## New Foundation

With any re-design it is a great time to do a little rethinking. Looking at the current site a question needs to be asked. What is it that people want when coming to my site? By understanding what it is people are looking for from your site you will be able to better position that information within the architecture of the entire site.

## Judging by the Cover

The old adage "Never judge a book by its cover" doesn't apply to your website. Users to your site make quick and often harsh judgment calls within seconds of viewing your homepage. By making outstanding first impression with a crisp, clean, professional look the user gets a sense of trust from the company behind the site.

## Follow the Leader

Your site could have the exact information a specific user is looking for. However, if it takes too long for them to locate it chances are they will go somewhere else to find the information. By making your site as user friendly as possible you will be able to guide the user to specific areas of content. Bringing content that is hidden under multiple clicks to the forefront makes it easy for a user to locate. As well as, leads the user to other areas of your site that they might not have known about.

## New Experience

New features can dramatically improve the user experience. Online calendars that allow a user to register for events are a perfect example of how a simple feature increases the value of a site. No longer does the user have to call or mail in an RSVP card. As such, the company doesn't need a person to answer the phone for every registration.

## Cheapest Employee

Your website could be your cheapest employee. It has already been mentioned that your site could

make your day-to-day tasks a think of the past. By adding features to your site that help educate your user base, ehnhance marketing efforts, as well as, develope a sense of who your users are you are in reality making your site work harder for you. The simple fact is that you have a site. Why not make it work harder and do more for you and your company? An offshoot of adding features like this is that your users have more interaction with your site and your company.

#### Your Future Customers

The whole goal of a re-design is to create a better experience for your users. There are many approaches to attain such a goal. Maybe it is a new look, a revised navigation scheme, or a complete overhaul. Whatever the outcome, your site should reflect the company behind the site and insure a sense of trust with you future customers.

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