

AN INTRODUCTION TO

***GROWTH
DRIVEN
DESIGN***



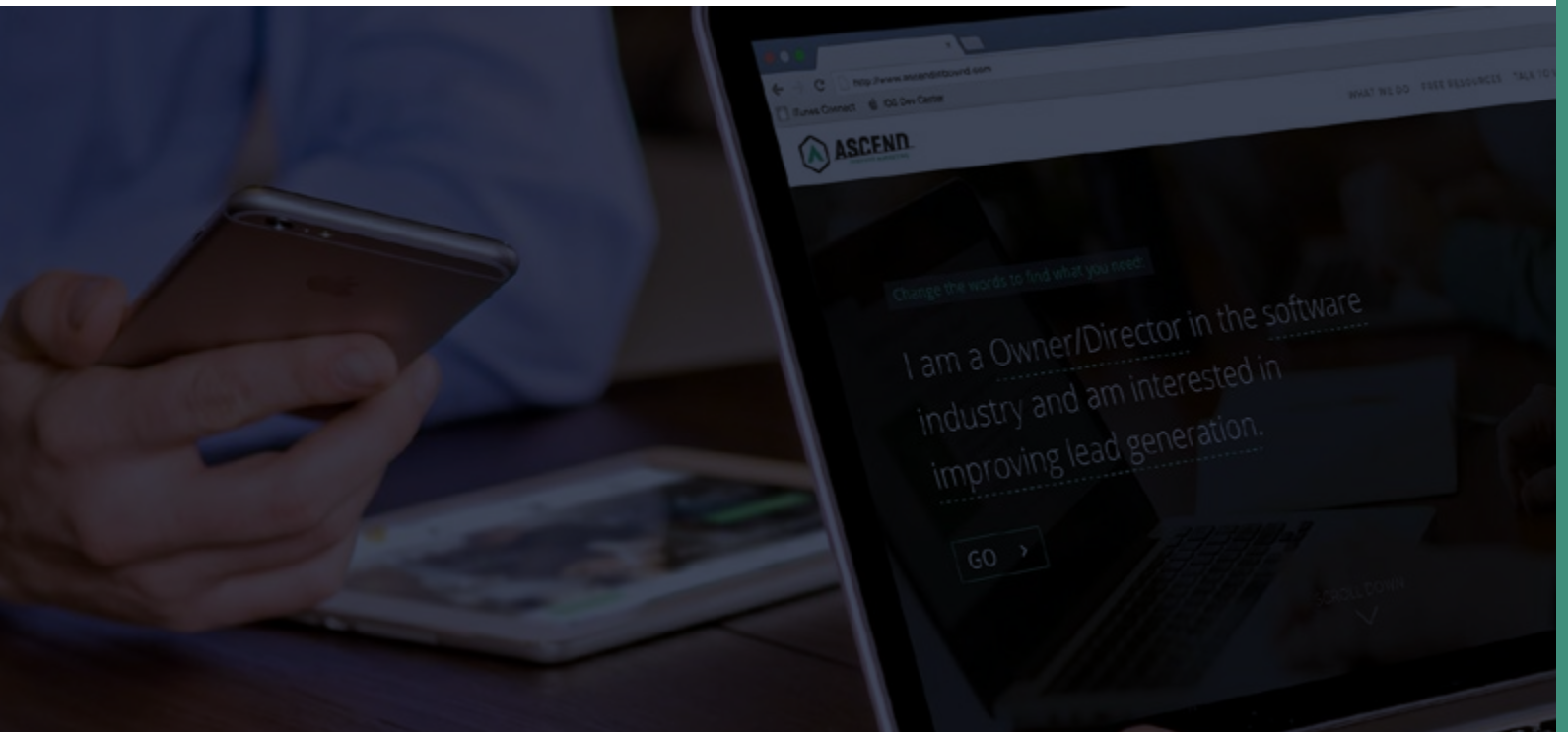
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Traditional Web Design is Broken	4
The Changing Tide	6
Three Pillars of Growth-Driven Design	7
The Growth Driven Design Process	9
Conclusion	13

INTRODUCTION

You're wasting time and money on your website and you don't even know it.

Over the past 6 years, the team at Ascend has launched over 100 websites-- from single page landing pages to full-blown commercial eCommerce builds, we did it all. We ate, slept and breathed web design-- we honed our skill sets and were good at what we did. Or so we thought. Until about a year ago when we realized we were doing it all wrong and that everything we knew about the traditional web design process was flawed.



For decades now, the website design process has been riddled with systemic risk that costs you valuable time, money, resources and opportunity.

Just wait-- we'll explain.

What we came to realize is that there is a much better way of approaching web design that offers significant potential for your business.

Hopefully, within this book you'll discover the benefits of a smarter approach to website design that can help you produce better results, convert more leads, and grow your business.

Trust us. it's worth the read.

TRADITIONAL WEB DESIGN IS BROKEN

Your website should be the central hub of your marketing efforts. The first place people go to find out information on your products or services. It should exist to be your best salesperson. Did you know that a potential customer has already been through 70% of the sales process before they actually reach out to speak to your sales department? And yep- the information that gets them that far through the sales funnel comes from your website.

Sadly, the way we approach building websites is broken.

Do you remember the last time you went through a website redesign? If you say, “no” simply because you have blocked the horrible experience from your memory, we won’t blame you. The process of designing a website is tedious and complex. It is time-consuming and expensive, but it’s also a necessary evil.

Traditional Web Design:

Large Up-Front Cost

The average small to medium sized business (SMB) custom web design costs between \$10-\$50K. The full payment is typically split into half up front and half before the official site launch.

Significant Time Commitment

Typical website design time is between 3 to 6 months and requires a great deal of time, resources and energy from your team.

Lack of Proof

Traditional website design process involves ‘guessing’ and launching a website that should work, in theory. It doesn’t leave much space for post-launch improvements and no real room for ‘trial and error’ with users.

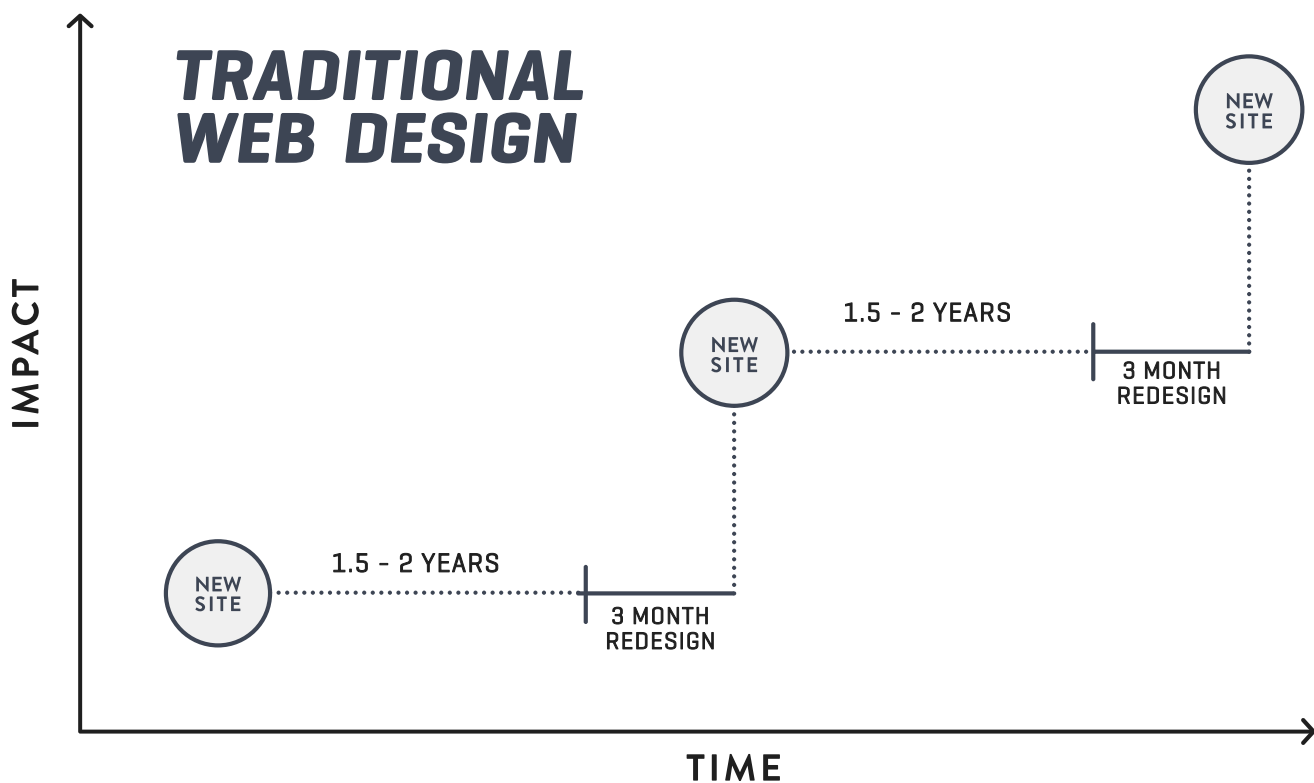
Over Budget, Out of Scope

Projects of any real size can get out of hand quickly. Scope creep happens on both sides of the line and can cause for real headaches.

After a website launches, it has no major updates for 2-3 years.

What this means is that your company's biggest sales asset and marketing tool, your website, sits stagnant for years. Some minor updates and small changes may happen, along with adding blog posts, calendar events, or even new landing pages, but the great majority of the site stays exactly the same.

Sound familiar? You're not alone. Most SMB websites fall into this costly rut.



So now the question remains, how can we make this process better?

In a perfect world, a website would be constantly changing; improving regularly based on data and analytics. It should be agile and flexible, and be able to adapt to the shifting trends in buying habits of your customers.

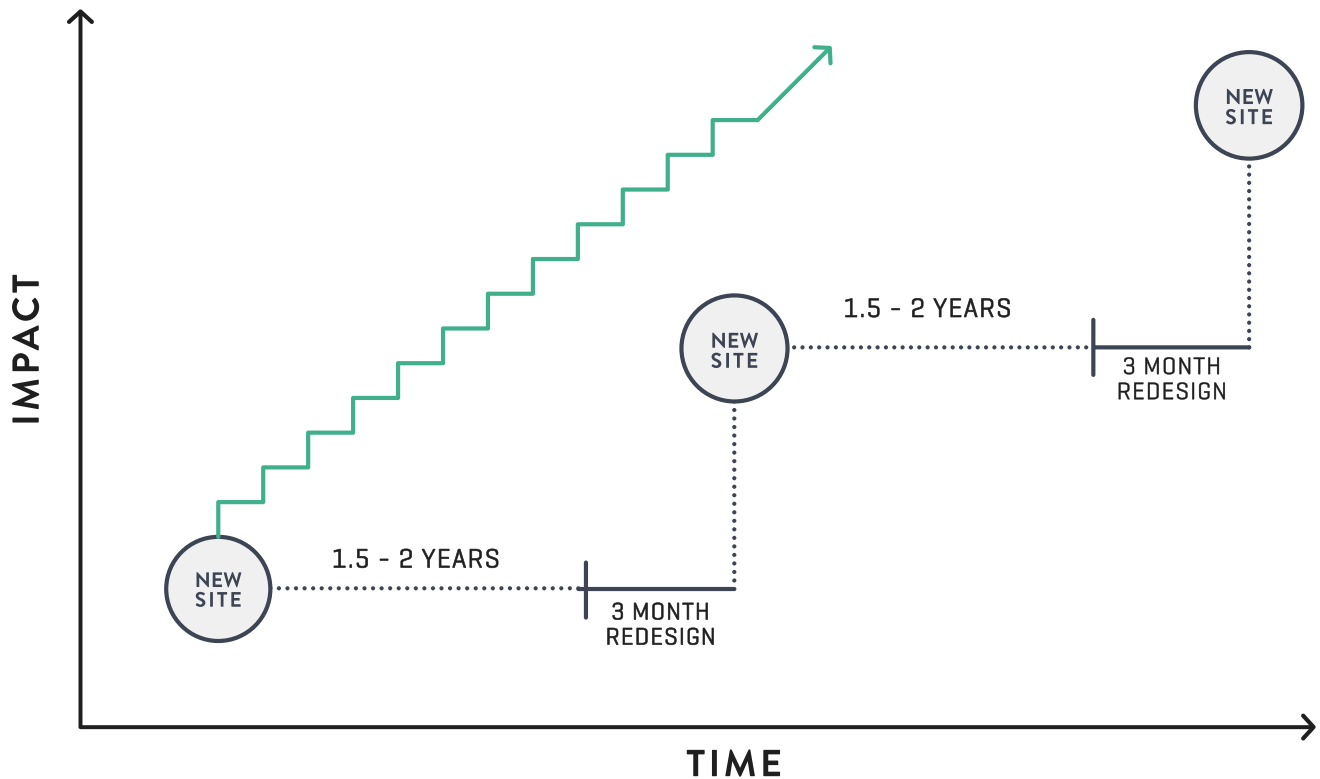
Enter, **Growth-Driven Design**.

THE CHANGING TIDE

The Smarter Approach to Web Design

Growth-Driven Design completely changes (for the better) our approach and methodology about creating, maintaining and growing a website.

TRADITIONAL WEB DESIGN VS. **GROWTH DRIVEN DESIGN**



By continuously learning and improving your website, you're able to quickly adapt and augment your site so it fits the most pressing needs of your customers.

The 3 Pillars of Growth Driven Design



Minimize the Risk of Website Redesigns

We work to avoid the risks of traditional web design by taking a systematic approach to shorten the time to launch, focusing on real impact and continuous learning and improvement.



Continuously Learn & Improve

We are constantly researching, testing and learning about our visitors to inform ongoing website improvements. Through continuous improvements we can reach peak performance.



GDD Learning Informs Marketing & Sales

GDD is tightly integrated with marketing & sales. What we learn about visitors helps inform and improve marketing and sales strategies & tactics (and vice versa).



“Growth-Driven Design has completely transformed the website design process for our agency. GDD sites consistently achieve more traffic, better conversions, and more qualified leads than traditional sites.

Steven Carter

Creative Director,
Ascend Inbound Marketing

GROWTH-DRIVEN DESIGN PROCESS

The Growth-Driven Design process is broken up into three main phases:

PHASE 1: STRATEGY

Defining the path

The first step of the website design process is to develop a strategy. You will meet with our strategy team to understand your company's objectives and goals, clearly define the scope of your project, and work together to determine the best route to accomplish these objectives.

Goals:

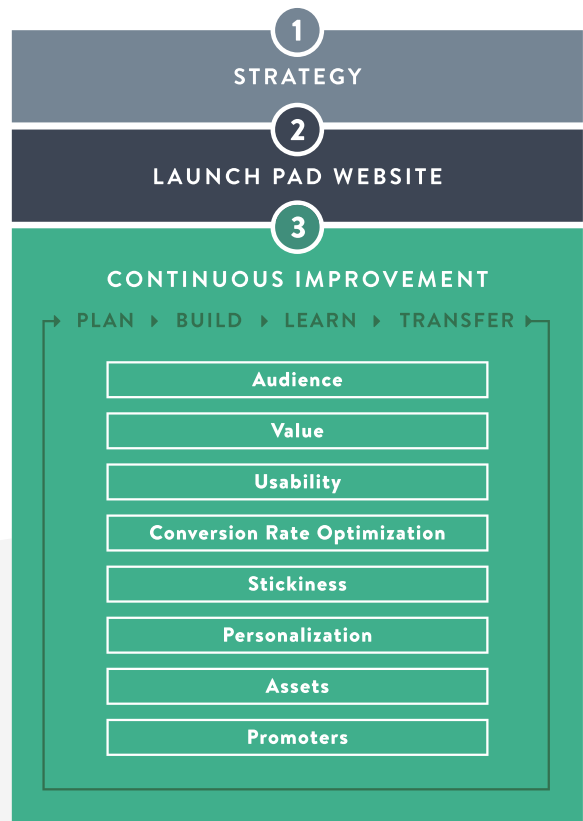
What specific performance goals are you hoping to achieve with your new website? How has your website historically performed, what areas need the most improvement, and how will this impact the overall marketing goals of your organization?

Personas:

Developing buyer personas helps identify and sort the different types of customers that are visiting your website.

A persona is a semi-fictional representation of your ideal customer based on market research and real data about your existing customers. When creating personas, consider including customer demographics, behavior patterns, motivations, and goals. The more detailed you are, the better.

Personas provide tremendous structure and insight for your company. A detailed buyer persona will help you determine where to focus your time, guide product development, and allow for alignment across the organization. As a result, you will be able to attract the most valuable visitors, leads, and customers to your business. (Source: <https://blog.hubspot.com/>)



PHASE 1: STRATEGY (cont.)

Quantitative Research:

Time to start mining data. And yep, all of the data-- the good, the bad and the ugly. You'll analyze your current website's analytics (site traffic, heat maps, click-through rates, etc). As you work through these things, you'll start to see where the website needs to improve.

Qualitative Research:

By sending out surveys and questionnaires to your current customers, you'll gain valuable insights into who they are and what they want. As you do this, match it up against the assumptions you made in your persona profiles and augment them as needed.

Site-wide and Individual Page Strategy:

Spend time developing both a 'global' or site-wide strategy and an individual page strategy for your website that includes all of the previously mentioned steps. You'll want to plan out a detailed guide of the best ways to engage and influence your potential new customers to achieve your goals.

PHASE 2: LAUNCH PAD WEBSITE

Acclimating to the elements

Traditionally in web design, sites are launched after they are 100% complete. In the Growth-Driven Design model, you push them out right away.

The launch pad site will incorporate all of the data gathered from Phase 1 of the GDD process. There's no such thing as a 'perfect' website launch on the first attempt-- it is actually intentional that is a fast launch and the purpose is to not get too overly caught up on analysis, content and features. The goal is to get a bare-bones site out there that can track user data, attract customers and still do a decent job at converting leads.

PHASE 3: CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Plan. Build. Learn. Transfer. Repeat.

Throughout the Continuous Improvement Stage, we will be doing exactly that— constantly sorting data and analytics to improve your website. We'll use an arsenal of tools such as heatmaps, persona research and development, user testing, and information architecture to customize your site so that it allows the greatest potential for quality user experience, lead generation and conversions.

The entire cycle revolves around the concept of *plan, build, transfer, learn, repeat*.



Step 1 - Plan

In the first step, you'll determine the most impactful items of the current time period. Plan on implementing the ones at the top of the list into the current cycle.

Performance vs Goals:

Review the most current data on your website performance and compare and contrast that to the goals you've set up (in previous phase).

Learning from Sales:

Be sure to communicate with the sales team to better delve into details of personas and techniques.

Step 2 - Build

The second step is implementation. Organize your team and start completing the line items developed during the Planning Step.

It's important to keep track of the changes and measure performance increases and decreases against previous versions. A good idea to help gain insight on the new changes is to run parallel social and email campaigns to drive traffic to your website.

Step 3 - Learn

Step 3 is all about taking the time to review and comprehend the data collected about your website visitors.

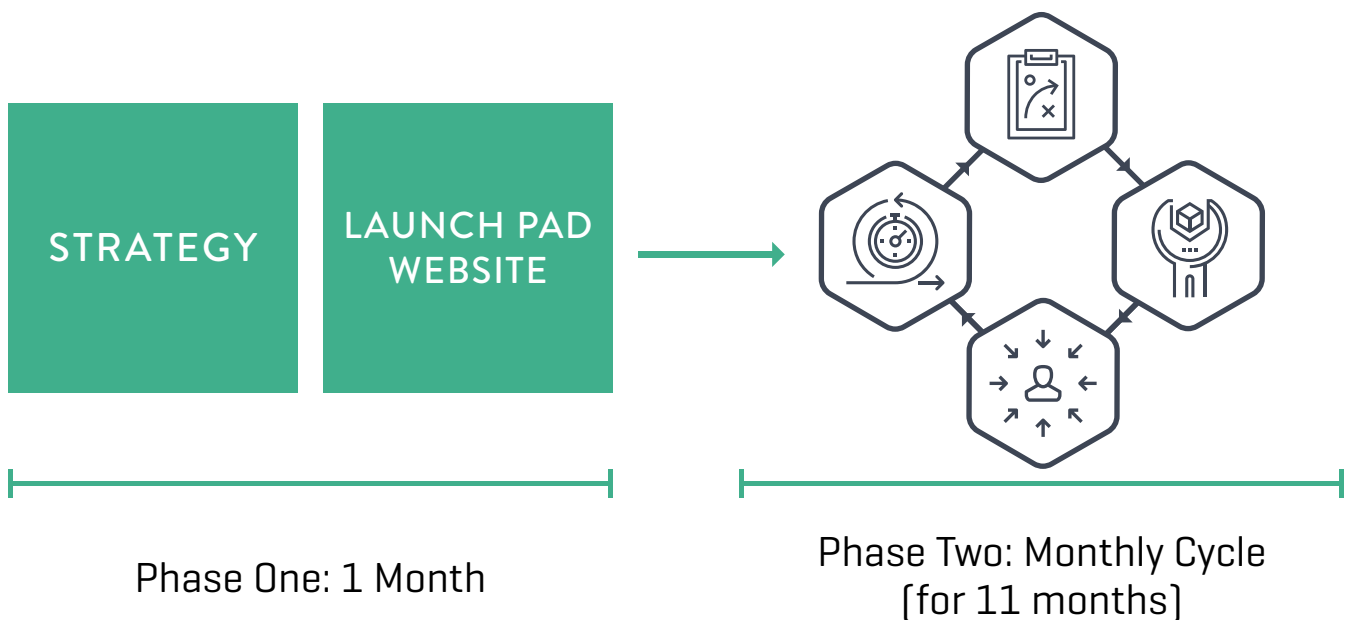
Based on the information you collected, did your changes impact as you anticipated? Why or why not? What did this teach you about your visitors?

Step 4 - Transfer

The final step in the process is to compile all the knowledge you've acquired and push it out to other parts of your business.

Gather your entire team and inform them of your findings and recommendations. Work with them to find ways to implement these ideas into achievable actions plans within their departments.

Now [yep, you guessed it], Repeat.



CONCLUSION

Growth-Driven Design is still a fairly new concept for most businesses. Based on the results that companies already incorporating the GDD methodology are experiencing, it's a no-brainer.

It's time to rethink website design-- both the way it's approached for your current site, as well as for future re-designs.

	RISKS		RESULTS	
TRADITIONAL WEB DESIGN	Upfront Costs <small>(out of scope, over budget, late)</small>	Resources & Time	Based on Assumptions	Static for 2 Years
GROWTH-DRIVEN DESIGN	Spread Over Time <small>(agile, one time & on budget)</small>	Launch Quick & Improve	Data Based Decisions	Continuous Improvement

Ready to Learn More?

Visit us at ascendinbound.com or email us at climb@ascendinbound.com to learn more and schedule a free consultation with our team and learn how Growth-Driven Design can drastically improve your online presence.