Website Refresh:
Strategic Assessment Questions

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Your Website's Lifespan is just *1½ - 2½ Years*

While not set in stone, this is a good metric to keep in mind.

When you start to close in on the 18 month mark *after* the launch of your website, it's time to initiate a website assessment.

Here are some of the strategic questions to ask yourself (and your marketing team!) when this day comes.

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Is Your Website Aligned with Corporate Goals?

Your business likely follows a strategic plan, with short- and long-term goals.

Strategic plans cover a lot of ground, much of which greatly influences a marketing program:

- New lines of business to create
- New products & services to offer
- New industries to serve
- New markets into which to expand

Step 1 of a website assessment is to review your corporate goals to ensure they're reflected on your website.

For example, when targeting a new market, you should add custom content to your site and identify relevant keywords for SEO, so when you expand, you have a digital foundation in that specific market.

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Does Your Site Reflect Your Brand?

We all know the old adage - people forget what you say, and what you do, but they never forget *how you made them feel.* It's true in life, and it's true in branding.

Branding is how you communicate externally (and internally, for that matter), how you differentiate yourself in a crowded marketplace, and how you position the culture and vision of your business.

Needless to say it carries a lot of weight!

So before you even dip your toe in the water of the website process, make sure you're in tune with your brand, as it must align and influence your direction. This is the only path to marketing continuity.

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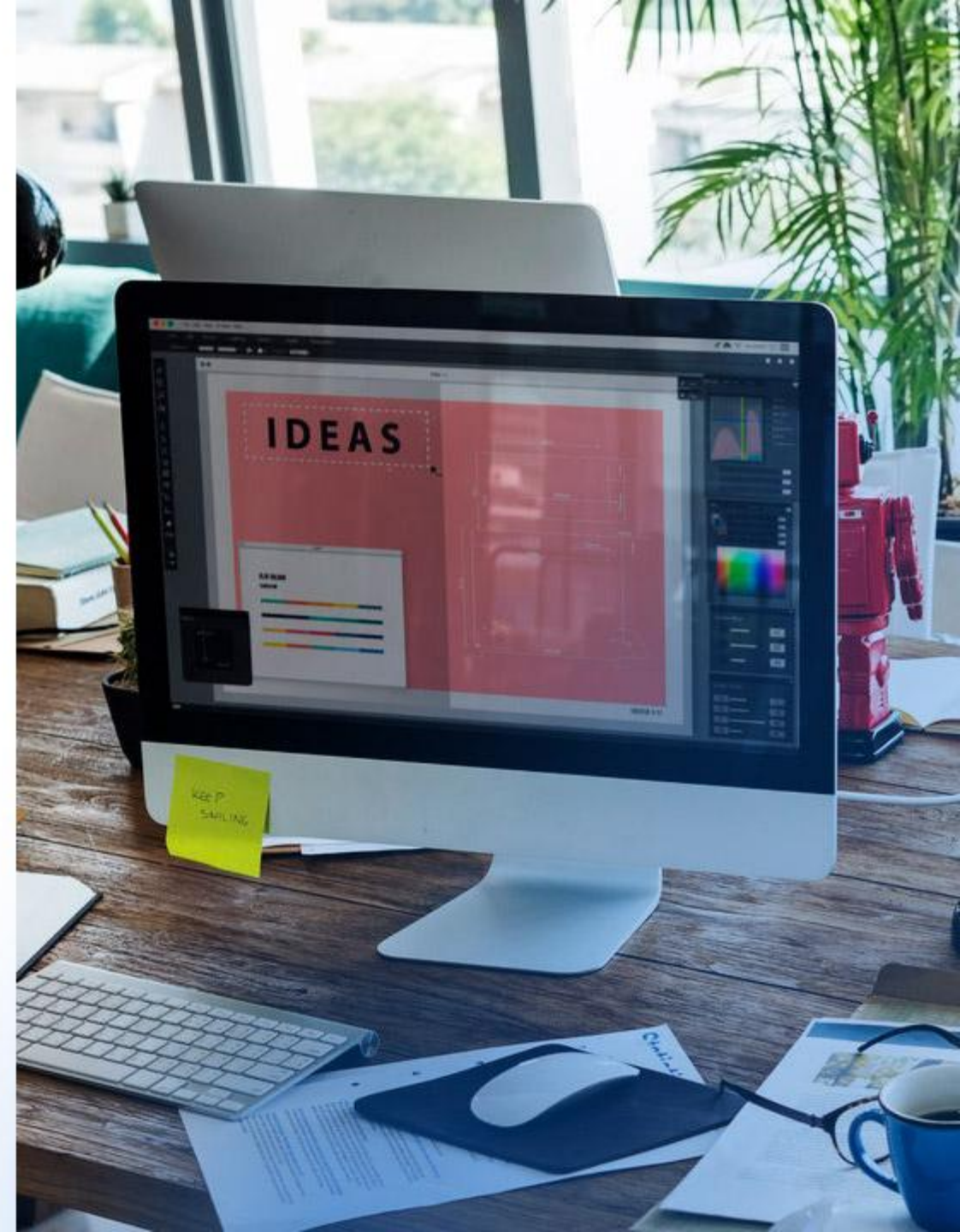
Does Your Site Connect with Your Customers?

Let's talk about your customers. They're your most important website visitors and it's imperative that in just a few clicks they:

- Understand your offerings
- Identify how you're different
- Discern your relevance to their current (or future) needs
- Can quickly & easily get in touch

Does your site do all of this? And do you really know your customers? **If not, or your target is changing, press pause on the refresh, and pivot to developing audience personas.**

Once you understand who they are and what they want, bring that insight back and unpause the website refresh. Now you can design a website to meet the needs of those targets, because they are the ones who can make or break your success.

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Does Your Website Look & Feel Dated?

This can be a hard one, especially if you designed your own site.

To approach this objectively, do your homework. Think about your competitors and visit their sites.

- What do they look like?
- What design elements do you like and dislike?
- Have they simplified access to pertinent information?
- What engaging strategies are they using to connect with their audience? User-generated content?

After this exercise, rinse and repeat, but this time, for companies *outside* of your competitive set and your industry. **Now you'll discover truly unique web strategies and designs to set you apart from the competition.**

And don't forget to keep track of the most inspiring sites so you can point your design partner to these for inspiration, when the time is right.

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Does Your Navigation Take Visitors Where YOU Want Them To Go?

When it comes to navigation, your structure must be intuitive so that your visitor can easily find **what they want and need to make a buying decision**. And if you have multiple audiences, you must account for different needs and behaviors.

For example, visitors to SaaS company sites want to know: 1) What does this product do? 2) How much does it cost?

This is why PRICE is always on the main navigation for a SaaS product company

Alternately, a website visitor for a financial advisor, for example, follows a different path. When the offering is professional services, a visitor often goes first to a leadership page to learn about the team and their expertise.

But We Still Haven't Answered The Question, Have We?

Where do YOU want them to go? What is the path that you want your visitors to traverse so that they get the best information to contact you or make a buying decision. Your answer to this will influence how you design your navigation, what landing pages you need, and how to message your calls-to-action.

This is critical as it creates the optimal path to nurture a lead to successfully move them through the funnel.

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Are You Implementing Inbound Marketing?

Inbound marketing is a strategy that draws visitors to your website *via great content*, which can come in the form of blogs, webinars, videos, social posts, infographics, etc.

Inbound marketing has been transformative for lead generation because it allows you to create your position, share your perspective, and put it out into the universe. Your optimal buyers will identify this content when it's off your site (i.e. on social media), and then come to your site to engage as a warm lead. *And warm is better than cold!*

Inbound marketing is big undertaking, but one that is incredibly valuable in driving qualified leads. Marketing automation solutions like HubSpot or Marketo are great because they help you track, share, and measure the impact of your program.

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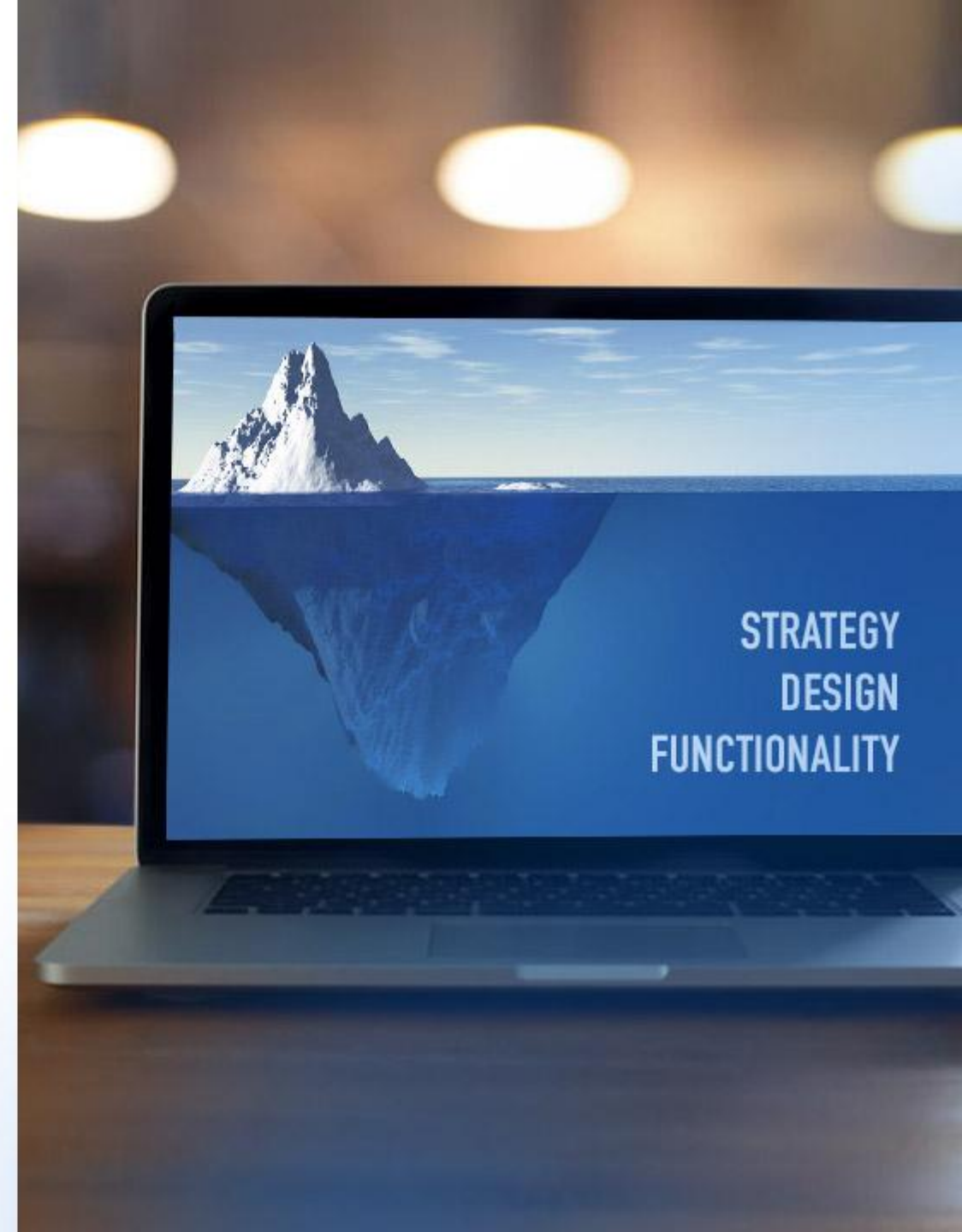COMMUNICATIONS

YOU MADE IT!

But This is Just the Tip of the Iceberg

There are so many things to consider when embarking on a website assessment, and it's critical that you begin by aligning your web strategy with your corporate strategy.

If you work through this guide, you'll have a great strategic foundation for your project. But like we said, it is just the tip of the iceberg.

A truly successful website will marry strategy and design with sophisticated technical capabilities, specifically for lead generation. The next step in your website refresh project is to analyze your website's back end.

And guess what? We've got another guide to help you with that too!

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THANK YOU!

Get in touch if you'd like to talk about how to apply these strategic questions to your website.

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