

intech*n*!c

Results Driven Websites

The Project Manager's Guide to Surviving a Website Redesign

HOW TO AVOID FRUSTRATION AND BLAME
— AND KEEP STAKEHOLDERS HAPPY

Sasha Berson

Produce Impressive Website Results



Increase Sales
or Leads



Build
Awareness



Enhance
Customer
Experience



Reduce
Costs



Improve
Workflow

Bring your whole team together
and achieve real business goals

Introduction



Sasha is the President of Intechnic. Over the last 15 years, he has helped various companies, ranging from startups to Fortune 500 organizations, learn business and team development skills, solve tough organizational problems, develop systems and deliver results.

His goal is to teach business strategies to help project managers and owners deliver products on time and budget, while meeting and exceeding stakeholder expectations.

Sasha Berson

President of Intechnic

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INVOLVED EARLY AND
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Introduction

You have had enough with your old website! Perhaps it is outdated and makes your company look smaller or less professional. Perhaps it does not generate enough leads.

Perhaps it's not user-friendly.

A new website, you think, will solve all of these problems.

You put together requirements, find 3 - 5 great agencies, and gather proposals. You select a vendor and soon the project is off to a great start, but ... that's when the headaches begin.

Everyone, from the VP of Sales to the Marketing Coordinator, has different needs and, at times, conflicting tastes and opinions about the future website! Meeting these needs and expectations drives you crazy and brings progress on the project to a standstill!

Ultimately, you want to be the hero who delivers a great product – a website that represents your company - that everyone loves. But how?



IN MY EXPERIENCE, THINGS CAN GO ONE OF TWO WAYS:

Success:



- Everyone is heard and understands their role in the project.
- The project goes smoothly. Deliverables come in and are reviewed on time.
- The new website goes live and delivers noticeable results. You are the team's hero.

Failure:



- Stakeholders interject themselves into the process, yet feel like they haven't been heard.
- The project gets derailed by conflicting opinions.
- When the new website goes live, it fails to produce measurable results and everyone is disappointed. You have a failed project.

How do you make sure your project is a success and you are a hero?

Get stakeholders involved early and get their buy-in well before the project is underway. Here is how you can accomplish that in just 4 steps:

1. Determine Project Stakeholders
2. Identify Stakeholder Needs and Expectations
3. Consolidate Your Stakeholder Wish List
4. Prepare and Present the Business Case.

STEP 1: Determine Your Project Stakeholders

Start by identifying the key players who will be involved in your website redesign. These will be your stakeholders. Most companies have three types:

Project Owner – This is you, the person who initiates and spearheads the project.

Project Manager – This is the person who is tasked with managing the project. The Project Manager and Project Owner can sometimes be the same person.

Stakeholders – These are the individuals whose jobs will be impacted by the project and the performance of the future website. They are usually company executives and department heads. Leaving them out can kill the project or have a devastating effect on its success.

NOTE: Even if all the requirements are met, if your key stakeholders aren't happy, the project can be deemed a failure.

Consider this situation:

In one project, a Director of Digital Engagement (Project Manager) did not include the HR Manager (Stakeholder) in planning the new website. Two weeks after the site went live, the manager came to the director and demanded to know why she was excluded from the planning process. As it turned out, the site did not have the tools she needed to streamline recruitment, creating additional work and stress for her and her team. She was angry. The director was on the defensive. Worse yet, he needed to request additional budget for the add-ons.

Don't get caught in this situation—make sure you identify the stakeholders from the beginning!

Now, write down all of your project stakeholders in the table below. Identify anyone who may have an impact on this project, as well as those whose support you will want:

DEPARTMENT/ROLE	NAME
Marketing Manager	
Sales Manager	
Customer Support Manager	
Webmaster / Content Contributors	
CTO/CIO	
Operations Manager	
HR Manager	
CEO	
CFO	

Now that you have identified the stakeholders, it is time to determine how the new website will help accomplish their objectives.

STEP 2: Identify Stakeholder Wants and Needs

Schedule a 30-minute meeting with each stakeholder. Some stakeholders may be less accessible than others, but at this stage, your goal is to get as many of them involved as you can. Explain that you are putting together requirements for the new website and you'd like to ask them some questions to make sure the new website will serve their needs.

Before the meeting, email or print out the appropriate worksheet for each stakeholder (found below). Each worksheet includes a list of common, department-specific objectives so that stakeholders can gain instant insight into how a new website can serve them.



Don't forget to ask stakeholders to email or hand in the completed worksheets before your meeting so you can review their requests, prepare clarifying questions for your meeting and use their ideas to plan the new website. Alternatively, you can ask them the questions from the worksheet during the meeting.

STEP 3: Consolidate Your Stakeholder Wish List

Once you have collected all of the responses, it is time to put it all together. Fill out the form below with your stakeholders' wants and needs for the new website.

Refer to this list when you're talking to web agencies to ensure they, too, understand these needs and requirements.

DEPARTMENT	STAKEHOLDER WISHLIST
Marketing Manager	
Sales Manager	
Customer Support Manager	
Webmaster / Content Contributors	
CTO/CIO	
Operations Manager	
HR Manager	
CEO	
CFO	

TIP: It is possible that you will not get every stakeholder to participate in this exercise. It is far better, however, to get a few buy-ins than none at all.

STEP 4: Prepare and Present the Business Case

Once you have your stakeholders' input, call a group meeting with all of them. Your goal is to get group buy-in by making sure everyone is on the same page and securing a greenlight to kick-off the project.

Before presenting the business case at this meeting, consider converting some of the items on the stakeholders' wish list into SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timely). While having stakeholders' requests is important, having SMART objectives for the project instantly demonstrates the business value and puts you in the driver's seat.

[Here's how to set SMART objectives for the website project.](#)

Good luck!

Stakeholder Worksheets

Marketing Manager New Website Wish List

We are planning a new website design/development project, and we want to make sure that the new site helps achieve your goals and meets your requirements.

It is very important that your input is taken into account before committing to the project.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this worksheet.

Think about the current website. What are the top 1-3 things about the current website that you find difficult or frustrating?

What do you wish the website could do? What do you wish it would automate or simplify?

If you were to choose one objective for the new website, what would it be?

Do you have any other requirements for the new website? (Check all that apply.)

- Attract more-relevant traffic
- Convert more visitors into leads/inquiries
- Increase brand/product awareness in the marketplace
- Achieve a more professional representation
- Capture and track leads
- Establish credibility and trust
- Engage website visitors and guide them through their customer journey
- Nurture leads
- Reengage existing customers
- Easily update new content
- Track website visitor interactions
- Other: _____

Once completed, please return this worksheet to the Website Redesign Project Manager.

Sales Manager New Website Wish List

We are planning a new website design/development project, and we want to make sure that the new site helps achieve your goals and meets your requirements.

It is very important that your input is taken into account before committing to the project.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this worksheet.

Think about the current website. What are the top 1-3 things about the current website that you find difficult or frustrating?

What do you wish the website could do? What do you wish it would automate or simplify?

If you were to choose one objective for the new website, what would it be?

Do you have any other requirements for the new website? (Check all that apply.)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increase sales | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide easy access to materials that support the sales process |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improve closing rate | <input type="checkbox"/> Nurture leads |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Help prospects learn about our solutions | <input type="checkbox"/> Establish credibility and trust |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Offer product/service comparison | <input type="checkbox"/> Validate product/service positioning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communicate unique selling proposition | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Capture and track leads | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reengage existing customers | |

Once completed, please return this worksheet to the Website Redesign Project Manager.

Webmaster & Content Contributors New Website Wish List

We are planning a new website design/development project, and we want to make sure that the new site helps achieve your goals and meets your requirements.

It is very important that your input is taken into account before committing to the project.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this worksheet.

Think about the current website. What are the top 1-3 things about the current website that you find difficult or frustrating?

What do you wish the website could do? What do you wish it would automate or simplify?

If you were to choose one objective for the new website, what would it be?

Do you have any other requirements for the new website? (Check all that apply.)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Simplify website updates with a better CMS | <input type="checkbox"/> Eliminate the need to copy and paste content |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Provide ability to review/approve content prior to publishing | <input type="checkbox"/> Establish a library of documents or images |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Provide ability to revert changes | <input type="checkbox"/> Streamline team collaboration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Automate processes or reduce redundant work | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide multilingual support |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reduce the time needed to perform various tasks.
Please list: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Automate content distribution through social media channels |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Allow single sign-on for a streamlined experience | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Once completed, please return this worksheet to the Website Redesign Project Manager.

CTO/CIO (IT) New Website Wish List

We are planning a new website design/development project, and we want to make sure that the new site helps achieve your goals and meets your requirements.

It is very important that your input is taken into account before committing to the project.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this worksheet.

Think about the current website. What are the top 1-3 things about the current website that you find difficult or frustrating?

What do you wish the website could do? What do you wish it would automate or simplify?

If you were to choose one objective for the new website, what would it be?

Do you have any other requirements for the new website? (Check all that apply.)

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reduce website maintenance costs | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide full access to the database |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reduce ongoing licensing costs | <input type="checkbox"/> Eliminate errors, bugs or glitches |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be compatible with certain technologies software.
(specify): _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Reduce server/hosting downtime |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be compatible with other/legacy software.
(specify): _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Improve security; reduce potential risks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Provide unrestricted access to the source code | <input type="checkbox"/> Meet ADA accessibility requirements |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide access to backups for quick retrieval |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Once completed, please return this worksheet to the Website Redesign Project Manager.

Operations Manager New Website Wish List

We are planning a new website design/development project, and we want to make sure that the new site helps achieve your goals and meets your requirements.

It is very important that your input is taken into account before committing to the project.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this worksheet.

Think about the current website. What are the top 1-3 things about the current website that you find difficult or frustrating?

What do you wish the website could do? What do you wish it would automate or simplify?

If you were to choose one objective for the new website, what would it be?

Do you have any other requirements for the new website? (Check all that apply.)

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Help reduce operating costs | <input type="checkbox"/> Establish accountability and traceability by logging and archiving important information |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Streamline and/or automate production processes | <input type="checkbox"/> logging and archive important information |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Streamline and improve communications and collaboration | <input type="checkbox"/> Assist with regulation compliance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Provide quick access to documentation/materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Integrate with other systems:
_____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improve workflows and reduce the amount of time it takes to perform tasks | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Once completed, please return this worksheet to the Website Redesign Project Manager.

HR Manager New Website Wish List

We are planning a new website design/development project, and we want to make sure that the new site helps achieve your goals and meets your requirements.

It is very important that your input is taken into account before committing to the project.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this worksheet.

Think about the current website. What are the top 1-3 things about the current website that you find difficult or frustrating?

What do you wish the website could do? What do you wish it would automate or simplify?

If you were to choose one objective for the new website, what would it be?

Do you have any other requirements for the new website? (Check all that apply.)

- Ability to apply for jobs through the website
- Ability to post jobs on the website
- Clearly explain why people should choose to work for our company
- Ability to track, manage and process job applications and resumes
- Automatically distribute job posts to job boards and social media
- Ability to post internal notices (events calendar, birthdays, other announcements)
- Other: _____

Once completed, please return this worksheet to the Website Redesign Project Manager.

C-Suite (CEO/CFO) New Website Wish List

We are planning a new website design/development project, and we want to make sure that the new site helps achieve your goals and meets your requirements.

It is very important that your input is taken into account before committing to the project.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this worksheet.

Think about the current website. What are the top 1-3 things about the current website that you find difficult or frustrating?

What do you wish the website could do? What do you wish it would automate or simplify?

If you were to choose one objective for the new website, what would it be?

Do you have any other requirements for the new website? (Check all that apply.)

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deliver substantial ROI | <input type="checkbox"/> Increase brand awareness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increase sales | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Once completed, please return this worksheet to the Website Redesign Project Manager.