



# LIFE AFTER REDESIGN

Setting the stage for website success

# CONGRATULATIONS!



## **The work is not over.**

The launch is like the wedding. Maintaining the website is like the day-to-day business of marriage.

We focus a lot on reaching the big event, but what comes after is even more important.

# Change is constant.

FIRST SIX MONTHS

SIX MONTHS - 2 YEARS

2-4 YEARS

4+ YEARS

# THE FIRST SIX MONTHS



# Don't panic.

Launching a site can bring out the critics. People with strong opinions may reach out with complaints.

One strongly-worded stakeholder email shouldn't have you doubting a well-thought out strategy based on goals and backed up by research and data.

Thank them for their feedback, file it away, and keep going.

***“I can't believe you took away the weather widget! This new website is TERRIBLE.”***

FIRST SIX MONTHS

6 MONTHS - 2 YEARS

2-4 YEARS

4+ YEARS

## So what's next?

You need to ensure the right structure is in place to keep your site healthy and productive.

You need **GOVERNANCE**.



FIRST SIX MONTHS

6 MONTHS - 2 YEARS

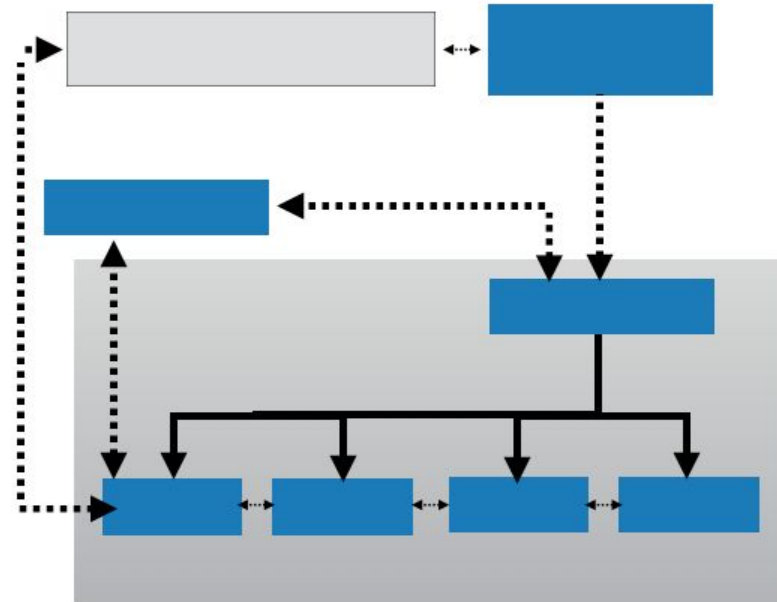
2-4 YEARS

4+ YEARS

# What is governance?

A process to support the fulfillment of your communications goals and ensure the success of the website as a strategic recruitment and marketing tool.

- Establishes ownership of website content and accountability for its upkeep
- Defines guidelines for what is and isn't appropriate content
- Addresses root organizational and process issues that result in content issues such as outdated content and inconsistent style



**FIRST SIX MONTHS**

6 MONTHS - 2 YEARS

2-4 YEARS

4+ YEARS



## The value of governance

Governance is an **insurance policy** for the investment you've made in upgrading your digital platforms.



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2-4 YEARS

4+ YEARS

# What's your status?

**Governance policy created  
as part of the redesign process**



Great! Now you get to implement it!

**Pre-existing governance policy  
created before the redesign  
process**



Time to review it and update as needed.

**No formal governance policy**



Time to start defining and documenting  
your governance.

**FIRST SIX MONTHS**

6 MONTHS - 2 YEARS

2-4 YEARS

4+ YEARS

# Governance considerations

- Governance model
- Roles & responsibilities
- Publishing workflow
- Training & documentation
- Managing CMS access
- Authoritative content
- Managing content requests
- Content quality assurance process
- Accessibility and compliance

**FIRST SIX MONTHS**

6 MONTHS - 2 YEARS

2-4 YEARS

4+ YEARS

# Your governance model

## DECENTRALIZED

Content activity dispersed across the institution with little or no overarching control or influence

## COORDINATED

Content activity shared among editors across campus who are empowered through a culture of knowledge

## CENTRALIZED

All content activity focused within a centralized team

FIRST SIX MONTHS

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4+ YEARS

# Roles and responsibilities

A coordinated governance structure requires partnership across different roles with defined responsibilities. These roles may include:

High-level decision makers	Leaders who set institutional priorities, approve policies, secure resources, and support the authority of the day-to-day decision makers.
Day-to-day decision makers	Communicators overseeing site maintenance, governance, and training; responsible for authoritative content and primary brand storytelling. Sets the agenda for policy decisions to be confirmed by high-level decision makers.
Content editors	People with CMS access who can create and/or modify content, but can't publish the changes.
Content publishers	People with CMS access who can create, modify, and publish. Some of them may have workflow relationships with content editors; the publishers could review, modify, and approve/publish content changes made by editors.
Content contributors	People who have no CMS access, but may occasionally make requests for updates or contribute to content as subject-matter experts.

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# Key role: the accessibility champion

To maintain an accessible site going forward, we recommend selecting an internal champion to ensure ongoing compliance as content is developed for the site. It is essential to identify ownership and process proactively, so you are prepared in case of a complaint.



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# Managing requests

Track requests for site updates and support through a form or forms so you use data to advocate for resources.

Make sure stakeholders across the institution understand:

- How to request news/story coverage
- How to submit events to the calendar
- How to request CMS access and training
- How to request new pages, or changes to existing pages

And include criteria for each request.

The screenshot shows the 'Submit Your Story Idea' form on the 'Around the O' website. The form includes a header with the University of Oregon logo and navigation links. The main heading is 'Submit Your Story Idea'. Below this, there is a paragraph explaining the purpose of the form and a note about the two-week advance notice requirement. The form fields include: Name (required), Email (required), UO Affiliation (dropdown menu), Contact Name or Source (if other than yourself), Contact Email (if other than yourself), Subject of Your Story Idea (required), and Visual Assets Available? (checkbox). There is also a large text area for 'Your Story Idea' and a CAPTCHA section at the bottom.

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

## Around the O

Academics & Research | Campus News | Student Life | Workplace | Oregon Quarterly | Ore

### Submit Your Story Idea

Have a great story idea that you think should be featured in Around the O? We are always looking for new story ideas about what's happening at the University of Oregon. We get many story submissions from around campus, so keep your idea brief.

Stories or story ideas must be about the University of Oregon; its faculty, staff or students; programs; or events. If your story is about an event or has a deadline or other time element, please submit your request **at least two weeks in advance** of the event date or deadline. We will try to post the story online one week in advance.

While we cannot guarantee your story will be featured, we look forward to reading your idea and possibly including it on Around the O.

All fields marked with \* are required.

**Name \***

**Email \***

**UO Affiliation \***

- Select -

**Contact Name or Source (if other than yourself)**

**Contact Email (if other than yourself)**

**Subject of Your Story Idea \***

**Visual Assets Available?**  Yes

If so please tell us the type (photo, video or graphic) and provide contact info with your story idea.

**Your Story Idea \***

Provide a short description of your story idea. (Add ideas for photo, video and social media here.)

Around the O reserves the right to make final decisions on style, timing and content for all material it publishes.

CAPTCHA

This question is for testing whether or not you are a human visitor and to prevent automated spam

FIRST SIX MONTHS

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# Example: University of Oregon

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# Training for the new site

Presumably, you and your team have learned how to use the new site editing interface. Now is the time to share the knowledge with other colleagues who have or should have CMS access.

- Do you need to create or modify documentation?
- Technical writing can be challenging. Think about applying best practices for web writing to your web training documentation.

The screenshot displays the 'Create Content' interface in a CMS. The top navigation bar includes 'Back to site', 'Manage', 'Shortcuts', 'ehostadmin', and 'Staging'. The main content area is titled 'Create Content' and features a navigation menu with 'Add content' highlighted. A dropdown menu is open, showing various content types: Admissions Flow, Division, Event, General Page, Home, In the News, Landing Page, News Landing, News, Profile, Program, Story Landing, Story, and Webform. A red box highlights the 'Add content' button and the dropdown menu. Below the dropdown, there is a security update notification and a table of content items with columns for Title, Content type, and Published status.

To create new content, click the “Add content” button. Or, from the navigation, hover over Content > Add content > and select the type of content you’d like to create.

**Note:** You may prefer (or be directed) to create content **directly** in a Group that you are part of. See the [Group Permissions](#) section, and more specifically, the [Adding Content](#) part of that section.



# Establish healthy habits

Now is the time to establish healthy habits for your new site. Develop a cadence for quality assurance and content auditing.

Block time on your calendar now for the rest of the year. Pick one day a month and set aside a few hours for regular maintenance. This time should be sacred; consistent proactive reviews will reduce the likelihood of big, urgent problems down the road.



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# Content auditing as a practice

Content audits are often done in one fell swoop as part of a redesign, but taking a critical look at site content should be a regular practice.

Different approaches can help distribute the work:

- Divide your site into twelve segments and check on one segment each month.
- Divide your site content up between members of your team.
- Rotate monthly auditing tasks among team members.

**FIRST SIX MONTHS**

6 MONTHS - 2 YEARS

2-4 YEARS

4+ YEARS

**SIX MONTHS TO TWO YEARS**



## The next phase

You've dealt with the immediate post-launch needs. You've settled into a comfortable routine in terms of site maintenance and QA. Now you can start digging a bit deeper in order to optimize.



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# Message architecture


You may have created a message architecture as part of your redesign. If you did, great!

If not, that's okay — now is as good a time as any to do it!

A message architecture is composed of your key messages and their supporting themes. It's a tool to help guide your editorial decisions.



# Message architecture



## Key Messages

<p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;"><b>Key Message</b></p> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 20px 0;">Our <b>elite</b> faculty produce <b>high-quality</b> research and are <b>trusted thought</b> <b>leaders.</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;"><b>Supporting Themes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are thought leaders at the forefront of research and clinical practice</li> <li>Our work drives the growth of biotechnology in the region</li> <li>We empower our faculty in their research endeavors through functional support and top-quality equipment</li> <li>We generate transformational knowledge that improves patient care and educational practices</li> </ul>
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**Relevant Audiences:** prospective students, prospective faculty, the public



# Message architecture

A message architecture can form the basis for your editorial strategy. Align your stories to your key messages and supporting themes.

If a story doesn't convey one of your key messages, why are you investing resources to create it and allowing it to take up space on your site? Is there a different angle on the story that will help it align to your key messages?

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# Editorial planning

Include columns for message pillars and tags in your editorial calendar so that you can use filters, pivot tables, and charts to see the balance of themes over time. Tracking these elements during planning will set you up for easier analysis of themes after publication.

Sample Editorial Calendar

File Edit View Insert Format Data Tools Add-ons Help Last edit was seconds ago

100% \$ % .0 .00 123 Default (Ari... 10 B I S A

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
1	STORY	DATE SCHEDULED	STATUS	WRITER	PHOTO/VIDEO	EDITOR	MAJOR ANNOU	THEME 1	THEME 2	THEME 3	TAG 1	TAG 2
2	Lorem ipsum de	4/15/2021		Jane	Rob	Barbara	TRUE	TRUE			TRUE	
3	Consectetur ad	4/16/2021		Alicia	Matt	Barbara			TRUE			TRUE
4	Sed do eiusmod	4/17/2021		Fred	Courtney	Kimiko				TRUE		
5	Incididunt ut la	4/18/2021		Alicia	Courtney	Fred	TRUE					
6	Dolore magna ali	4/19/2021		Fred	Matt	Barbara		TRUE			TRUE	
7	Ut enim ad min	4/20/2021		Jane	n/a	Fred			TRUE			
8	Duis aute irure	4/21/2021		Jane	Rob	Kimiko		TRUE				
9	Excepteur sint c	4/22/2021		Fred	n/a	Barbara			TRUE		TRUE	
10	Sed ut perspici	4/23/2021		Jane	Courtney	Alicia	TRUE			TRUE		



# Assess requests

By now, you've had your request form(s) set up and hopefully trained your colleagues to use them (instead of calling or emailing an individual on your team).

With a few months' worth of submissions, you have a data set to analyze! Look for patterns in the requests.

- Do you need to clarify aspects of your workflow or strategy?
- Are you getting a lot of requests for help with something that people should be able to handle on their own?

The questions you get repeatedly will help you see where the gaps are in your training, support, and internal communications.



# Refine your training

Use the insights you've gathered from analyzing request data to optimize your training. What questions do you answer repeatedly? Revisit your training documentation to clarify those subjects.

Also look for other gaps in your curriculum. Are you just teaching editors how to use the CMS? Or are you also teaching them things like:

- Best practices for web writing
- How to produce accessible content
- A basic understanding of information architecture

Make the shift to content-first training, so people can learn how to produce good content before they learn how to publish content.

FIRST SIX MONTHS

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# Leverage training resources

As you revise your training curriculum, think about how you can improve delivery as well.

- Are there trainers at your institution that you can partner with to deliver web training?
- Can you build learning modules on the LMS to shift at least some training to a self-serve model?
- Are there academic technologists who can review your training and documentation and provide feedback?
- Can you add group trainings to HR's professional development calendar?

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# Making the case for more training

It can be hard to find the bandwidth to train, especially if you have a large number of site editors across the institution.

Untrained editors introduce RISK. They may publish content that hurts your brand, doesn't align with your strategy, or destroys your accessibility.

If you have a workflow that includes review, can you save review time by providing more training?



**TWO TO FOUR YEARS**



## The next phase

The launch is a distant memory. You can barely remember the previous site. You've gone through two full annual cycles of content updates, and published dozens (if not hundreds) of stories.



# News/story analytics deep dive

Remember the message pillars and tags in your editorial calendar? Tie your editorial calendar to your analytics. Invest some time in analyzing your body of story data so you can find successful patterns and areas for improvement.

Sample Editorial Calendar

File Edit View Insert Format Data Tools Add-ons Help Last edit was seconds ago

100% \$ % .0 .00 123 Default (Ari... 10 B I S A

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
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4	Sed do eiusmod	4/17/2021		Fred	Courtney	Kimiko				TRUE		
5	Incididunt ut la	4/18/2021		Alicia	Courtney	Fred	TRUE					
6	Dolore magna ali	4/19/2021		Fred	Matt	Barbara		TRUE			TRUE	
7	Ut enim ad min	4/20/2021		Jane	n/a	Fred			TRUE			
8	Duis aute irure	4/21/2021		Jane	Rob	Kimiko		TRUE				
9	Excepteur sint c	4/22/2021		Fred	n/a	Barbara			TRUE		TRUE	
10	Sed ut perspici	4/23/2021		Jane	Courtney	Alicia	TRUE			TRUE		





# News/story analytics deep dive

Questions to ask during your deep analysis:

- Which key messages are resonating with your audience? Are any key messages not hitting?
- Are there story formats that perform better?
- Are there topics that perform really well? Others that underperform?
- What's your sweet spot in terms of story length?
- How do video stories or photo-heavy stories compare to more text-based stories?

FIRST SIX MONTHS

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# Taxonomy audit

While you're at it, use this data to analyze the tags on your news and stories.

- Do certain topics perform better?
- How many tags do you have in your news/story taxonomy now?
- Are all of them still appropriate?
- Are any tags underused?
- Can any tags be eliminated to reduce UX friction?
- Are there any redundant tags that can be merged?
- Do you need to adjust your governance policies or site permissions to prevent excessive tag creation?

All Tags
#AIVWallStreet
150 Faithful to the Mission
150 Years
1969 Milestones
2014 Doctoral Seminar Series
2020 Commencement
8th Biennial Adoption Conference
9/11 Remembrance Mass
Abdrakhmanov
Academic Resources
Academic Service-Learning
Accepted Student Day
Accounting BS
Accounting BS
Actuarial Science BS
Administrative Studies BS
Admissions
Adolescent Education BSEd
Advertising Communication BS
Alumni
Alumni Chapters
Anthropology BA
Asian Studies BA
Athletics
Audiology AuD
Awards
Biology
Bioloav BS



# Component audit

Component-based design offers you a flexible toolkit that you can use to build page layouts appropriate to content needs. As you audit your content this year, take a little extra time to note whether or not you are using those tools effectively.

- Are you over-relying on the WYSIWYG?
- Are there components you could use more often or more effectively?
- Are there components that need adjustments to be more useful or usable?

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**2-4 YEARS**

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# Pruning

Day-to-day site maintenance often focuses on publishing new content: new stories, testimonials, programs. But it's also healthy to periodically remove content.

Your site is not a filing cabinet or an archive. It should hold only current, relevant information.

Challenge yourself. How much has the page volume of your site grown since launch? Can you cut back to the launch volume?



# Pruning: what to cut and what to keep?

Start by using analytics to find the least-visited pages.

- If your users aren't looking at the page, is it really necessary? The answer may be yes, but the question deserves consideration.
- Is the information on that page essential?
  - If so, could it be combined with another page?
- If it does need to be a standalone page, what are the current pathways to it? How can you better direct people to it?

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# Training

Review your training materials and processes again. Is everything still good?

Think about the ideal skillset for a site editor or publisher. Is there extra training that you might be able to offer for enthusiastic participants?

Do your distributed site editors and publishers have any contact with each other? Could they learn from each other? How can you build community? Consider what could be learned if you could get a group of CMS users together in the same room even once or twice a year.

FIRST SIX MONTHS

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# Visual design tweaks

Has your brand evolved since you launched your site? Take some time to conduct an omnichannel design review and reflect on whether some small changes to visual content or front-end design might be necessary.

- Are you using a different accent color more often?
- Has your photography style evolved?
- Are there graphics or patterns that you are using in emails or on social that could be brought into the site as well?

A light visual refresh can help extend the life of a website that is starting to feel a bit dated.



— **BEYOND FOUR YEARS**





## The next phase

Thanks to your excellent stewardship, the site has served your institution well for several years now. But things have changed, and another redesign is on the horizon.



# Preparing for the next redesign

If you're at the point where you are thinking about the next redesign:

- Reflect on what works and work doesn't on your current site.
  - Same CMS or different?
  - What are the requirements?
  - What else would you change?
- Figure out what questions you have. Can you answer them with available data, or do you need to do some research first?



# Look around but keep working

Block some time to review peer and competitor sites. What works? What doesn't? Take detailed notes and see if you can draw holistic conclusions about what you want from a new site--and what you want to avoid.

Don't stop adding or pruning content just because a redesign is coming. A redesign will usually take 6-12 months, and you want your site to stay up-to-date in the meantime.



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# Getting ready for the RFP

Work with your procurement team to define a timeline, and make sure that timeline is communicated up to senior stakeholders. You don't want to end up begging your procurement partner to review contracts over the holidays because senior leadership is insisting on a compressed timeline.

Find out if there are particular requirements or review processes that you need to account for.



# Prepare to evaluate responses

Take the requirements you defined in your RFP and figure out their relevant importance. You can then build a rubric for scoring proposals. This can help remove some of the subjectivity in proposal evaluation, and may help you decide between two strong proposals.



**ALONG THE WAY**



## **Document, document, document**

Take notes about what you learn,  
challenges, questions, problems, wins.

Share your work.

## **Celebrate the milepebbles**

Digital transformation is cultural transformation. Change may be slow but all progress is still progress.