



# The B2B website buyer's guide

---

What you need to know, ask, and do when seeking a B2B website design firm.

**BEFORE ASSUMING IT'S TIME FOR A B2B WEBSITE REDESIGN, ASK YOURSELF:**

Does my website possess the following qualities?

---

Serves as an effective credibility piece.

---

Has an engaging and intuitive design.

---

Is mobile-friendly.

---

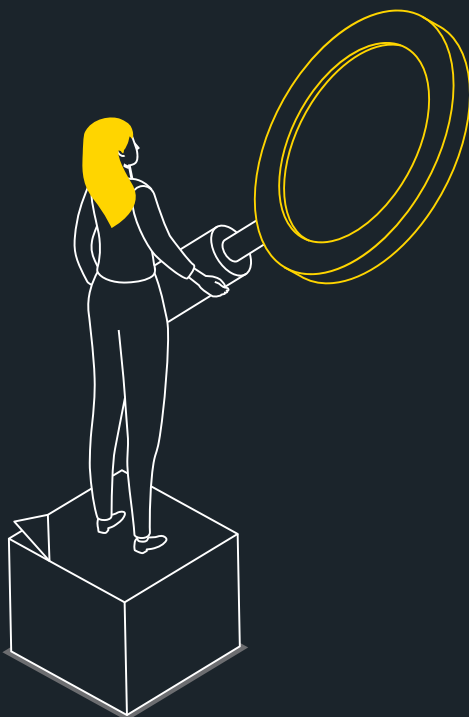
Has content that reflects my brand's value proposition and offerings.

---

Is easy for prospects to find through a search engine.

---

Generates sales-qualified leads.



If you're having trouble saying "yes" to any of the above, it's time for a B2B website redesign.

But where should you start? In this guide, we'll outline the most important questions to ask, so you can find the right agency partner to put your new B2B website on the path to success.

# B2B WEBSITE PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

---

Before approaching B2B web design firms, it's critical to have an internal discussion about your requirements for the new website. To make sure you don't waste valuable time, you'll need to reach a consensus on budget, timeline, and objectives.

**HERE ARE SOME HELPFUL TIPS ON PROJECT REQUIREMENTS:**

## **Decide on your website's goal(s)**

Your B2B website can have a variety of different functions and serve your firm in multiple ways. It may act as a lead generation machine, a credibility piece, a resource center, or a customer service tool.

Before you start building a new website, you need to know what you expect it to do for you. Determine the main function of the website and how it can add value or support your sales and marketing goals. One important thing to keep in mind is that the more you expect from your website, the larger it will become (and often the more expensive it will be to create, manage, and maintain).

## **Determine must-haves vs. would-likes**

Once you have established the goal(s) of your website, determine what elements it absolutely must have. This doesn't need to be an extensive list, but it should take into account all the stakeholders in your company.

The best way to create this list is to have a quick internal meeting with all the necessary stakeholders (this does not mean everyone in your company!). Invite a knowledgeable representative from each relevant department and let them know they are responsible for gathering information from their own team before the meeting. This pre-meeting work and a select group of attendees will make determining website requirements efficient and effective.

## Set a budget range

A B2B web design budget may or may not be something you and your team control. If you control your budget and a new website is a priority, you can determine what type of website you can build independently. However, it's more common that the budget is already set and you are simply given a maximum from the finance department.

It's essential to understand your budget range before reaching out to B2B web design partners. This information will help you decide between doing the work in house, working with a freelancer, or hiring a professional web design agency. It will also help potential partners understand your needs and limitations for better, more personalized proposals.



## Know your CMS needs

Choosing a content management system (CMS) can be a big decision. In fact, many firms leave the choice to their developer and just deal with the outcome. However, unless the developer is going to be managing the website, implementing all web design changes, and keeping the website updated, the decision should be made by you and your team.

At Bop Design, we only work with WordPress CMS. Why? Because, as the world's most popular CMS, it has the largest support community, plugin availability, and the most user-friendly updates. A quick tutorial is often all anyone needs to start updating their WordPress website. WordPress also enables marketing teams to manage and update their website easily without the need for development support – a crucial factor in maintaining an effective digital marketing strategy.



## Find, meet, greet, and listen

Now that you know what you need, it's time to see what your options are for building your B2B website. It's always a good idea to reach out to a handful of designers and agencies to see what they have to offer. Interview a short list of potential web design agencies and listen to what they have to say. Make sure every offer is tailored to the needs of your firm and will fulfill all your requirements.



# QUESTIONS TO ASK

---

There are many critical questions to ask a prospective agency about their company and process. Here are the top ones to consider:

## 1 Do you have experience with B2B website design?

While every industry has its own challenges, it's important to partner with a web design agency that understands the difference between B2B and B2C client relationships. B2B projects tend to have a higher price tag, span a longer period, and involve more complex products and services. Working with an agency that is familiar with designing websites for B2B target markets ensures a smoother design process and an end product that is professional and maximizes lead conversions.

## 2 Can I see examples of websites for firms like ours?

Web design agencies often specialize in working with firms in niche industries. While they may not have worked with a company in your exact market, they should have experience building websites for firms similar to yours. Ask for specific examples so you can confirm they understand your industry and ideal buyers.

## 3 Who will be working on my website design project?

Many agencies heavily outsource all design and development work to freelancers with little personal expertise in these areas. It is in your best interest to have the work done by a stable, fully engaged agency with a full-time team of experienced employees on your project. Be sure to ask who you'll be working with so you can ensure consistency and quality for your website design process.

#### 4 Will my website utilize WordPress as its content management system?

More than 40% of websites currently use WordPress as their CMS. It's a testament to how easy the platform makes it for a non-technical person to manage content and make changes to their website. WordPress also allows companies to have more development options. Using a proprietary CMS benefits the agency by limiting your options, so you have to rely on them for maintenance. Therefore, using an open-source CMS like WordPress is always in your best interest.

#### 5 Can you provide links to your profiles on third-party review websites?

Don't rely on references and testimonials provided by the agency. Do your own research on third-party review websites like Clutch, Yelp, Glassdoor, or Agency Spotter. Make sure the agency has a generally positive online reputation. If they have no online reputation or a negative one, they're probably not the right choice for you.

#### 6 Can I speak to a previous or current client?

Third-party review sites provide a good idea of what it's like to work with a website design agency, but nothing beats speaking candidly with a previous or current client. A reputable agency fosters positive, ongoing relationships with clients, even after the project is over. An ideal partner has a few previous or current clients who are willing to take the time to speak to the agency's prospects and share their experience with the agency. Talking to a past or current client will give you the "real deal" on what it's like to work with that agency.

#### 7 What's your process for incorporating content?

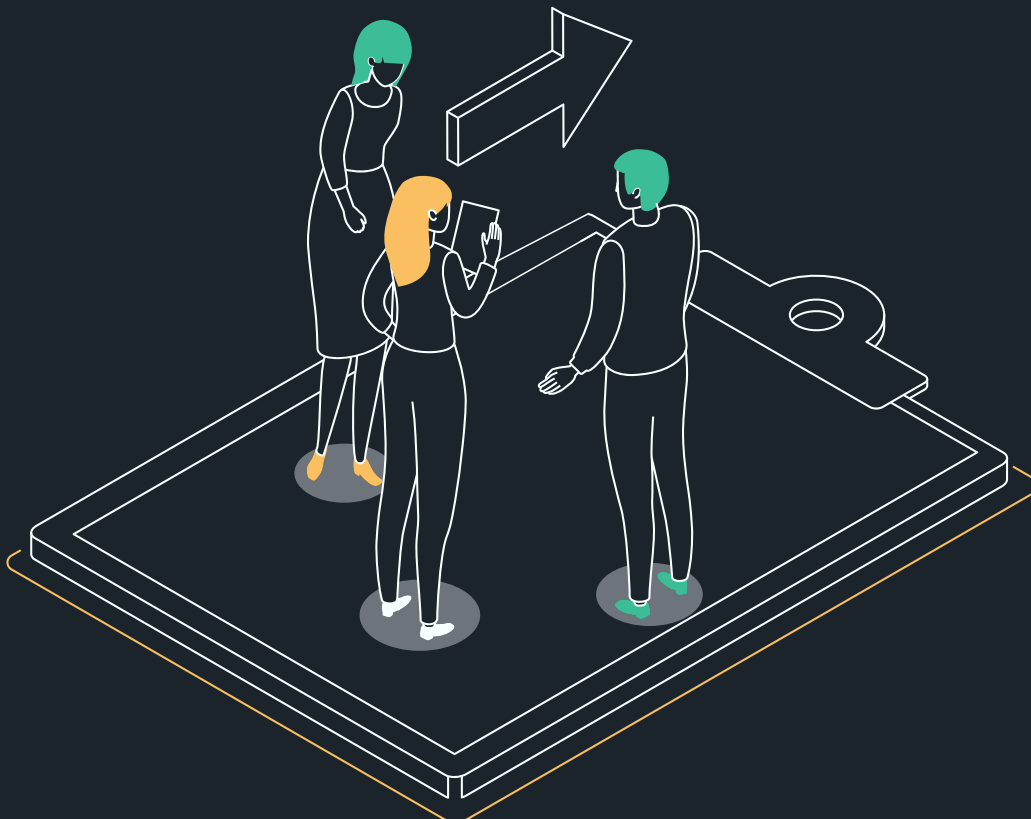
Content is an important part of a new website launch. In some cases, the existing website content is still accurate and up to date, but the design is outdated. In other situations, the content needs an overhaul or new content needs to be created. Ask the B2B web design agency if you are required to provide the final content or if the agency has an experienced content team who can write the copy for you. If you don't have the resources or time to draft website copy, it's important to partner with a full-service agency that can oversee your content strategy and provide expert copywriting resources.

## 8 Do you integrate SEO best practices into the website design process?

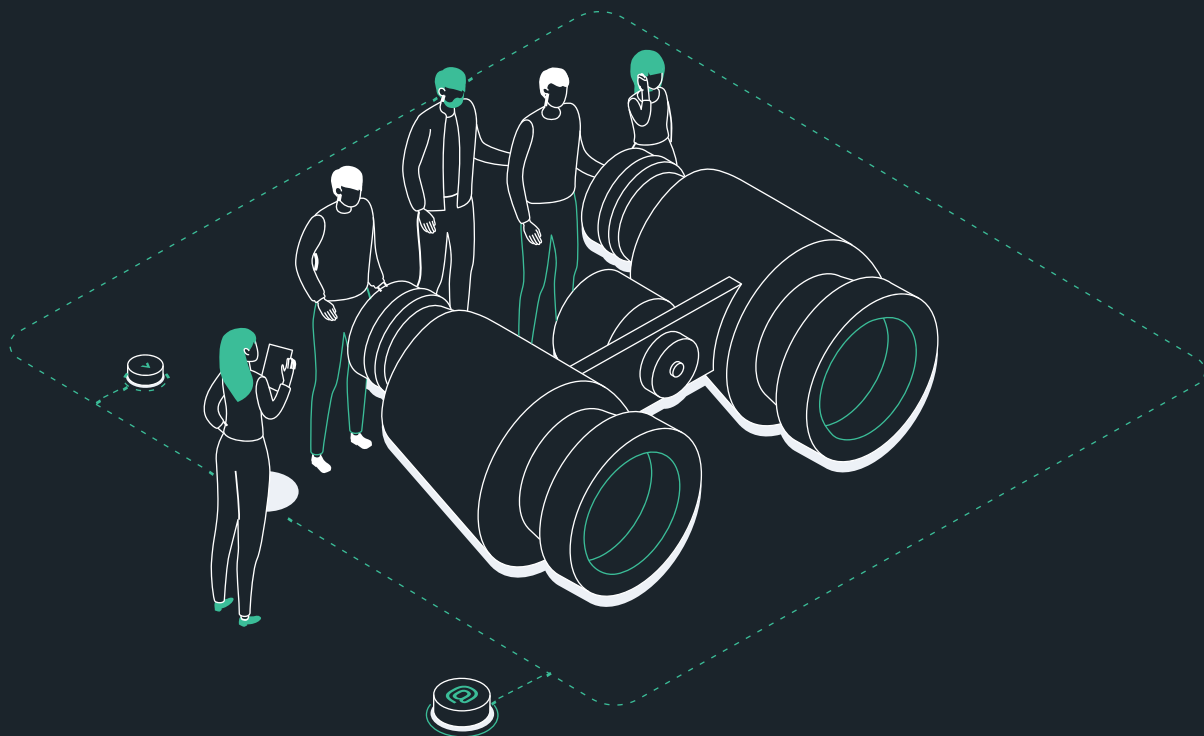
As you speak to different agencies and review their websites, you'll soon discover that certain agencies focus mainly on branding and design rather than functionality. If this is what you need, great! However, if you need a functional website that is also built to attract new website visitors, you'll want to partner with an agency that understands and integrates SEO best practices into the website design and development process. Trying to launch an SEO plan on a website that lacks SEO best practices integration often requires a complete redesign and rebuild.

## 9 Do your websites have accessibility built in?

Digital accessibility for websites is a large consideration for many businesses. However, achieving accessibility compliance on a website is often a cost-restrictive undertaking that results in an unappealing design. At Bop Design, we follow accessibility guidelines to meet WCAG Level AA criteria when designing websites. While this doesn't ensure total compliance (which can cost over \$100K), it creates a user-friendly experience for those with visual or audio disabilities.



Pay attention to the sales process of the agencies that you interview or meet. Often, the sales process is a key indicator of what it will be like to work with the agency. In many cases, the agency is interviewing you as well to ensure they are the right fit and can deliver on your project.

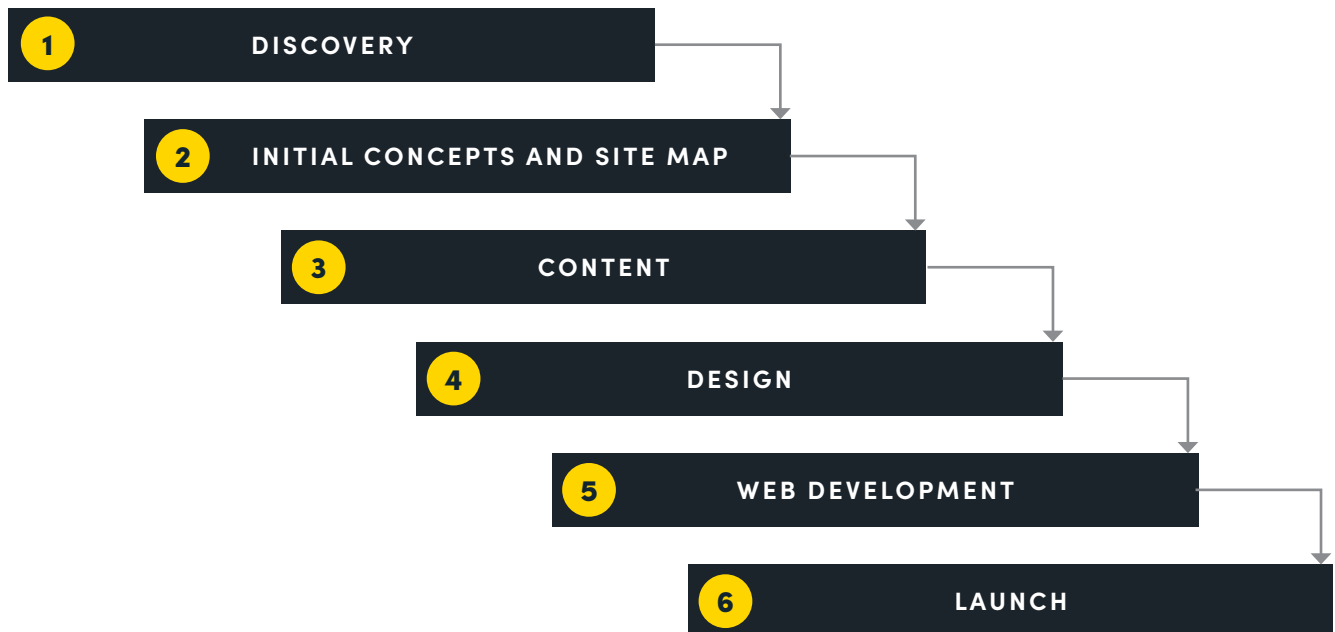




# WEBSITE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

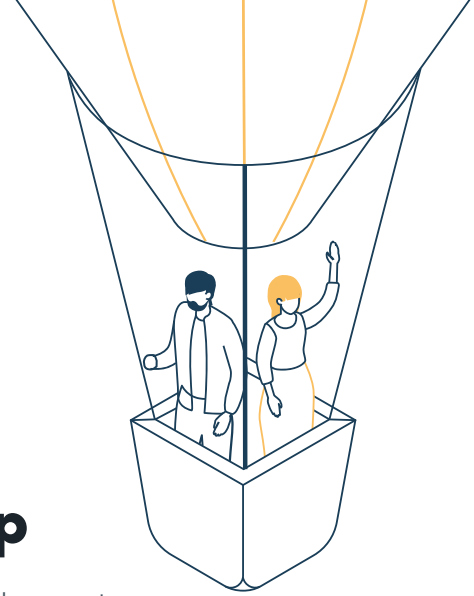
Knowing as much as possible upfront about a B2B web design agency's process ensures there are no surprises. A typical project schedule can be broken into the following six steps.

**MAKE SURE YOUR SELECTED WEB DESIGN AGENCY IMPLEMENTS A SIMILAR PROCESS.**



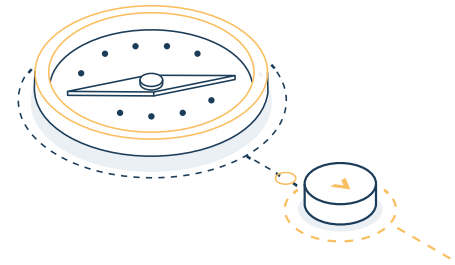
# Discovery

In the discovery stage, your agency will discuss your firm's unique value proposition, target market and the role of the website in the sales and marketing process. This may include interviews, industry and competitive research, and analysis of a preliminary keyword wishlist for SEO.



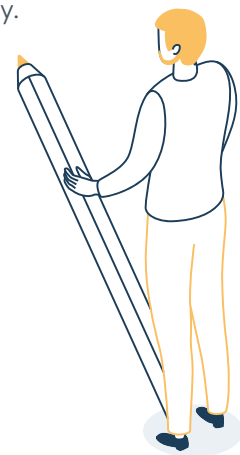
# Initial concepts and site map

Based on the creative discovery session, your agency should present you with initial design and messaging options before performing any web development tasks. At Bop Design, we present each client with two unique home page concepts and a preliminary site map (a chart that maps out all the proposed pages for your website). We go through revision rounds until there is consensus on both the home page design and site map. This way, it's clear how the website will look once it's developed and key messaging is in place. Once the client has approved the home page and site map, we move on to content and design for the rest of the pages.



# Content

The content (aka copywriting) phase of the B2B website project typically includes an interview call or meeting and up to two rounds of client revisions. Our copywriting process includes a dedicated, industry-specific copywriter. Throughout the content portion of the web design project, we work with clients to develop web copy that incorporates their SEO goals, brand message, and specific calls to action. While the copywriting process for the website is separate from the design portion, they often happen concurrently.



## Design

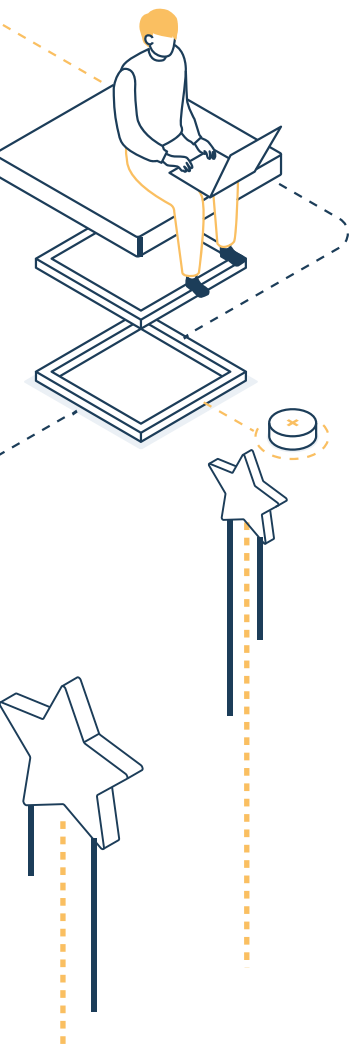
Once the home page and site map are approved, the design team begins to lay out design templates for the remaining pages of your B2B website (the “sub pages”). These should follow the same color scheme and general look and feel of your home page, but the structure will vary for each page category. Design elements may include infographics, iconography, and original or stock photography and video. At Bop Design, we deliver the sub page design directions in Adobe XD format for you to comment on, and provide up to two rounds of revisions.

## Web development

After the design and content are approved, the focus moves to the backend of the site. Make sure your B2B web design agency is developing your website according to current web standards from the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). Also, the website should be set up to be easily “crawlable” by search engines, helping your website to be more prominent for targeted keyword phrases. If your agency says they’re good at SEO, ask them about their SEO success stories. Make sure they can deliver.

## Launch

If your website were a movie, this would be the big premiere. The website launch is an exciting time, but you’ll need to make sure it is properly managed by an experienced marketing and development team. The website launch is a technical process that requires careful attention to detail and the know-how to fix any issues with hosting and coding. Ask your agency about post-launch monitoring and maintenance. At Bop Design, we set up 301 redirects and monitor and correct 404 errors for 30 days post-launch, ensuring your firm’s B2B website maintains peak performance and functions properly.

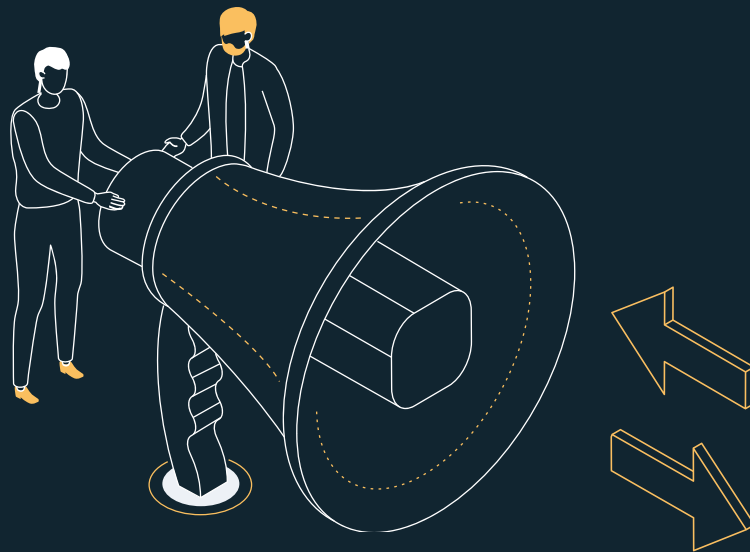


# WEBSITES AS A LEAD GENERATION TOOL

---

Too often, B2B firms view their website only as a branding tool and not a platform that can generate and nurture ideal client leads.

While a B2B website can interest a prospective client in doing business with you, it should also nurture them throughout their buying journey.



# A living, breathing resource center

For traditional and digital marketing strategies, your website is often the main hub of activity. Sales sheets and brochures should include your website URL so prospects can get more details about your company. Email newsletters should link directly to various pages and resources on the website to encourage prospective and current clients to visit and complete an action. Your social media pages should list the website and drive followers there to learn more information or get in touch.

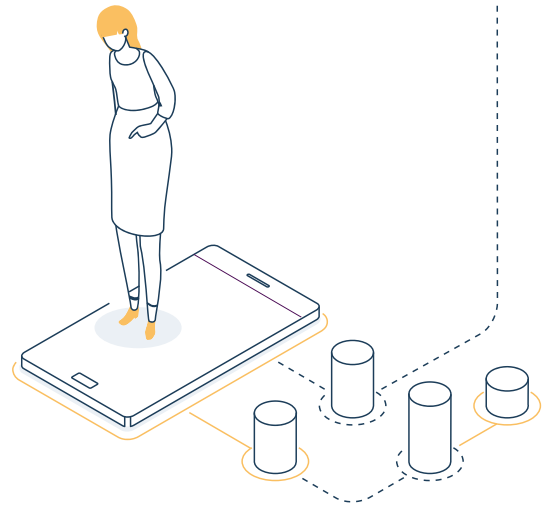
Your website is often the foundation for your SEO and content marketing strategy. As such, the website needs to be functional and continually updated with fresh, dynamic content. Ideally, your content marketing strategy will be in place before the new B2B website launches to capitalize on the investment. Ensure your web design agency is aware of your future SEO and content marketing plans and goals when building your website.



# Calls to action

Calls to action (CTAs) are an important component of any B2B website. Appearing as a special banner, button, or graphic text on a web page, a CTA is meant to prompt the visitor to perform a specific desired action and continue down the sales funnel.

What makes an effective CTA? One word: variety. CTAs should not simply say the same thing in different ways. Rather, the CTAs on a website should address different client needs, various stakeholders in the buying process, and unique stages in the decision-making process to compel the visitor to take different actions. Keeping your CTAs diverse and fresh keeps prospective clients interested in your business.



# Varied content

In the B2B realm, a service or product is being sold that impacts an entire organization and often involves input from multiple decision makers. Therefore, the sale is more complex and often results in a longer decision-making process. If your website only features a “Contact Us” page or a newsletter signup as CTAs, you’re missing out on the potential for visitors to move faster through the buying process. While effective, those CTAs can only support certain stages of a buyer’s journey. For example, a visitor discovering your website for the first time may not be ready to subscribe to a weekly newsletter, but they would be open to downloading a tip sheet or watching a video.

By providing educational content that prospects will value and refer back to on an ongoing basis, you establish credibility for your brand and stay top of mind when they are ready to make a purchase decision.

Many times, this content is already lying around your office (literally or figuratively) and just needs refreshing for the web.



Here are some new content ideas that can entice potential clients:

---

Videos

---

Customer testimonials

---

Articles

---

Case studies

---

Press or awards

---

Sales sheets

---

Blogs

---

Infographics illustrating your service or process

---

eBooks or guides

---

Portfolios or project galleries

---

On-demand webinars

---

Product demos

---

Social media posts

---

White papers

Use this guide as a road-map to help you research, qualify, and select the right web design agency for your B2B firm's needs.

**For more insights into website redesign strategy and best practices, visit the Bop Design website or contact us today.**

---

888.670.7803 // [bopdesign.com](http://bopdesign.com)