

# HEALTH CARE WEB DESIGN

LEARN HOW TO PLAN YOUR WEBSITE REDESIGN PROJECT

## The secret steps to great healthcare website design

A comprehensive guide from the experts at TBH Creative



# Planning your new and improved website

Healthcare websites are complicated and serve a lot of needs. The most successful projects invest time and thought up-front to map out a strategic plan to meet targeted goals and serve patient needs.

This guide covers the best practices for making your HIPAA-compliant website a force-multiplier in your overall healthcare marketing plan.

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Create patient-friendly web content, beautiful webs design, and web development technology

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Track your website goals and promote your new website after launch.

## It's time for an upgraded (and strategic) healthcare website design if...

- You've outgrown your website.
- Your website isn't showing results.
- Patients don't use your website.
- You can't make the changes you want or important features don't work.
- Your competitors have better websites.
- You aren't getting enough visitors to your site.

# 01

## Site audit

Stepping back for a big-picture view of the present pays off significantly for the future.

*When it comes to healthcare web development, you can't afford to skip over your baseline assessment. Audit your current website and consider how things are functioning.*

- What is working? What is not?
- Is your site responsive and optimized properly for smaller screens and devices?
- What does the website look like? Do the colors and structure match your brand identity?
- What types of analytics are you tracking? What do the numbers say about your site's effectiveness?
- What tools do you have in place for users to interact? Do people use them? Do they need improvements?
- What do your patients and employees say about the website?
- How much of your content is accurate?
- Is information easy to find?
- How is your technical SEO and local organic search rank position?
- What can you control on the site with your CMS? What is hard-coded?
- How much time and ability do you have to work on this project in-house, and how much do you have budgeted?

It can be difficult to assess your website. To increase your accuracy and make sure you consider a variety of viewpoints, consider bringing in your marketing and IT teams, as well as a representative sample of practitioners, executives, and customer service staff members.

### RELATED ARTICLES

- Get a general overview of how to audit your website  
<https://www.tbhcreative.com/website-audit-time>
- Learn how to be more strategic about your content audit  
<https://www.tbhcreative.com/strategic-website-content>
- Find out if your web design needs a more significant update  
<https://www.tbhcreative.com/web-design-update>
- Figure out how to evaluate your website analytics  
<https://www.tbhcreative.com/evaluate-website-analytics>



# 02 Team creation

Pulling the right people together can make or break your healthcare website design project.

*Organizational structure may determine some of your team members but taking the time to designate authority with clear roles and responsibility will prevent headaches during the development process.*

Ensure you meet your goals by defining:

- What web design, development, copywriting, and technical skills do you have in-house?
- How much time can your team devote to the project?
- How much of the work do you want to outsource? How much outsourcing can you afford?
- Who are the stakeholders in your organization? Whose opinions should be consulted and at what points in the process?
- Who will make approvals, and what will the sign-off process look like?
- What roles will each person on the team fill, and what does their availability do to your timeline?

## **NOT SURE HOW TO SET UP YOUR TEAM?**

It is important to involve all key stakeholders from the beginning. We recommend spending time on an important foundation step: selecting the best internal team.

- Learn how the best hospital websites structured their design project  
<https://www.tbhcreative.com/best-hospital-project-structure>

As you build your team, you may need to outsource part of the work—either to partners or teams with experience in healthcare website design.

Before starting a website redesign project is a great time to evaluate existing partnerships and make sure that they have kept pace with your growth and mission.

- Have you outgrown your web design or digital marketing agency?
- Can other agencies better meet your needs?
- Do you like the work your partners are doing?
- Do you need a new partner that can do more than website redesigns?
- Are you satisfied with your agency's SEO capabilities?
- Are you ready for other digital marketing services?

### TEAM CREATION RESOURCES

When you evaluate your existing partnerships or consider selecting a new web design firm, these resources may help:

- Evaluate potential partners more strategically  
<https://www.tbhcreative.com/evaluate-potential-partners>
- Involving the right people for website project success  
<https://www.tbhcreative.com/website-project-success>



# 03 Strategy development

Mapping your objectives ensures you'll reach them.

*In today's environment, you can't afford to be anything less than strategic when it comes to your healthcare marketing.* The best hospital websites use a carefully developed voice and structure designed to reach ideal patients and achieve clearly defined business goals.

A thoughtful approach ensures that you prioritize the right design, functionality, structure, and content to produce measurable results.

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- Who are your ideal patients?
- What service lines do you want to promote most? What services are patients looking for and/or not aware that you offer?
- What common concerns do your patients have? What information do they need in order to select your organization or provider?
- Why do patients seek help? What are their concerns?
- How do your target patients access the Internet?
- What types of functionality might help patients understand or become more comfortable with your services?
- What other business needs could be served through design?

The first step in building an effective website is gaining a clear understanding of your website users (patients, referring physicians, caregivers, or loved ones). We call this persona research.

## What do your users need?

### Developing website personas

A persona is a detailed profile of your ideal audience, compiled from interviews and research, that helps you better understand how to reach and communicate with your target customer.

You may already have a good idea about the types of people who use your website, but do referring physicians and patients use your site the same way? How about administrators? How do their differences affect the way they navigate the pages?

Persona research involves learning as much as possible about the people who fit your key audience profiles. You need to learn how they use the Internet in general, how their lifestyles affect the way they interact with your organization, and what they really need from your website. Armed with that information, you can design your new healthcare website to communicate more effectively, and get better results.

## What do you want the website to accomplish?

### Setting your website goals

Once you have completed persona research, take the time to articulate *your* business goals, prioritize them, and determine how you will track and measure them.

- Do you want to increase appointments?
- How would you like to grow your patients within a select demographic?
- Is your goal to build awareness around a specialty or procedure?
- Are you having a hard time attracting the right job applicants?
- Do you need patients to select caregivers or submit forms online?



Using your persona research and goals, your healthcare web development team can suggest targeted solutions that make sense for your organization. This could take the form of one overarching strategy or a series of linked plans for different sections. It might also require supporting promotional campaigns using a variety of marketing tactics.

One important aspect of any strategic plan for healthcare website design is site architecture. The way patients navigate your site and how you organize content impacts your audience's user experience, and whether or not you meet your business goals.

Another part of your strategy needs to be measurement. After defining your goals, make a plan for checking baselines. Think about how will you pull together reports after launch, then set up the right tracking tools and think about how you'll handle different outcomes.

### CASE STUDIES

- Methodist Sports Medicine: HIPAA-compliant web forms  
<https://www.tbhcreative.com/project/methodist-sports-medicine>
- OrthoIndy: Redesign that increased appointments by 250%  
<https://www.tbhcreative.com/project/orthoindy>
- Franciscan Health Foundation: Storytelling that increased donations  
<https://www.tbhcreative.com/project/franciscan-health-foundation>
- OrthoNebraska: Website design that simplified a complicated merger  
<https://www.tbhcreative.com/project/orthonebraska>
- Logansport Memorial Hospital: Phased approach for a success  
<https://www.tbhcreative.com/project/logansport-memorial-hospital>
- Indiana Hemophilia and Thrombosis Center: Reorganized structure  
<https://www.tbhcreative.com/project/indiana-hemophilia-and-thrombosis-center>
- Growing Grins Pediatric Dentistry: Switch to digital records saves practice administrative time  
<https://www.tbhcreative.com/project/growing-grins-pediatric-dentistry>

# 04 Timeline assessment

Taking a realistic view helps you balance time and resources.

*How long will your healthcare web development project take?*

Realistically, when can you expect to launch a redesigned website?

Because each organization's needs, budget, and capacity are different, website project timelines can vary significantly. To build a workable schedule, be sure you consider the full scope of work and appropriate review times at each step as well as testing time.

## **Assess the tasks involved**

- Build in time to create SEO content and ensure HIPAA compliance. Your content must speak to your target audience, while satisfying regulatory requirements and feeding search engine algorithms.



- As you consider design time, be practical about your approval process, and build in time for review and iteration.
- Factor in time for designing, building, and testing any custom tools and functionality you require.
- Take behind-the-scene tasks into account. With a redesign, you need to plan time for a redirect plan, testing links, and new coding.

### Reassess your bandwidth

- Can you, in fact, do any of the tasks you defined in-house?
- Where does it make more sense to outsource? Remember, employee time costs your organization just like paying a contractor does—in many cases, it's more cost-effective to pay the faster expert.
- How will you plan for and enforce review time for stakeholders who need to approve various stages of design and deliverables?

### RELATED ARTICLES

Use insights from the best hospital website projects to avoid getting overwhelmed with project management details.

- Keep your website redesign project on track  
<https://www.tbhcreative.com/redesign-project>
- Common healthcare site mistakes  
<https://www.tbhcreative.com/healthcare-site-mistakes>
- Why so many websites fail  
<https://www.tbhcreative.com/website-failure>



# 05

## Build and launch

Putting your website plan into action is a balancing act and an ongoing project.

*Now all of your up-front work begins to pay off, and it's time to start designing and developing your new site.* When you take a strategic approach to healthcare website design, projects run more smoothly and stick more closely to deadlines. Of course, no plan perfectly anticipates every eventuality, and there will still be unexpected roadblocks and plenty of moving parts.

During your project, be sure you monitor your team's progress and track benchmarks regularly. Establish a routine of regular check-ins and reports and give your team permission to tell you when it looks like a deadline needs to be adjusted. Some steps have to proceed in order, but others can be worked on simultaneously.

Although all projects are different, here are some best practices and tips we learned while working on successful healthcare websites.

**Give wireframe appropriate priority.** Spending time on wireframes upfront saves headaches and expensive rework later on. Being sure that content elements are positioned with priority and that nothing is missing before you start high fidelity design work or coding.

**Define site architecture early.** During content planning, define page structure and labels, interlinking opportunities, keyword targets, and desired audience journeys so that your site is designed to meet your goals.

**Streamline content production.** Keep your design and content teams in sync so the copy and templates work together. Include META data, URL naming, photo specifications, and other page-level notes in content documents to streamline the production process.

**Build functionality testing into the timeline.** Work out the details of application functionality early in the process. Make sure you allow appropriate time for testing all interactive features and making any

needed improvements prior to launch.

**Remember approvals.** Don't forget to loop key project stakeholders in at all major stages. Getting approvals along the way saves time.

**Schedule enough time for thorough production.** Healthcare websites tend to have a lot of pages. Make sure you include adequate time in your schedule to add your content to your new site.

## Launch, Rejoice!

### You launched your site, now what?

The moment your brand new HIPAA-compliant website goes live doesn't mean your job is done. It's an exciting new beginning and opportunity to further your efforts with digital marketing.

The best hospital websites are iterative and integrate with all aspects of other marketing tactics. After your new website launches, you can use your new website as a tool to drive smarter marketing campaigns, direct more effective ads, and achieve your broader business goals.

If you thought launch day was amazing, just wait.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Website redesign planning checklist  
<https://www.tbhcreative.com/healthcare-website-planning-checklist>
- Post-launch checklist  
<https://www.tbhcreative.com/healthcare-post-launch-checklist>
- Vendor comparison worksheet  
<https://www.tbhcreative.com/healthcare-vendor-comparison-tool>



# 06 Ongoing improvements

Use your new website to make your overall marketing strategy even stronger.

*Now that you have a new healthcare website, why not use it to propel your healthcare marketing to a new level? Consider your site in light of your overall marketing plan.*

- Which pages make the best landing spots for ad campaigns or social media content?
- Can you link key web pages within existing marketing workflows?
- How can you integrate the website into your social media strategy?
- What features or functions were deprioritized in phase one and might now move into consideration?
- What content might benefit from greater consideration or additional resources?
- Who/how will you keep adding more content and improving your SEO visibility?
- Which of your business goals might be met by adding to existing website content? Could you expand your vision to use the website for fundraising or media awareness?
- What are the analytics telling you?
- What ideas does your web design agency bring to the table?



Given what you put into developing your new site, you'll want to keep it fresh and functional as long as possible. Scheduling time for routine maintenance can extend the lifespan of your website significantly—far beyond the commonly accepted three-year redesign cycle.

**You'll want to make time for:**

- Handling technical updates
- Performing semi-annual audits and analytic reviews
- Making iterative improvements every month (or quarter) to keep the site updated without overwhelming your team's workflow

**FROM OUR BLOG**

- Don't make these common healthcare website mistakes  
<https://www.tbhcreative.com/healthcare-website-mistakes>
- Structuring the design process for hospital websites  
<https://www.tbhcreative.com/creating-website-project-success>
- Understanding what your patients need from your site  
<https://www.tbhcreative.com/buyer-personas>
- Must-haves for all healthcare website design projects  
<https://www.tbhcreative.com/healthcare-design-must-haves>
- Why so many websites fail  
<https://www.tbhcreative.com/website-failure>



## About TBH Creative

As an Indianapolis web design company specializing in sophisticated custom solutions, TBH Creative often serves clients in the healthcare sector.

Since 2004, we've partnered with small practices and large networks of hospitals and affiliated practitioners, and we use our experience in strategy, custom development, digital marketing, and user experience to deliver features and functionality that set our clients apart and comply with regulatory requirements.

And, we don't stop there.

TBH Creative believes in the power of ongoing collaboration. Whether your next steps involve integrating digital marketing, adding new tools, or making regular improvements to extend the life of your website, TBH Creative is here to provide ongoing support and strategic insights.

The TBH Creative process begins with strategy and our recommendations driven by your goals. We believe in clear communication, high standards of excellence, and beating deadlines. But beyond those ideals, what drives the heart of our business is your mission—helping you serve your patients better with digital marketing and design than you ever thought possible.



**Ready to  
get started?**

**Set up a free consultation →**

<https://www.tbhcreative.com/healthcare-project>



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