



5 Tips for Working with Your Web Team

Hello.

The skills and talents of web and marketing teams often mean that the two teams are made up of very different people. When you're working with unique groups of people, success with few speed bumps can be hard to come by. Marketing teams may approach goals or problems one way, while web teams take a completely different perspective. Computer Weekly's Managing Editor Cliff Saran describes this phenomenon: "The IT department builds things that scale and last, while marketing wants the next big thing – and needed it yesterday." How do you bridge that gap effectively without tying up a project or causing even more conflict between professionals?



Keep these five key tips in mind for your next web team collaboration.

1. Have a Clear Plan

Marketing and web teams alike understand the importance of a well-formulated plan before starting in on any project. But beyond your strategic tactics and timeline, does your plan include important points of contact and collaboration periods between your marketing and web teams? Is your web team involved in the planning process, or are they waiting on the sidelines until execution? Having a shared goal is not enough to get two teams on the same page. Both teams need a shared plan with clear responsibilities and tasks for each group is essential.

While your new marketing campaign may involve only a small level of input from your IT team, it's important to keep them in the loop on what's happening and how their role interacts, impacts and benefits the rest of the project. They might be able to identify potential roadblocks that you can't see, or offer up suggestions to improve the process on their end or for the end user. Even with something as simple as creating a new landing page, you'll want to make sure they're informed of the plan before anything launches.

"The needs assessment for the website might overlap with other efforts and approaches of the marketing department...the established branding and marketing of the business should inform the structure and design of the website."



Source: Seigel, Smashing Magazine, 2011

2. Keep Lines of Communication Open & Active

Beyond the planning process, actively communicating with your web team is crucial for success. It's better to ask a lot of questions than to make assumptions on things that turn out to be misguided.

According to the [Association for Talent Development](#):

Poor communication, including "strained or ineffective interdepartmental relationships," are a huge problem in organizations, and can "negatively affect morale and the bottom line."



This is particularly important when you're asking for something to be completed on a tight timeline. Are you assuming your web developer can adjust an element of your website in a matter of minutes? It might not be that simple, and getting in touch as soon as possible to discuss the favor can save time and frustration on both sides. This also shows respect for the other team's time and talents.

3. Understand Web Development Basics

Not everyone is a web expert and you're not expected to know all of the answers. As a marketing professional, you may assume you're safe without knowing any technical details. While to some extent this is true, understanding the kinds of things you're asking your web team to complete is important. It's impossible to accurately plan and communicate with others when you don't understand the details of their tasks, so learning a thing or two about development can pay off tremendously.

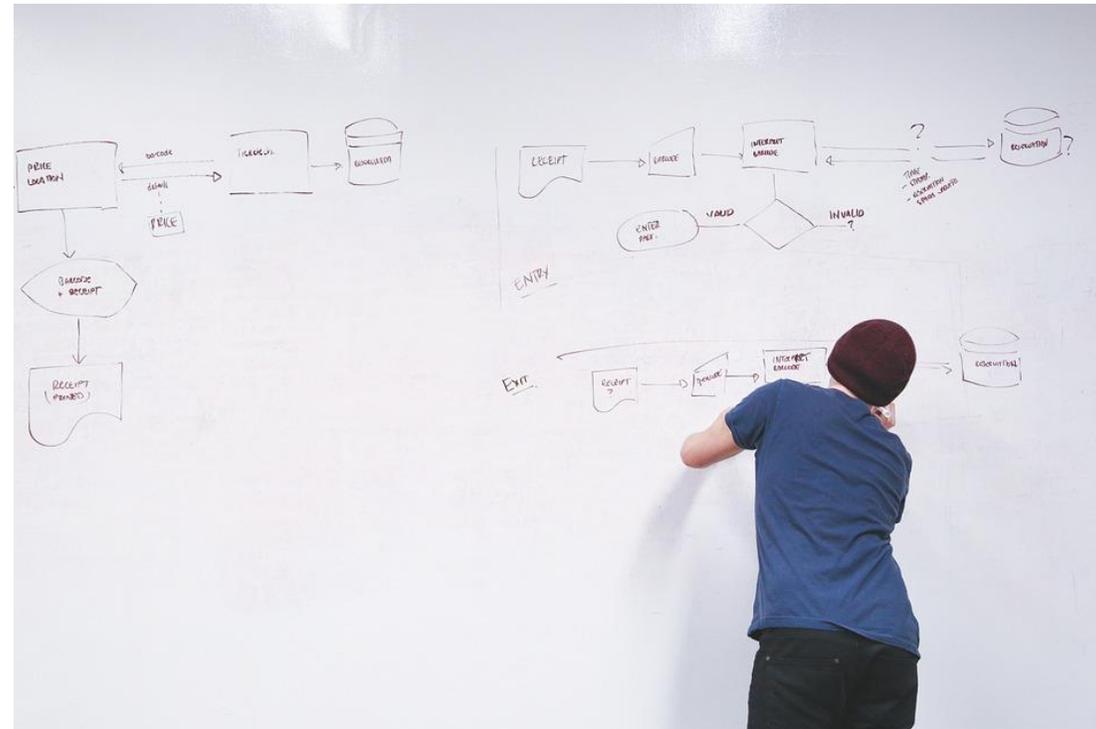
So what is worth your time to investigate and understand further?

- **Search Engine Optimization Terminology:** You'll need to understand the types of things involved with optimizing your website for search engines like Google, especially considering any SEO work done on the back-end is usually directly tied into any marketing campaigns you're running. Reviewing an SEM glossary is a great way to brush up on important terms.
- **Designer & Developer Terminology:** Similar to SEO jargon, you'll want to have a basic understanding of common terms and tasks that designers and developers may be working with.

The more you can learn about the kinds of things the web team is working on, the better you'll be able to collaborate and accomplish tasks.

4. Write Everything Down

Did you discuss some great ideas with your web team? What about a change that would improve the website's overall look and feel? If you want to get these accomplished, don't assume that a phone or email conversation communicated that to the web team. Ensure that your developers clearly understand any changes you want to make and that they are included in the overall plan and pricing structure. This also goes both ways – the web team should confirm anything that deviates from the original plan before going ahead and put it in writing. This will prevent any confusion during the project and make sure there are no surprises with the end product.



Conclusion.

Working with your web team doesn't have to be a difficult process. There are ways to keep the experience running smoothly with rewarding results. Excellent organization, communication and understanding are key to maintaining a great relationship.



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