

PebbleRoad Studios

Articles

Mapping Your Website Redesign Strategy

Jan 27 2007, By [Maish Nichani](#), (4) [Comments](#)

So you've got a redesign project. Congrats. Where are you going to start? The goals mentioned in the request-for-proposal or tender aren't going to get you far. You might plan for kick-off sessions with key stakeholders, but again, you just get a clearer picture of the forest. Then you go and do a content inventory and that gives you a good look at the trees. You also get to see raging forest fires, unauthorised logging, and a few aliens. You feel shattered. Actually professionally empowered. So, again, where do you start? A plan? But you first need a strategy to contain the plan. This article is about one such strategy.

Eliminate, Reduce, Raise, Create

The Eliminate, Reduce, Raise, Create framework by INSEAD professors W. Chan Kim and Renée Mauborgne is a popular technique for analysing business strategy. They have written an entire book—[Blue Ocean Strategy](#)—on this technique. We're going to borrow a page from it to map our redesign strategy.

The framework embodies 4 actions:

1. **Eliminate** what is redundant, outdated or trivial and providing no value
2. **Reduce** what isn't providing enough value
3. **Raise** what has the potential to add more value
4. **Create** what isn't available yet but can bring more value

These 4 actions represent a reservoir of questions that can be asked about our content. But these questions need a direction. This is provided by the goals of the redesign. The stage is now set for using our background knowledge and research findings to provide answers to these questions

Here's the setup.



As in any strategy building exercise, the magic is in asking the right questions. And the closer we are to the ground, the better the questions get.

Let's move forward with a scenario.

A scenario

Background: A client wants you to redesign their executive education website. The website provides working adults access to short-term courses to bridge their learning gaps and make them more productive. You do a first-pass, lightweight research by talking to few customers, visiting competitor websites, doing a content audit and looking at search logs. You decide to focus on one of the business goals, which is to **increase customer loyalty**. Here's how you use the Eliminate, Reduce, Raise & Create to take things ahead.

Step 1: You facilitate a session with your team and ask the right questions around each action point. After a couple of hours you populate the grid. Here's what it looks like.

Goal: Increase customer loyalty



Step 2: You repeat the process with other important business goals. You build a big list. Note that some of the items represent larger business issues.

Step 3: You can't do all of what you've outlined. You need to focus on what can be done in the short-term. You hold a prioritisation session to set the short-term directions.

And you're on your way, more focused and more confident than before this exercise.

Conclusion

There are many methods to map design strategy. I use this because it is simple to understand and execute. Although this is a quick technique to get you on your way, it's important to note that the success of this technique depends on the success of related skills and methods like user research, facilitation, prioritisation and knowledge of good design. The knowledge will always drive the method.

4 comments so far

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1

Very nice application of this framework, Maish. I assume that where the website serves multiple audiences

with different goals, you'd run this process for each audience?

By [Patrick Lambe](#) ([website](#)) on Jan 27 2007 | [comment permalink](#)

2

Yes Patrick, we'd run this process for each audience or persona. The personas approach will give a clear picture of the goals and then this process can move things along from there.

By [Maish Nichani](#) on Jan 28 2007 | [comment permalink](#)

3

Update: I've modified the setup image, tightened the text a bit.

By [Maish Nichani](#) on Jan 28 2007 | [comment permalink](#)

4

This is really useful, practical advice; thanks Maish!

By [Lou Rosenfeld](#) ([website](#)) on Mar 01 2007 | [comment permalink](#)

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