

# 10 Steps to a Successful Redesign

(so you won't have to do it again in 3 months)

Mags University - June 1, 2009



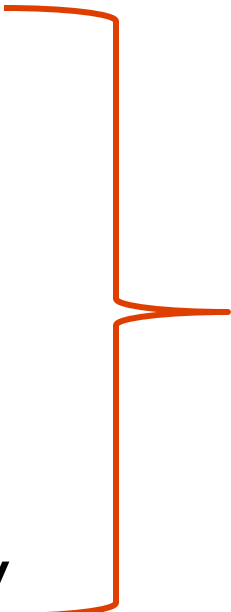
Michael Gold & Susan West  
[www.westgoldeditorial.com](http://www.westgoldeditorial.com)

**westgold**  
EDITORIAL

# I. Read the Tea Leaves

- Site analytics
- User testing
- Surveys (current site)
- Field studies
- Interviews
- Expert review

## 2. Set Goals

- Site analytics
  - User testing
  - Surveys
  - Field studies
  - Interviews
  - Expert review
- preliminary priorities & goals
- 

# 3. Get the Big Buy-In

- Invite your boss & high-level stakeholders
- Revisit basic business & content strategies
- Review the research (tea leaves)
- Propose your priorities: *what should change* (high-level)
- Invite their ideas
- Listen, discuss, encourage venting
- Get *consensus*
- Sketch out the process ahead
- Promise to keep them in the loop

**But expect the unexpected**

# 4. Spin Off a SWAT Team

- Agile & authorized to make decisions
- Assign roles & allocate resources: who does what, in-house vs. outsourced...
- Meet regularly in manageable doses
- Discuss, decide what's changing & how

# Discussion/decision agenda

## Background & Big Picture

- Context: What's driving the re-design, strategic goals, and how will you measure success?
- Audience: How does the intended audience for the re-designed site compare/contrast with current users?
- Mission
- Tone/Personality
- Competitive Analysis & Positioning: versus other obvious competitors and also other sites in your family
- Content Strategy: the most important, defining elements of information and functionality; what's changing and what's not
- Sitewide usability Issues
- Advertising and Subscription Issues

# Discussion/decision agenda (2)

## Site Description

- Site organization and navigation
- Home page approach: projecting the right "first impression" of new site's mission, personality, and high-priority content/features
- High-level pages/areas: For each major "channel"/navigational area/content category, a description of the "start" page and the key components of content and functionality that flow from it
- Category-neutral tools and functionality
- Advertising: guidelines for presentation

# Discussion/decision agenda (3)

## Technical Requirements & Concerns

- Content management system wish-list
  - Redesigning current CMS?
  - Who will use it? Make it work for them.
- Integration with existing platforms
- Handling of registration/subscriber/membership databases, interfacing with back-end management system
- Etc.



# 5. Write It Down

- Internal [wiki](#) & [blog](#) to collaboratively discuss, refine, record your ideas & decisions → ignite the fire
- \*Redesign blueprint: AKA spec doc, statement of requirements, etc. A detailed document with decisions & descriptions from foregoing discussion. To be shared with everyone.

# Blueprint excerpts: TOC

## Background & Big Picture

- Context
- Audience
- Mission
- Tone/Personality
- Competitive Analysis & Positioning
- Content Strategy
- Sitewide usability Issues
- Ad & Subscription Issues

## Site Description (bulk of blueprint)

- Site organization and navigation
- Home page approach
- High-level pages/areas
- Category-neutral tools and functionality
- Advertising: guidelines for presentation

## Technical Requirements & Concerns

- Content management system
- Membership management system
- Etc.

# Blueprint excerpts (2)

## New site map

### HOME

- Top Stories
- Poll
- Most Popular
- E-newsletters
- Web Feed (RSS)
- About SITENAME.org

### PARENTS & PARTNERS

- Community Partnerships
- Parent Involvement
- Mentoring
- School-to-Career

### TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION

(Combining Technology Integration with content currently in Digital Divide)

### PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

- (Consolidation of content currently under Ongoing Professional Development, Teacher Preparation, and Mentoring)
- Teacher Training Modules

### MAGAZINE

- Current Issue
- Back Issues
- Digital Edition
- Subscribe (& other customer service)
- Advertising...

# Blueprint excerpts (3)

## New home page approach

- **Name:** COMPANYNAME Travel Planner ... or Travel Planner (with tag line that says “powered by COMPANYNAME Travel Guides”?)
- **Personality traits:** A travel information center, built from the resources of COMPANYNAME Travel Guides. Emphasis is on practical information for trip planning. Does not come across as an overtly promotional site for the books, though info about the various lines and marketing messages are certainly available. In “About” or possibly in a tag line, make a special point about the experience and authority of the books’ authors.
- **Focus:** The current site’s home page consists primarily of navigation and promotional descriptions of books; it features no samples of content. The new site’s home page should emphasize the site’s identity as an information resource to help travelers plan trips. Its main content well should offer specific samples of—and direct links to—this practical information.
- **Components:** One way to ensure that the home page entices users deeper into the site with specific content samples is to organize the content well into dedicated highlighting areas...

# Blueprint excerpts (4)

## Personalized Productivity Tools

- These would be available only to subscribers. (Note that while these functions may be a challenge for the developers, they require little effort on the part of MAGAZINE staff.)
- Login leads to slightly modified home page, with a customized area that includes:
- Message in fine print at top welcomes user and confirms log in: “Welcome michael@westgoldeditorial.com.” Option to log out is nearby.
- Handy list of 5 most recently visited links on MAGAZINE site
- Links to the various personalized tools such as My Profile, Alerts and Feeds, etc.
- Reminder message about when subscription ends: “Your subscription good through...”
- A promo space "Just For Our Subscribers" where we can enter brief text promos
- No “cold” subscription pitches on this version of the home page
- My Profile: Optional professional description (we’ll have to specify the fields in the form) that user can choose to make available when posting comments, ratings, and other user-generated content...

# Blueprint excerpts (5)

## Article Presentation

- The big change here is moving from PDF-only versions of magazine-based articles (in the current site) to user-friendly, easy-to-read, “webified” presentation of text in HTML format. This HTML version of the article will not include any decorative graphics or images, although it will include informational graphics (see “thumbnail representations” below). In addition, we want to provide a variety of additional content and functionality right on every article page that boost the article’s value and extends its reach.
- We would like to convert print-based articles into Web format in a manner that is as automated as possible. Some manual preparation will, however, have to be done by MAGAZINE staff or contractors and volunteers.
- Except for Editor’s Note, Out & About, Letters, Beyond the Bottom Line, and Last Look, all articles that appear in the print publication will be transferred to the Web site. Nearly all will follow the format shown in the **conceptual mock-up** below with slight variations. (Articles shorter than about 500 words need not be divided into sections with in-text subheads and top-of-document navigation...

# 6. Make Mockups

- Crudely created conceptual mockups
- Paper prototypes
- Wire frames

# Sample: article presentation

Created w/  
MS Word & SnagIt

Mock-up (with annotations in red)

## A Failure of Philanthropy

American charity shortchanges the poor,  
and public policy is partly to blame

[Note: no "decorative" graphics or images]

 [printer-friendly version](#)

★ ★ ★ ☆ (16 ratings / comments) | [rate](#) / [comment](#) on this article

[Why Give? | Tax Policies Reward Giving | Who Gets Charitable Dollars? Costs of Virtue Are Uneven | Should We Change Policy? | Footnotes](#)

By [Rob Reich](#) [[links to author bio, list of author's other articles, etc.](#)]

The [Woodside School Foundation](#) in Woodside, Calif., is a fantastically successful local education foundation (LEF). Since 1983, it has been raising money for the Woodside School District, which is made up of a single public elementary school that enrolls fewer than 500 students. Between 1998 and 2003, the last year for which data are available, the foundation collected more than \$10 million, adding several thousand dollars per student per year to public funds for the school. Woodside Elementary uses that money for programs in music, art, physical education, and technology, says Superintendent Dr. Daniel A. Vinson. The school has won the top rating on [California's Academic Performance Index](#) (API) for the past six years. [Note: MAGAZINE staff would have to identify appropriate links within all articles and supply Web addresses.]

### Related to this Article

[related material listed here is chosen manually by SSIR editors—articles + podcasts, video, news, events... If editors choose not to list anything here, the "Related" heading does not appear.]

- [Would Americans Make Charitable Donations Without Tax Incentives?](#)

[sidebar that ran with main article]

- [Article #2...](#)

- [Article #3...](#)

- [Item #4 ...](#)

### More on Philanthropy

- [Browse all of Philanthropy](#)

[items below are generated automatically from most recent additions in this category/topic]

#### SSIR Articles:

- [Article #1...](#)

- [Article #2...](#)

- [Article #3...](#)

#### News:

- [News headline #1...](#)

- [News headline #2...](#)

#### Events:

- [Event headline #1...](#)

- [Event headline #2...](#)

### Related Topics



# Sample: home page scheme

Home Page Conceptual Mockup  
(Copy reflects our suggested wording. Layout and visual elements demonstrate suggested concept and hierarchy—they are not recommendations for actual graphic design.)

**Print2Web**  
from West Gold Editorial

*Helping magazine editors & publishers take the digital leap*

[E-newsletters](#) | [Web Feed \(RSS\)](#) | [Advertising](#) | [Subscription](#) | [About Site.com](#)

SEARCH

MySiteName: LOG IN

[Advanced Search](#)

|      |          |          |          |          |          |          |  |          |                 |       |            |       |
|------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|--|----------|-----------------|-------|------------|-------|
| Home | Topic #1 | Topic #2 | Topic #3 | Topic #4 | Topic #5 | Topic #6 |  | Magazine | Resource Portal | Blogs | Multimedia | Store |
|------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|--|----------|-----------------|-------|------------|-------|

**RESOURCE PORTAL**  
Tools from around the Web

**BREAKING NEWS**  
[Headline number one](#)  
(NY Times)


**COMMENTARY**  
[Headline number two: longer](#)  
(Content Wise)

**HOW TO**  
[Yet another headline here](#)  
(CNET Weekend Project)

**NICHE-SPECIFIC WEB SEARCH**  
Focuses on best sites, learns your interests.

[blogging](#) [community](#) [launch](#)  
[magazines](#) [metadata](#) [newspapers](#)  
[podcasting](#) [publishing](#) [lesson](#)  
[redesign](#) [RSS](#) [technology](#)  
[user content](#) [wordpress](#)  
[more Buzz Cloud...](#)

**VIDEO** [More>](#)



**What, Me On Camera?**

Geordie Brackin's strange journey from Men's Health magazine editor to video glam guy.

**TOP STORIES** [More>](#)

**Cross Training**  
At Stanford POW, editors channel their inner geeks Nov. 2007  
(All Topic #1)

**RELUCTANT BLOGGER** [More>](#)

Why does everybody think it's so great to sit around in your underwear spilling bile...  
[it's no cake walk, this blog biz...](#)

**Browse Articles By Category**

- [Advertising](#)
- [Best Practices](#)
- [Blogging](#)
- [Books](#)
- [Content Management](#)
- [Cool Tools](#)

# 7. Check In

- Share blueprint & mockups with bosses, major stakeholders
- Gather feedback
- Confirm buy-in

# 8. Kick the Tires

- User testing (paper prototypes, wireframes, selected build-outs)
- Focus groups, individual interviews
- A/B online testing of beta versions

# 9. Revise & Repeat

6. Make mockups
7. (Check in, if necessary)
8. Test again
9. Decide on new revisions & repeat...

...until launch

# 10. Explain the changes (after launch)

## Introducing our new look!

[Return to the Homepage](#)

We've redesigned our site to make it easier than ever to find top-rated products. The new enhancements were inspired by feedback from users like you. So please explore, and [let us know what you think](#).

### Find it fast

With clear, left-hand listings of our eight main product areas, you can quickly drill-down to find the items you want, from digital cameras to GPS systems.

### Ratings right here, right now

We've highlighted Ratings for seasonal products that receive the most searches right on our homepage to give you instant access to information you want right now.

### One-step access

Now subscriber log-in to their account right on our homepage for one-click access to our detailed Buying Advice and unbiased recommendations from our experts.

### News you to know

Get FREE daily news, including at the latest product news, useful Buying Advice tips, and special packages.

### See how it's done

New videos take you inside the labs, so you can see how our engineers test products, from lawn mowers.

The screenshot shows the Consumer Reports.org homepage with the following elements:

- Header:** "Expert • Independent • Nonprofit" and "ConsumerReports.org" logo. Navigation links for "Customer Service", "My Account", "Donate", "Our Web Sites", "Sign-in", and "Subscribe".
- Search:** A search bar with a "Search" button.
- Navigation Menu:** "Cars", "Appliances", "Electronics", "Home & Garden", "Babies & Kids", "Money", "Food", "Health".
- Left Sidebar:**
  - Cars >** New Cars, Used Cars, Pricing, >> More cars
  - Appliances >** Laundry & cleaning, Kitchen appliances, Heating, cooling & air, >> More appliances
  - Electronics >** Cameras & photography, Televisions, Computers & Internet, Phones & mobile devices, >> More electronics
  - Home & Garden >** Kitchen, Bed & Bath, Home improvement, Lawn & garden, >> More home & garden
  - Babies & Kids >** Baby & toddler gear, Preschool products, Kids' toys & activities, >> More babies & kids
  - Money >** Investing, Retirement planning, Shopping, Credit and borrowing, >> More money
- Main Content Area:**
  - Featured Article:** "Electronics Guide BEST & WORST DIGITAL CAMERAS" with a camera image and "READ MORE..." link.
  - Today's News:**
    - Click the right gift with our Mother's Day guide
    - Podcast: GPS, HDTV and all the latest hot gadgets
    - Keep your home secure during the holidays
    - Crash tests for more than 100 models
  - Subscription Banner:** "SUBSCRIBE ONLINE" with "Join today & get 24/7 online access to: Expert Ratings, Buying Advice, Much, much more!" and a "SUBSCRIBE" button.
  - Expert Ratings:** A section with a "STOP !!" indicator and product listings like "Upscale Sedans" and "First Look: Kenmore XL200".
  - Inside our TESTLABS:** A section with a video player and text: "Wiper blades. See how our experts put them to the test."
- Right Sidebar:**
  - Member Sign-in:** "Not a member? Subscribe Now!", "Member sign-in" form with fields for "Username", "Password", and "Remember me", and a "Sign-in" button.
  - Consumer Reports Magazine:** "13 Issues plus TWO FREE Gifts!" with a magazine cover image.
  - Bottom Line Price:** "GET THE BOTTOM LINE PRICE ON A NEW CAR. Find a reliable new car for the right price" with a car image.

# Tours, how-to videos, etc.

- Basecamp: [video](#) on managing files
- Berkleemusic.com: [guided tour](#)

The screenshot shows the Basecamp website's navigation bar with the logo and links for Home, Tour, Case Studies, Buzz, Forums, Help/FAQs, and Pricing & Sign-up. The '37signals' logo is also present. The main content area features a large heading 'Take a tour' and a sub-headline 'Watch videos, check out the screenshots. We take Basecamp's interface seriously.' Below this is a horizontal menu with links for Colors & Logos, Dashboard, To-dos, Files, Messages, Milestones, Time tracking, Overview, and Comments. At the bottom, there is a video player with a row of video thumbnails and the text 'We visited some of our Basecamp customers and brought a video camera along...' and a 'Watch the videos' button.

# (10b.)...And Forever Tweak

# beta.nejm.org



The NEW ENGLAND  
JOURNAL of MEDICINE

ABOUT BETA ▼

BETA PROJECTS ▼

November 19, 2008

On the *Journal's* beta site, we pursue new ideas in publishing and showcase innovative ways to present information for use in medical education, research, and clinical practice. This beta site is part of our commitment to physicians who "Never Stop Learning". Please check back often.

## NEW PROJECTS LIST

Current beta projects for you to test



### FACEBOOK APPLICATIONS

Stay in touch with NEJM on Facebook.

[Vote and Comment](#)

### Gadget

#### IMAGE CHALLENGE GOOGLE GADGET

Add NEJM Image Challenge to your iGoogle homepage.



### Gadgets

#### GOOGLE GADGETS

Rating: ★★★★★

Stay informed about recent and popular articles at NEJM Online by



### Interface

#### NEW ARTICLE INTERFACE

Rating: ★★★★★

A way of viewing journal articles in tabs.



### NEW!

#### NEJM AUDIO SUMMARY WITH SLIDES

Rating: ★★★★★

Test this option for listening to NEJM's



## BETA POLL

Do you use Twitter?

- Yes, I use it often
- Yes, but only occasionally
- No, but I'm interested
- No, and I don't plan to
- No, I've never heard of it

VOTE

## E-MAIL NOTIFICATION

Receive beta project updates

e-mail:

submit

## Recent Visitors

Salinas Blogosphere



# Recap: The 10 Steps

1. Read the tea leaves
2. Set goals
3. Get the big buy-in
4. Spin off a SWAT team
5. Write it down
6. Make mockups, paper prototypes, wire frames
7. Check in
8. Kick the tires (test)
9. Revise & repeat 6, (7?), 8, 9
10. Launch, explain, & tweak

Thanks!

Any questions?

michael@westgoldeditorial.com

**westgold**  
EDITORIAL

**And expect the unexpected**

© 2009 West Gold Editorial Consulting - All rights reserved  
MagsU 2009