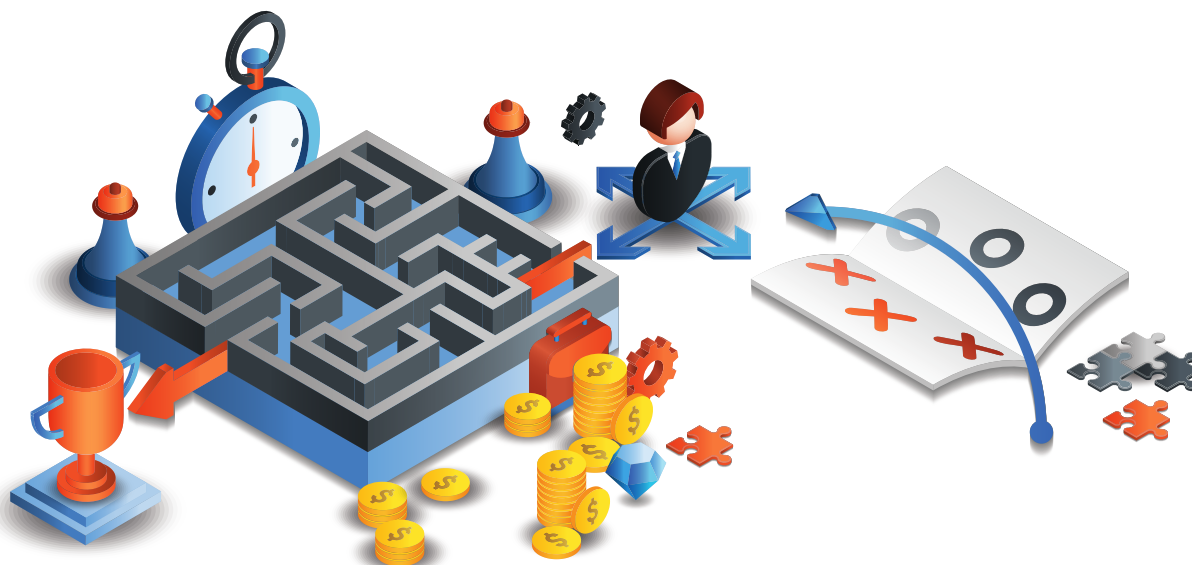

Create a Responsive Website With Three Simple Steps

Most consumers in today's world are always connected. Ubiquitous internet access has revolutionized business conduct across a variety of industries including e-commerce, education, and even non-profit work. Websites have replaced brick-and-mortar storefront as the way most clients are introduced to and interact with companies. Given the vast number of digital devices in use, a well-designed, responsive website is critical to setting your business apart from your competition. Creating a great website isn't as hard as you might think. This guide will get you going in three simple steps.





The best business marketing campaigns focus their message on a particular audience. As one of the fundamental functions of your website is to promote and market your business, your website design strategy should reflect the user you are trying to reach. It is vital to remember that one of the best practices in website design is to focus your strategy on providing the best user experience (UX) possible. The best way to determine the best experience for potential users is a little market research. Researching your potential users provides the data you need to make informed decisions on your web strategy and architecture. For example, your audience research needs to provide you with the most popular devices they use for web access. Your website may provide an unsurpassed user experience on a laptop but fall flat on a mobile phone. Proper user research makes for better overall web strategy.

Device selection is only one example of many aspects to consider for an improved web presence. While the users may differ demographically, the same opportunities for improvement abound across every industry. It isn't always easy to identify ways to enhance your web strategy, even if you have had a website for years. Using an expert partner can help you reach your strategic objectives by helping you determine the data needed to develop the site structure you desire. At Creosen, we help our clients solve these types of problems every day. Recently, we redesigned the Indiana State University website, using the steps in this guide.

While the focus of this redesign was for an educational institution, the process and results are applicable to almost any industry. In this case the intended audience included current, former, and prospective students from around the world. The site would be viewed on a variety of devices and needed to be responsive. Using the site structure desired by the university, Creosen provided a Drupal-based website upgrade that was focused on the user experience and provided the university with the technical upgrades they desired. The results were both exceptional for both the client and their potential users.



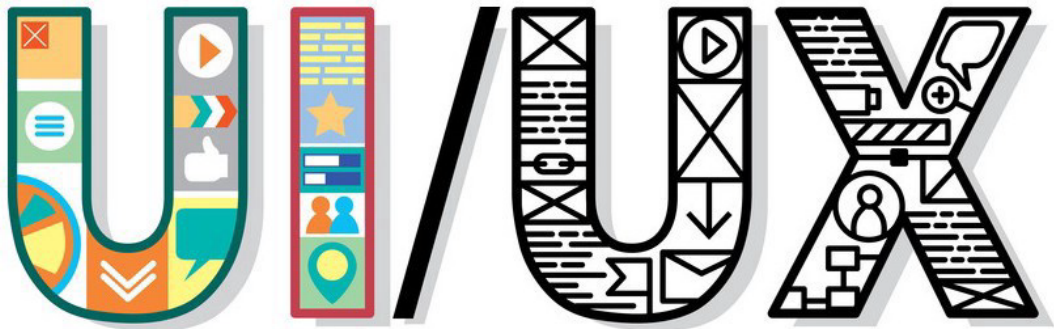
Once you have developed your web strategy, the next step is to select the correct content management system to optimize your content display and administer your data. If you are relatively new to digital commerce, you may be wondering exactly what a content management system, or CMS, is. In short, it is the software tool used to create and modify a website. Drupal was the CMS of choice for the redesign of the Indiana University website you read about in **Step 1**.

Using a CMS is key for any e-commerce, education, or non-profit looking to maximize the potential for their web presence. Without one, it is likely that the responsiveness of your site will suffer, and your content will not display correctly on multiple devices. UX-focused design is nearly impossible to implement without the proper CMS, and it will be more difficult to manage your site efficiently.

Fortunately, there are good open source solutions available for to choose from. For an educational or non-profit client, cost is always a consideration and open-source software helps keep website development expenditures minimized. At Creosen, we have helped our clients develop web solutions using Drupal. Drupal is open-source and provides several key features including mobile site development, strong security, and the collaborative benefits that come with the development of open source software.

For e-commerce clients, open source software can also provide a good solution. However, we have used other CMS packages that are more specific to the e-commerce industry. Magento Commerce provides clients with the tools necessary to quickly set up products, use customer analytics to increase sales, and streamline the entire web development process for both business-to-business and business-to-customer transactions.

There are a variety of CMS choices, and making the right choice makes all the difference in a successful web presence. Creosen can help you make the right choice based on your business needs.



Throughout this guide, we have made multiple references to user experience, or UX, based design. Designing your website to be as usable as possible is equally as important as the content you make available. You may have more high-quality content than your competitor, but if your users have a negative experience navigating your site, it won't matter. They will move on to a more user-friendly web page.

For example, if you are a university trying to attract young students, it is imperative that you make your website mobile-friendly. You only need to step onto any city sidewalk to view thousands of young people staring at a smartphone screen. If your website is only user friendly when accessed on a laptop or desktop, you will lose customers.

As we mentioned in Step 1, you need to research your audience and do so on a routine basis. E-commerce, educational, and non-profit businesses alike benefit from analyzing metrics that can be easily collected from a well-designed website. Those metrics can help you make improvements and attract even more customers. Experts like Creosen can help you make the most out of your website development.

■ Proper Website Development Leads to More Business

The importance of proper web development is key to engaging customers in today's highly digital world. It doesn't have to be hard. Simply implementing the three steps in this guide – defining your web strategy, choosing the right CMS, and focusing on the user experience – will differentiate your site from your competitors. Making your site responsive and easy to use will help you win more clients.

The experts at Creosen can help. We have industry-leading web design experience in the e-commerce, educational, and non-profit industries with results that give our clients a competitive edge. Whether you are just starting to develop your digital strategy, or have years of website design, we can help your organization reach its goals through novel solutions, customer-centered support, and our unsurpassed expertise.