

Relationship Building for the Website Industry

Valley Web Summit

Presented on August 18, 2012 by

Tess Gadwa, Founder

yes e~~x~~actly[®]

After You
Build the Website...

What Happens Next?

yes e~~x~~actly

A Common Scenario in Our Industry

with apologies to XKCD...

yes e~~x~~actly

What? Your old web developer moved to
Belize and left you stranded?

That's terrible.



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yes e~~x~~actly

Don't worry. I'll prepare an estimate
and then we can get started working
on your changes right away!



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yes e~~x~~actly

(sigh)

I wish I lived in Belize...



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yes e~~x~~actly

The Care and Feeding of Websites

- What are your best solutions?



yes ~~e~~xactly

Industry Challenges

- No clear standards or best practices for website maintenance and updates.
- Our clients often do not have the budget for in-house IT support.
- Security threats and web technology are constantly evolving.
- CMS platforms (WordPress, Drupal) relieve the need for some routine coding updates but create other logistical challenges.

yes e~~x~~actly

Industry Challenges

- Burnout and turnover high in our industry – especially for solo shops.
- How do we maintain effective communication with clients after launch?

yes e~~x~~actly

A Toxic Development Cycle

yes e~~x~~actly

Time to hire a new web developer.

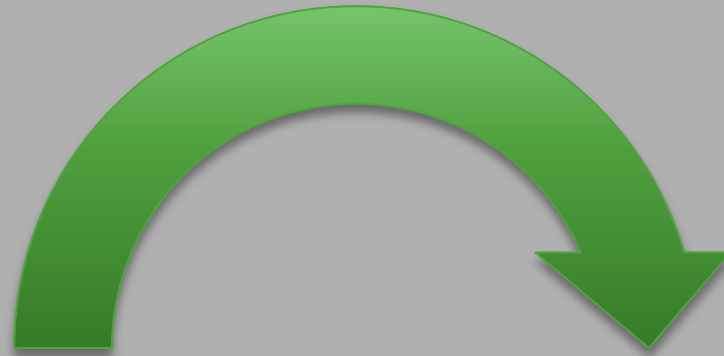


yes e~~x~~actly

A Better Cycle

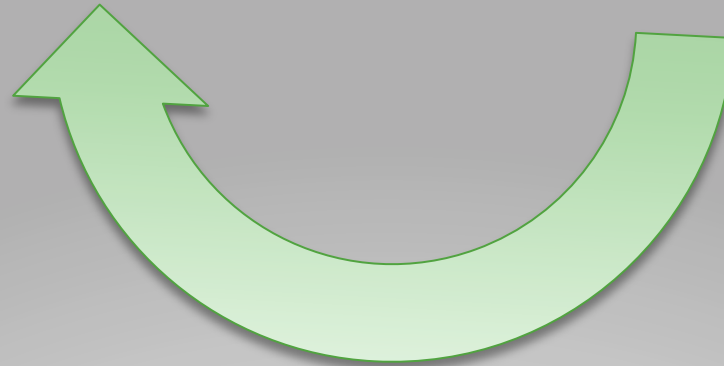
yes ~~e~~xactly

I talk to my web developer and authorize changes.



"I hate my site."

"I love my site."



I'm getting frustrated.

yes e~~x~~actly

How Do We Get There?

yes ~~e~~xactly

Starting Point

- Store server information, credentials, reference screenshots, and source code and design files for all past projects.
- Have a referral network available for projects and tasks that you choose not to take on or lack the necessary skills and background to take on.

yes e~~x~~actly

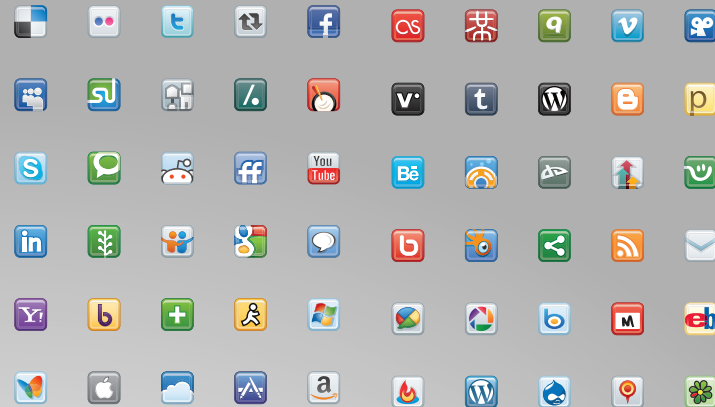
Potential Solutions

- Monthly retainer agreements (include a certain amount of prepaid hourly time at a discount)
- Managed hosting.
- Include a preset amount of service and support hours as part of every project.
- *Include training time and documentation materials with every project.*

yes ~~e~~xactly

Potential Solutions

- *Educate the client.*
- SEO, blogging, and Social Media all require continuous effort.
- Work best in partnership between client and web developer.



yes e~~x~~actly

Potential Solutions

- Check in periodically to see what new features the client may want in their site.
- Are they happy? Dissatisfied? Somewhere in between?
- ***Help the client to see their web presence as an ongoing investment, rather than a one-time expense.***

yes ~~e~~xactly

Guidelines

- Educate the client.
- A web presence is more than a web site.
- Practice self-sustainability (lifestyle, hours).
- Monetize relationships that add value for the client.

yes e~~x~~actly

Q & A ...



yes e~~x~~actly