

# Website Redesign vs. Refresh: Which Is Best for My Law Firm?

Wondering whether your law firm's website needs a facelift? Unsure whether a simple refresh or a complete redesign is the way to go? In the rapidly evolving digital landscape, making the right decision for your online presence is crucial. Before making a decision, it's best to conduct a website audit to determine exactly which factors are driving the update.

Let's explore the key considerations.

## What Are Your Website Functionality Needs?

As your firm grows, so do its digital requirements. Before committing to a redesign, evaluate whether your existing content management system (CMS) can accommodate new functionalities. Often, developers underuse the capabilities of these CMS systems. Consulting with a web developer can reveal possibilities for enhancing your website's functionality without starting from scratch.

It's important to consider the type of CMS that was used to build your website. Open-source platforms like WordPress and Drupal are widely used, facilitating accessibility to a broad pool of developers. Conversely, proprietary systems may require specialized expertise and are typically best managed by the original development company to ensure seamless integration and maintenance.

## Does Your Website Reflect Your Brand?

As your firm evolves, so should your digital presence. If you've undergone a [rebranding exercise](#), your website should reflect these changes cohesively. A complete redesign may be warranted to align your online identity and showcase your firm's uniqueness. Alternatively, minor updates such as color palette and font updates suffice if the changes are primarily cosmetic. Whether it's a full makeover or a subtle refresh, consistency in messaging and visual identity is key.

## Does Your Law Firm Have Future Growth Plans?

Consider your firm's long-term goals and growth plans. Will your current website be able to accommodate future expansions or changes in services? A redesign offers an opportunity to build a scalable and flexible platform that can adapt to evolving business needs. If you anticipate significant growth or strategic shifts in the near future, investing in a redesign might be a wise decision.



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## What Are Your Competitors Doing?

Evaluate your [competitors'](#) websites. Are they offering features or functionalities that yours lacks? Assessing industry standards can provide insights into areas where your website may be falling short. If your competitors have more modern and user-friendly websites, it may be time for a redesign to stay competitive.

## What Do Website Users Think?

Solicit feedback from your website visitors. Are there common complaints or suggestions for improvement? Understanding user pain points can help pinpoint areas that require attention. If feedback indicates significant usability issues or outdated design elements, a redesign may be appropriate.

Focus groups of five to 10 people can be helpful in identifying how your audience recognizes broader concepts on your site, such as brand perception and messaging. Usability testing is better for assessing visitor interactions with a website – how they navigate the site, complete forms, share web content on social media, etc.

## What Do Your Website Traffic Analytics Show?

Dive into your website analytics to gain a deeper understanding of user behavior. Identify pages with high bounce rates or low engagement metrics. These insights can highlight areas that need improvement. If analytics reveal widespread dissatisfaction with various aspects of your website, a redesign may be necessary to address underlying issues comprehensively.

## How Fast is Your Website?

In an era where attention spans are dwindling, every second counts. Slow-loading pages not only frustrate visitors but also harm your search engine rankings. Thankfully, addressing this issue doesn't always require a complete website overhaul. Simple fixes like image compression or backend optimizations can significantly enhance load times, improving user experience and SEO performance.

## Could Your Website Be Better Optimized for Mobile Responsiveness?

In today's mobile-first world, your website must adapt seamlessly to various devices. With a significant portion of web traffic coming from smartphones and tablets, ensuring a mobile-friendly experience is paramount. While retrofitting your current site with mobile-friendly elements is an option, you may need to further optimize your site for peak performance on all devices. Consider this as an opportunity to not just adapt but elevate your website's design and functionality.

## Is Your Website Accessible?

Compliance with accessibility standards such as Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) not only broadens your audience; it also protects your firm from potential legal liabilities. Start by running an accessibility audit that evaluates various aspects of your website, including navigation, content formatting, visual design, multimedia, forms and interactive elements.

Once the accessibility audit is complete, you will have a clearer understanding of the areas where improvements are needed to enhance accessibility on your website. From there, you can prioritize and implement changes to ensure that your website is both legally compliant and accessible to all users.

## How Old is Your Website?

If your website is nearing a decade in existence, it's time to seriously consider a redesign. Outdated coding poses security risks, while neglected maintenance leads to functionality issues. A modern redesign not only safeguards against cyber threats but also enhances user experience, which bolsters your firm's credibility and professionalism.

If your firm's website has multiple problems that will be time-intensive to correct, it may be better to rebuild from the ground up. However, intelligent repairs can often make a big difference in your website's performance and the user experience.

Consider these budget-friendly refresh tactics:

- Simplify navigation to improve user experience.
- Update visuals with fresh images and headshots.
- Keep content relevant by refreshing practice area pages and [attorney bio pages](#).
- Integrate new web forms, like newsletter sign-up forms, to enhance visitor engagement.

## Trust Your Instincts

Ultimately, if you're dissatisfied with your website, don't ignore your instincts. Even minor design tweaks can breathe new life into your online presence. Experiment with colors, imagery and layouts to find what resonates with your firm's identity.

Navigating the complexities of website redesign can be daunting. If you're unsure about the best approach for your law firm, don't hesitate to contact Melanie Trudeau at [mtrudeau@jaffepr.com](mailto:mtrudeau@jaffepr.com) for help.