

ALKALI

The B2B Website Redesign Checklist

Nine phases, from deciding what the project is for through the first month after launch. It is built around the part that costs the most when it is skipped: preserving the search visibility the current site has already earned.

How to use it: assign an owner to every row. A task with no name against it is the one that gets missed. Phases 5, 7 and 8 are the ones worth being strict about.

PHASE 1 Decide what the redesign is actually for

A redesign without a stated problem becomes a repaint. Write the answers down before anyone opens a design tool.

DONE	TASK	OWNER	DATE
☐	Write one sentence naming the business problem this redesign solves.		
☐	Name the single audience the site is for, and what they need to decide.		
☐	Agree how you will know it worked, in numbers, not impressions.		
☐	List the three things you cannot do on the current site.		
☐	Decide whether this is a redesign, a rebuild, or a platform move. They are different projects.		
☐	Set the budget range and the date the site has to be live.		

PHASE 2 Benchmark before you change anything

You cannot tell whether a launch went badly if you never recorded what normal looked like.

DONE	TASK	OWNER	DATE
☐	Export current traffic, top landing pages, and conversions for the last 12 months.		
☐	Record current rankings for the terms you care about.		
☐	Record current page speed on mobile for the homepage and two key pages.		
☐	Save a copy of the current sitemap and a full list of URLs.		
☐	Screenshot the pages that matter, so you can compare later.		

PHASE 3 Inventory the content and decide its fate

Removing a page removes whatever it was ranking for. Decide deliberately, page by page.

DONE	TASK	OWNER	DATE
☐	List every URL on the current site with its traffic and rankings.		
☐	Mark each page keep, rewrite, merge, or remove.		
☐	Merge thin overlapping pages rather than deleting them outright.		
☐	Flag pages with inbound links from other websites. These are assets.		
☐	Identify pages that get traffic but nobody has updated in years.		

DONE	TASK	OWNER	DATE
☐	Agree who is writing the new copy, and by when. This is the usual reason projects slip.		

PHASE 4 Fix the structure and the message, not just the look

Most B2B sites do not fail on aesthetics. They fail to say what the company does and why to pick it.

DONE	TASK	OWNER	DATE
☐	State what you make or do, for whom, in the first screen. Avoid a heading that could sit on a competitor's site.		
☐	Say why a buyer should choose you over another company offering the same thing.		
☐	Put certifications, approvals and standards where a buyer can see them. Most B2B homepages never mention one.		
☐	Give the buyer a visible way to request a quote or start a conversation.		
☐	Plan the pages your buyers actually need, not the pages your competitors happen to have.		
☐	Agree the navigation before the design. Structure is harder to change later than colour.		

PHASE 5 Map every URL and plan the redirects

Rankings belong to URLs. This phase is where a redesign quietly loses them.

DONE	TASK	OWNER	DATE
☐	Build a spreadsheet mapping every old URL to its new address.		
☐	Redirect to the closest equivalent page, never in bulk to the homepage.		
☐	Use permanent (301) redirects, not temporary ones.		
☐	Remove redirect chains so no URL hops more than once.		
☐	Decide deliberately which URLs will return a 404 because no equivalent exists.		

PHASE 6 Build on staging, not in public

Everything below should be true before anyone outside the project sees the site.

DONE	TASK	OWNER	DATE
☐	Build on a staging environment that is password protected.		
☐	Confirm staging is blocked from search engines while you work.		
☐	Migrate content faithfully, including page titles and meta descriptions.		
☐	Test every form end to end and confirm where the submissions land.		
☐	Check the site on a real phone, not just a narrow browser window.		

PHASE 7 Pre-launch checks

The list that separates a launch from an outage. Do not delegate the last three.

DONE	TASK	OWNER	DATE
☐	Every redirect in the map resolves to a working page.		
☐	Page titles and meta descriptions are present, unique, and not truncated.		
☐	Analytics and conversion tracking fire on the new site.		
☐	Page speed on mobile is no worse than the site you are replacing.		
☐	Canonical tags point at live URLs, not at staging.		
☐	The XML sitemap lists only live, indexable pages.		
☐	Someone outside the project has read the homepage and can say what you do.		

PHASE 8 Launch day

Short list, high stakes. Work through it in order.

DONE	TASK	OWNER	DATE
☐	Remove the crawler block. Confirm the live site is indexable. This is the most expensive thing to miss.		
☐	Submit the new XML sitemap to Google Search Console.		
☐	Spot-check 20 old URLs and confirm each redirects correctly.		
☐	Confirm forms deliver to the right inbox from the live domain.		
☐	Tell sales the site changed, and what changed.		

PHASE 9 The first 30 days

Most recoverable problems surface in the first month, and only if somebody is looking.

DONE	TASK	OWNER	DATE
☐	Check crawl errors and 404s weekly, and fix the ones with traffic.		
☐	Compare traffic and rankings against the benchmark from Phase 2.		
☐	Watch which pages people actually land on. It is rarely the ones you expected.		
☐	Fix the top three drop-offs before starting anything new.		
☐	Book a 30-minute retrospective and write down one thing to do differently.		