# Web Design Process

## Step 1: Brand & Digital Analysis & Audit

If you're looking for a way to keep your online business ahead of the competition, the key may well lie in differentiation. What makes you – or your product or service – different from everything else that's out there?

A brand and digital analysis or audit can help you breathe life into a business, or specifically its website, when things are becoming stagnant. It's also wise to go through this process before designing a website. If you're at that stage, you're going to love this.

Answering key questions early will help you focus your efforts, make your website more targeted to its audience, and will help differentiate you from the other players in the market.

In more detail, a brand or digital analysis will help you to:

- ***identify your business' position of your business in the market.***
  If you're not where you want to be, or where you had planned to be, it's imperative to confront that fact. Then you can take positive action to correct your drift.

- ***identify strengths and weaknesses.***
  Independent book publishers may not have the financial power and marketing spend of one of the big four, but they have the advantage of the speed with which they can react to changes in the market and capitalize on them. What are the strengths of your business? Would it be wise to make more of those abilities to stand out from your competition?

- ***identify what customers desire, what you offer, and where those two things intersect.***
  For modern marketers, that intersection on a Venn diagram should be significant. That's not always the case. You might not realize it until you perform a brand analysis. It might seem to be a no-brainer that what you create needs to be aligned with what people want, but this often gets forgotten in the excitement of the marketplace.

- ***learn how your business is perceived.***
  Prepare yourself. This might be surprising. It might be disappointing. It could be plain weird.

Whatever the result, it's best to know. Then you can play to those perceptions or work to change your image.



## How to perform a digital and brand analysis/audit?

Now is a good time to employ your mind-mapping skills. Keep yourself creative and free. Consider and re-consider:

- the website's purpose
- your competition
- your market and product niche

- your product strengths and weaknesses (go ahead and do a full SWOT analysis)
- your position in the market, and how this relates to your competitors
- current and predicted market trends
- what makes you different – including pricing, quality, attitude to risk

Evaluate your goals regarding your web content, SEO strategy, and use of social media.

If that doesn't mean much to you yet, be sure to read parts 2 through 4 of this Ebook series, where this will become clearer. Otherwise, use analytics and reporting to assess how well you've achieved your goals in each of these three key areas.
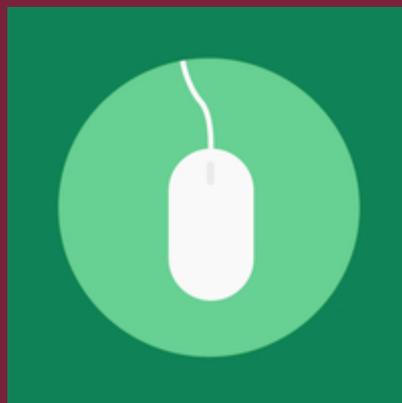
# Ask your customers

When attempting to understand their customers, business owners often forget that they can communicate with them directly. Not everything needs to be done through cyber-espionage. You can ask them for their unbiased opinions, directly, by using an online poll.

Check out Qualaroo or SurveyCrest for great resources to help you get feedback from visitors.



Another approach is to ask people to check out your site and tell you what they think. Give them goals, such as navigating to a particular page, and watch how they attempt to achieve them. Check for errors, such as dead links and broken navigation. Ask for feedback.

After all your soul-searching and fault-finding, it's time to fix the issues. Don't worry: you'll be using the awesome web design and web developing skills you're going to pick up during this Ebook series.

When you've got to the end of the series, and followed all the recommendations, it's time to do another audit. There is never a final digital analysis or audit. It's what you do to stay on track. Embrace it, learn to love it, and you'll be in much better control of your business and the experience of your users.

**About MetroCreate**
----------------------------
MetroCreate Studios is a digital marketing and consulting agency located in Cambridge, MA. We work with companies of all sizes increase their audiences and sales by leveraging digital marketing tools. Learn more at our website: metrocreate.com