

How Long Does a New Website Take to Build?

The short answer is: longer than most people think. On average, a well-developed web project will take anywhere from 19-32 weeks to complete from the time that we begin designing your new website to the time you are trained on it. There are many factors that could possibly lengthen that timeframe, such as:

- Our current workload.
Like most businesses our workload is constantly fluctuating. These fluctuations may add or remove time to your project.
- Delays in the discussion.
The Design stage of your site build involves considerable interaction between you and our designer. With some clients needing to receive approval from several team members or a committee before approving a design, it is not uncommon for the design stage to take longer than usual.
- The complexity and size of the old and new website.
Often we are helping clients pare down their overgrown website into manageable sections for their visitors. This involves creating a sitemap that allows visitors to easily and clearly find important information.
- How many custom components are added to your website.
Each of our websites is a custom build that is tailored to your needs, and often requires one-off components that our developers need to create or modify to meet your requirements.

Our Process

Embarking on a new website is no small project. At Diocesan we do our best to make the process as smooth as possible. Below is an outline detailing the phases that will guide you through this journey.

Phase 1 - Discovery

We begin the Discovery phase by gathering information about your parish. This includes evaluating the current state of your website, learning what goals you wish to accomplish with your new website, and what your strengths/areas of need are in evangelization through use of your current site. We will have a 20-25 minute consultation with you to discuss these key points so that we can truly get to know you better. We'll then review the information gathered during our meeting to begin outlining your current website's pages, menus, and potential issues that may need to be addressed. All of this information will help us to move into the second phase in our process, the Deep Dive.

What to Expect in the Discovery phase:

- Consultation meeting (20-25 minutes) to address 3 key areas:
 - The current state of your website
 - Your goals as a parish and how you would like to accomplish these through your website
 - Your strengths and areas of need when it comes to evangelizing through your current site

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Phase 2 - Deep Dive

In Phase 2, we take the knowledge acquired during the Discovery phase and investigate each piece of information further. Examples of items discussed at the second consultation meeting, which is typically 60-90 minutes long, include key items you wish to accomplish with your new website, key features you feel you would like your website to have, and the possibilities for overall aesthetics and feel of your new site. Time spent during the Deep Dive phase is crucial to ensuring that the final product meets your intended needs.

What to Expect in the Deep Dive phase:

- A 60-90 minute meeting using Zoom video conference technology (instructions sent before the meeting)
- Conversation with the Diocesan web department team (potentially including designer and content specialist) to further discuss the following key areas:
 - Key items you wish to accomplish with your new website.
 - Key features that visitors need and utilize when visiting your new site.
 - Aesthetics and feel of your new site.
 - What defines your parish.

After the meeting, Diocesan will work on developing a detailed quote based upon the discussions of the Discovery and Deep Dive phases. If you agree to continue in the process, please sign and return the proposal indicating that you consent to the dollar amount proposed for site development and the possible fluctuation in price if additions are requested after the contract is signed. The contract must be signed and returned before the site project gets added to our design queue, at which point the 19-32 week timeline will begin.

Phase 3 - Content Strategy

Once we have discussed your goals, the Content Strategy team begins going through your current site looking for key items. In addition to the amount of content you have, our content strategists look at what parts of the site you use most often, features you enjoy, features you don't enjoy, the usability of your site, and more. If we can pick out the most common types of information you edit and visitors use, the designer can find the best solution for consistent display and ease of editing. The goal of this is to ensure your content will best fit your goals and help create a website that will work especially for you. At this point, we will also ask you to go through your current site layout and determine what items will be staying and what will be going.

Phase 4 - Design & Flow

Having figured out your site's overall strategy, we're now ready to begin designing your new website. The first stage of the Design process is creating a wireframe of your site. A wireframe allows us to quickly layout the functional elements of your site. If changes are needed, we can easily move items around within the wireframe. Once we have your approval of the wireframe, we will begin creating proofs of the primary pages of your website. The Design process will involve frequent communication between you and our designer. At times, we may go through several revisions until we reach final design approval. These revision rounds require timely approval by you in order to keep the project on track.

Phase 5 - Content Migration

During the Content Migration stage, our content specialists assist you in migrating the content from your existing website into your new one. Remember, the content is the most important part of your website. Is your information formatted so that it's easy to find and understand? If not, we format it for you. Are you consistent with the information you provide? Don't worry, we review it. Is the information current? If not, you may request that we don't migrate it.

Phase 6 - Development

The Development stage is the point at which we turn your approved designs into a fully functional website with the functionality & features discussed during the Deep Dive process. While there is little client involvement at this stage, much of the timeline will be spent building the website tailored to you.

Phase 7 - Train/Launch

Every project of ours includes two personalized training so that you have the knowledge and ability to maintain and expand your new website. No matter how well we've documented each aspect of your new website there will most assuredly be changes to the scope of the project. From new sections or pages that you wish to add that weren't thought of or needed during the Deep Dive phase, to any functional changes to a component that sounded good in theory but in practice don't meet your needs or the visitor's needs, Diocesan understands that a growing and living parish may have minor updates. These changes often pop up after the Training stage and need to be addressed prior to launch.

Phase 8 - Ongoing

Once your website is launched, the work is not quite done. Now it's up to you to continue adding new content, articles, and events to the website that keep your visitors and parishioners informed and feeling welcome. Having new content is key to a flourishing website!