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SEO for Redesigns: What to Watch Before You Relaunch

1.Introduction: Why SEO Belongs in Every Redesign

When companies invest in a redesign, the focus often leans heavily on visual aesthetics: sleek layouts, bold branding, and modern UI elements. While these design improvements are important for user experience, many businesses forget that **SEO is the engine driving discoverability and traffic.**

A beautiful site without SEO is like a billboard in the desert: impressive but unseen. Studies show that websites lose between **20-70%** of their organic traffic if SEO is neglected during redesigns. (searchengineland.com)

Redesigns are the perfect opportunity to strengthen SEO foundations, not just refresh a look. Done right, you can protect existing rankings, boost user engagement, and improve conversions.

2. The Hidden Risk of Redesigns

Aesthetics vs. SEO Performance
Design teams often focus on how a site looks without considering how search engines (and users) will find and experience it. Examples include:
- Dropping keyword-rich pages in favor of minimal layouts.
- Removing internal links because they "clutter" the design.
- Launching new frameworks without testing crawlability.

Real Costs of Traffic-Loss
Traffic drops after redesigns can take months to recover. Lost rankings mean lost leads, revenue, and brand visibility. In competitive industries, a single mismanaged redesign can undo years of SEO growth.

🔑 **Key takeaway: Redesigns are not just design projects; they are also SEO projects.**

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Table of Contents

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3. SEO Pre-Relaunch Checklist

Step 1: Crawl and Benchmark the Current Site

- Use tools like Screaming Frog or Sitebulb to capture **current URLs, metadata, internal linking, and structured data**.
- Benchmark traffic, rankings, and conversion metrics so you can compare pre- and post-launch performance.

Step 2: Map and Protect Existing URLs

- Document every URL and assign it to its new equivalent.
- Avoid unnecessary URL changes. If you must change, set up **301 redirects** before launch.
- Protect high-value pages (top traffic and top conversion URLs).

Step 3: Audit and Optimize Content Before Migration

- Review existing content for gaps or duplication.
- Update outdated sections and optimize with **primary and secondary keywords**.
- Ensure content aligns with user intent at each stage of the funnel.

Step 4: Plan Redirects and Canonicals Correctly

- Use **301 redirects** for permanent moves, not 302s.
- Update internal links so they point to final URLs instead of redirect chains.
- Check canonical tags to avoid duplicate content issues.

Step 5: Review Technical SEO Foundations

- Ensure the new site has a logical **crawlable structure**.
- Check robots.txt and XML sitemaps for errors.
- Validate that hreflang, pagination, and canonical logic carry over correctly.

Step 6: Prepare Structured Data and Schema

- Carry forward existing schema (FAQ, Article, Product, etc.).
- Validate with Google's Rich Results Test.
- Enhance with new schema opportunities to stand out in SERPs.

Step 7: Optimize for Core Web Vitals and Mobile UX

- Test load speed, layout stability, and interactivity.
- Confirm responsive design across devices.
- Eliminate render-blocking scripts and optimize images with WebP or AVIF formats.

4. Launch-Day SEO Monitoring

- Monitor Google Search Console for crawl errors.
- Track analytics in real time to confirm traffic flows correctly.
- Test redirects, structured data, and indexation of key pages.
- Watch for sudden drops in impressions or clicks.

5. Post-Launch SEO Review and Ongoing Maintenance

- Compare benchmarks: traffic, rankings, conversions.
- Re-crawl the site to ensure no orphaned or broken links.
- Update XML sitemaps and resubmit to Google.
- Plan quarterly audits to refine technical SEO and content performance.

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6. Conclusion: Designing with SEO and Aesthetics Together

A redesign should never be a choice between **beauty and discoverability**. The most effective relaunches integrate SEO into the design process from day one. When teams collaborate — designers, developers, and SEO specialists — the result is a site that **delights users visually and ranks competitively in search**.

✅ **Pro Tip from ScaledOn:** Approach every redesign with the mindset that design attracts the eye, but SEO drives the audience. Both must work together for growth.

Need help protecting your rankings during a site redesign?

Our SEO team can guide you through pre-launch audits, redirects, and technical reviews — so your relaunch boosts traffic instead of breaking it.

Drop us a line: sales@scaledon.com 📩

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