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# ARE WEBSITES THE NEXT PAYPHONES?

Understanding the Changing Role of Websites



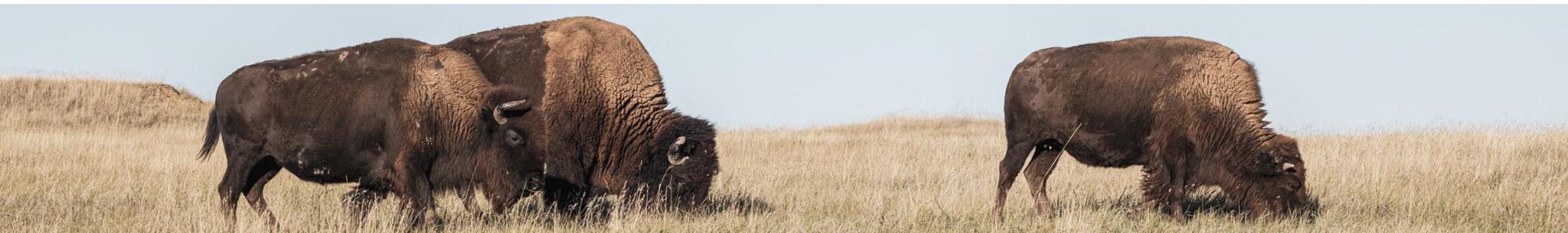


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## About Bold Bison

**Bold Bison Communications & Consulting** provides forward-thinking communications solutions, engaging strategy and facilitation services, and inspiring workshops and trainings for nonprofits, particularly in the conservation, climate, and local food movements, as well as the arts and cultural institutions.

**Bold Bison** is a professional affiliate of the **Land Trust Alliance** and is a **Certified LGBT Business Enterprise®** through the **National LGBT Chamber of Commerce**. For more information, visit **[BoldBison.com](http://BoldBison.com)**





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## Our Team



**DIGITAL MEDIA PRODUCER**

Mitch Sloan  
They / Them



**DIRECTOR OF CREATIVE SERVICES**

Patrick Williams  
He / Him





**Your Users Have Evolved**



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## Extended time on-page is the way of the past.

- Average time spent on-page is now **52 seconds**
- **75% of visitors** leave your website after **3 seconds**
- 1/3rd of users **never scroll past the Hero Section** (or the first “screenfull” of content).

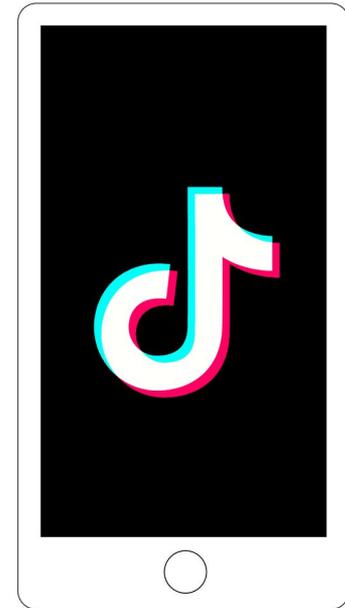
**We want to design an accessible website that people want to return to, even as browsing habits change.**



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## Everything is TikTok now

- **Endless scrolling feeds** of content, usually prioritizing video and **optimized for mobile devices**
- Strong preference towards **moving elements on-screen**
- Users tend to leave a webpage in under **15 seconds** if the content doesn't grab their attention





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# People Scan Content for Relevant Info

- **“Listicle” formatting** of the 2010’s has transformed blog content and lived on in **Gen AI summaries**
- **Less than 1/4th** of text-on-page is read by a visiting user
- Users expect content to be **organized logically** , and want to find their quarry **within three clicks**

## 5 Reasons Why This (Plastic Free) Shampoo Bar Is On Everyone's Wishlist 🎉

Here are the big five reasons why everyone is finally tossing the liquid shampoos and conditioners, ditching big chain brands, and saving tons of money by switching to the worlds most convenient (and plastic-free) Shampoo Bar ever by The Earthling Co.



### 1. No Harsh Or Harmful Shampoo Formulas

Our shampoo bar has everything you want and none of the bad stuff you try to avoid in your hair care routine. It creates a luscious lather that gently removes build-up, and leaves your hair soft and clean.



### 2. Perfect for ANY Hair Type

This shampoo is curly hair-friendly and can be used on color-treated/bleached hair. It doesn't have SLS or any harsh, stripping ingredients, making it better for you and for the planet.



# Web Presence Effects Reputation

- **Halo effect** – users may become **biased for/against your organization** based on web presence
- Search engines **de-prioritize websites** with **high bounce rates and minimal accessibility** features
- Successful sites **design for returning users** that engage with content, instead of flashy elements for “unique visitors”





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**If we don't update our website strategy to meet changing user expectations, our websites are at risk of becoming obsolete.**

**Fortunately, there are fixes.**



# Understanding User Experience



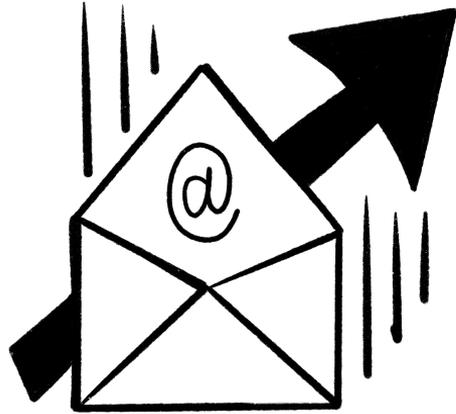
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# What is User Experience (UX)?

- The overall **experience of a person using a product** such as a website or app, especially in terms of how easy or pleasing it is to use.
- **It's not that complicated – the core of UX design is empathy**. Put yourself in the shoes of your audience and think about what they want to accomplish on your site.

**User Goals + Org's Goals = UX Design**





**Org Goal: Increase  
Newsletter sign-ups and  
expand mailing list**



**User Goal: Learn what native  
species they can plant in their  
garden**

# UX in Practice



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UX Design: Homepage Newsletter banner, with Local Native Plants PDF on sign-up

UX in Practice





# Accessibility Wins for Your Website





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## Easy Win: Alternative Text

**Alternative text (alt text)** is descriptive text that conveys the **meaning of an image** in digital content. **Makes visual content accessible** to **people with vision disabilities** but also **improves SEO** in a variety of ways:

- **Additional keywords** to rank on search engine results
- Search engines **prioritize sites with accessibility features**
- Alt text helps **feed AI summaries**, citing your content in Gen AI results



Page Block X

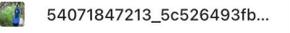
Image

Insert an image to make a visual statement.

[Learn more](#)



Media ⋮



ALTERNATIVE TEXT

Smiling GPC Volunteer Moving Material with a Wheelbarrow during a Stewardship Work Party

[Describe the purpose of the image.](#) ↗  
Leave empty if decorative.

ATTACHMENT DETAILS



Port-Gamble-bay.webp  
May 29, 2025  
4 MB  
2160 by 1620 pixels  
[Edit Image](#)  
[Delete permanently](#)

Alt Text

[Learn how to describe the purpose of the image.](#) Leave empty if the image is purely decorative.

Title

Caption

Description

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[Copy URL to clipboard](#)

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are by our  
require  
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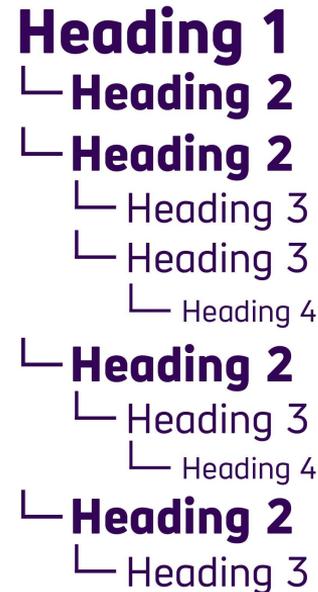
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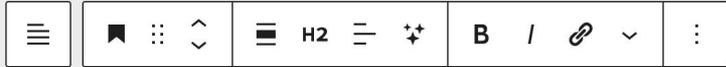


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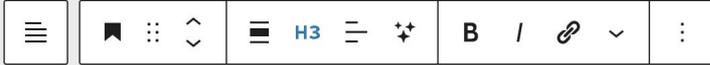
# Easy Win: Proper Meta Tags

- Tags like <H2> or <p> (Heading 2, paragraph) tell browsers and accessibility software **how to read your site**
- **Generative search engine results** pull from <H2 >and the <P> below **for AI summaries**
- Logical hierarchy helps users with **screen readers and mobility devices** tab through your website while **improving SEO rankings and AI summary citations**





# Giving Options



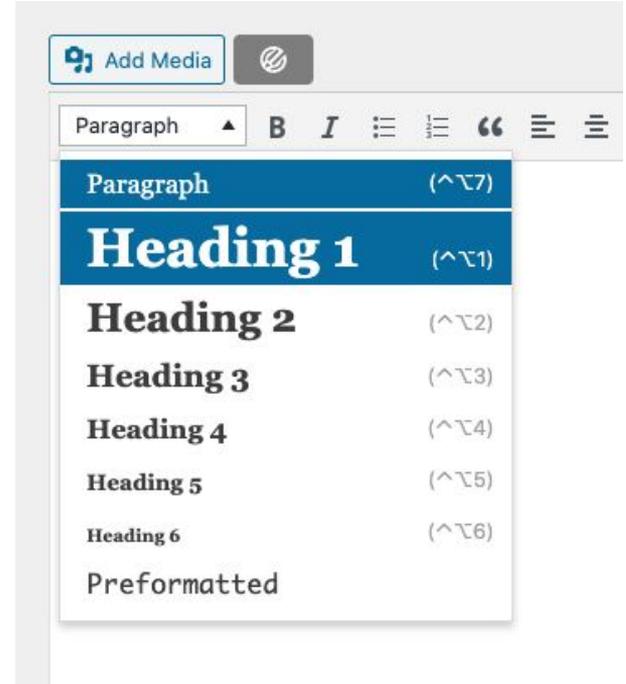
## LAND DONATION

A gift of land with habitat for a family or an individual can be a significant advantage. Peninsula Conservancy can help you explore your property's ecological value and natural future of the area.

- H1 Heading 1
- H2 Heading 2
- H3** Heading 3
- H4 Heading 4
- H5 Heading 5
- H6 Heading 6

value (or a gift of land or real estate) can be a significant advantage. Peninsula Conservancy can help you explore your property's ecological value and natural future of the area.

## VOLUNTEER TIME

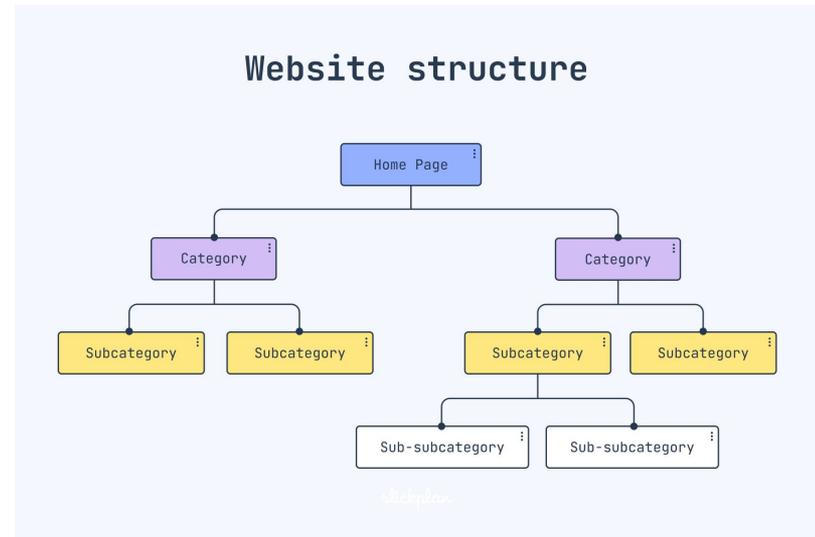




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## Easy Win: Logical Navigation

- Make sure you have **basic information easily available** for users
- Guide users through your content from **general to specific**, making it easy for **first time visitors** to find what they need
- **5 X 5 Rule:** 5 items or less in your main navigation, and 5 items or less in the dropdowns for each.





Preserves > County Map

Waterfalls of Rensselaer County Public Preserves

Home

Local History

Block Drinking Water Protection

Protect ▾

News ▾

About ▾

Links/Partners

Partner Trails

Naturalist's Library

Search...

Home /



Who we are ▾

What we do ▾

Get outdoors ▾

Get involved ▾

Support ▾

**DONATE**

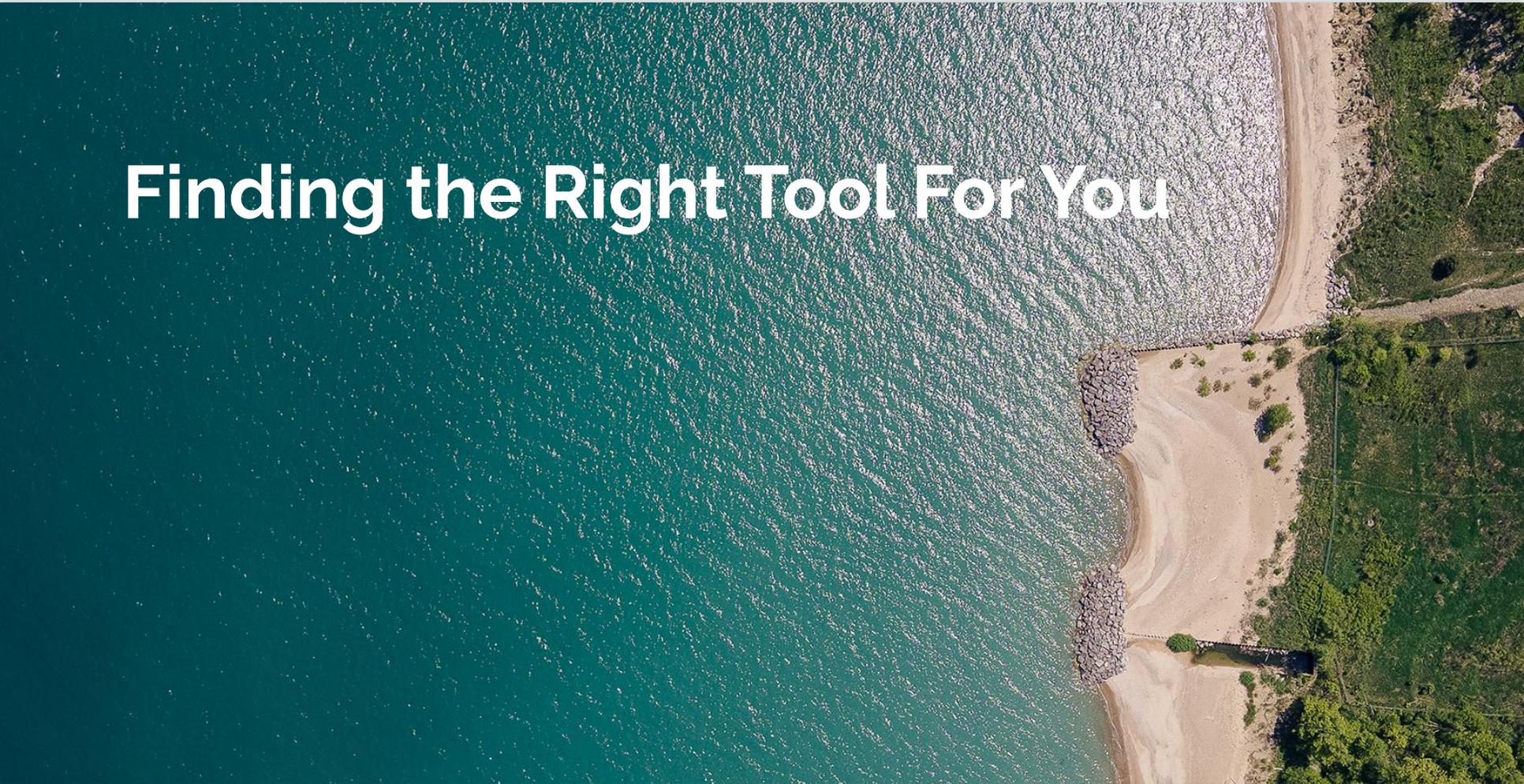


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**Honing your user experience and implementing accessibility best practices makes your website one users want to return to while meeting compliance standards and helping new audiences find you.**



# Finding the Right Tool For You





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## Best Friend or Greatest Enemy – Your Site's CMS

- A **content management system (CMS)** is software that helps users create, manage, store, and modify their **digital content** .
  - Includes an **editor to embed** text, images, video, audio, maps, and program code that **display content and interact with the user.**
  - Popular examples include **WordPress** , Squarespace, Wix, and Shopify.
- In the past, web developers would build a website with a bespoke CMS **separate from other technologies** used on the website
  - This creates a problem where your front-end, hosting, domain registration, and donor management systems **are all in separate places**



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## A New Way to Work: All-in-One CMS

- **Simplify web management** by consolidating your content management, web hosting, and domain registration on a single platform, such as SquareSpace or **Wordpress**
- These platforms **automatically update** to prevent security risks, widgets breaking, and outdated browser formatting – **taking technical work off your plate**
- **Extensive library of templates** that allow for drag-and-drop edits similar to **your other marketing platforms** (MailChimp/Constant Contact or Canva)
- Archival documentation to **help you troubleshoot** (forums, YouTube, Reddit threads) and live-support options on business plans



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## But My Old WordPress Was Bad!

### WordPress.org

- Clunky **editing system**
- Styles and design **controlled by your web developer**
- Functionality no longer works
- **Looks dated**
- **Difficult** to use/person who knew how left the staff

### WordPress.com

- **Massive library of page templates** and site themes
- Site Editor allowing for **drag n' drop, "what you see is what you get"** editing
- Global Style settings to make adding **new content easy and on-brand**



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## Headaches Resolved: Technical Challenges

- **Externalize the risk** to vendors whose businesses exists for it
- **Strengths of a toolkit:** donation processing, event registration, email signups, translation, etc.
- Put your **website on autopilot** so you can focus on the fun parts—content, design, and strategy

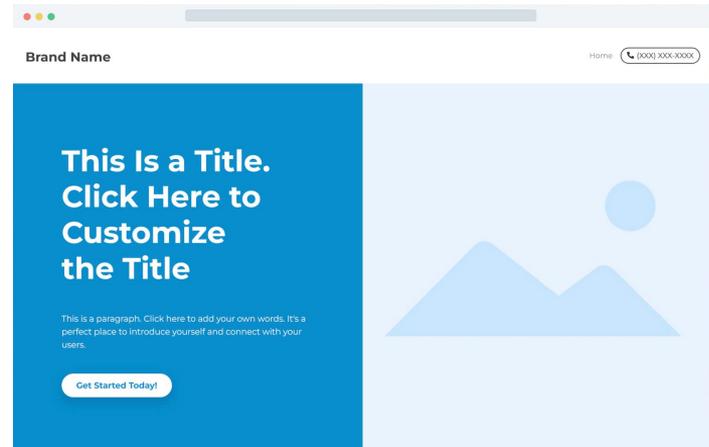




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## Headaches Resolved: Capacity

- **Reduce the time spent** keeping systems healthy – all-in-one systems automate updates
- Fail-safes to **restore your site** to a previous state (without coding, technical instructions, or support calls)
- **No-code templates** let you drag-n'-drop content, “what you see is what you get” editing





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## Now Web Management is Easy – Focus on Content

- **Put yourself in the shoes of your audience:** what do they want to do on your site?
- **Does your website “feel” like visiting your org?** Consider your website as a welcome mat for your organization.
- Focus on **common accessibility features and simplified navigation** to help all users engage with your content.





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## Questions to Ask Before Rebuilding Your Website

- How will this website alleviate our capacity constraints?
- What does our relationship with our developer look like post-launch?
- How will we “control” the look and feel of the website post-launch?
- What are the annual costs we can expect from this hosting platform?





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## Today's Takeaways

- **Web behaviour is changing** – considering your user experience is vital to your website, but you also need to consider how changes in website behavior impact your organization's **overall marketing strategy.**
- **Implementing accessibility features** help address big-picture changes in user behavior on websites while remaining **ADA-compliant.**
- **Your website needs to be an asset not a burden.** Make sure your website is a helpful tool for your org and users, externalize the risk where you can.





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## Still Feeling Stuck? We Can Help With That.

- While we hope today's learning will help you overcome any fears of your website, Bold Bison can **help you tackle the challenges we discussed** today
- Help with strategy, organization, and management to **improve your existing website** ; offer an assessment, help with accessibility, or troubleshooting
- **Design and build a new website** , including training those on your team to who will be responsible for keeping it up to date





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# Connect with us!



[hello@boldbison.com](mailto:hello@boldbison.com)



SIGN UP  
FOR THE  
BOLD BISON  
NEWSLETTER



**Mitch Sloan**

[MITCH@BOLDBISON.COM](mailto:MITCH@BOLDBISON.COM)



**Patrick Williams**

[PATRICK@BOLDBISON.COM](mailto:PATRICK@BOLDBISON.COM)



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# Thank you!

